

# MINNETONKA MEMO

A publication from the City of Minnetonka



## Tracking the Trails

Learn how Minnetonka's strategic profile drives the development of this community asset

All day long, in all kinds of weather, people head out on Minnetonka's growing network of more than 90 miles of trails. Most trips on foot and bike are still just for fun but, as key areas of the city are connected to the network, options for other uses abound. That's the point, according to Matt Kumka, the city's parks and trails project manager.

"Minnetonka's Trail Improvement Plan helps us see the big picture, which is to give people more daily transportation options beyond cars and trucks," said Kumka. "But we also use it to identify and prioritize specific segments that are easier to construct and are likely to be heavily used."

One of the most visible and recent signs of the plan is work underway along Minnetonka Boulevard. Walking or biking to Groveland Elementary School and nearby businesses has long been a challenge because of traffic and a narrow roadway. This year, contractors started improving streets and sewers in the Tonka Woodcroft area. But once work is completed next year, attention will shift to building a multi-use paved trail for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

"The trail ranked fourth on our list because it will connect to a school, parks, businesses and bus stops all along Minnetonka Boulevard," Kumka said. "It also ranked highly because of the utility and road construction work already underway."

Minnetonka completed its first trail segment 50 years ago and each year the network ranks among the city's top amenities by residents in the community survey. Trails are also prioritized in the city's strategic profile under the Infrastructure and Asset Management category.

"With the Trail Improvement Plan, we are taking a step farther into the future and working to make additional transportation options a reality," which can lead to more efficient and cost-effective planning for the future, Kumka said. "The plan also describes the process that can help people understand why some trails are completed before others."

**Staff reviewed safe connections and walkability improvements for Minnetonka Boulevard to include a mid-block and push-button safety crossing at Groveland School.**



Read more about Minnetonka's Trail Improvement Plan and track progress on the city's Strategic Profile at [MinnetonkaMatters.com](https://www.minnetonkamatters.com).



**FIRE DEPARTMENT AND CITY  
OPEN HOUSE**  
Tuesday, Oct. 11 | 5 - 8 p.m.

**See inside  
for a map and  
overview of this  
year's event!**



# FIRE DEPARTMENT AND CITY OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, Oct. 11 | 5 - 8 p.m.



## Things you can do at the open house

- Ride on a fire truck
- Enjoy a hot dog
- Tour the police station
- Register to vote
- Grab a native plant seed packet
- Jump down the inflatable slide
- Enjoy a cup of cocoa
- Fill a treat bag with safety goodies
- Spray water from a fire hose
- Charge your electric vehicle
- Climb on a digger in your hardhat
- Schedule a discounted energy audit
- See first aid demonstrations



Visit [minnetonkamn.gov](http://minnetonkamn.gov) to learn more.

## Council addresses rising costs with 2023 property tax levy

Excellent city services are a hallmark of Minnetonka's commitment to its residents. The city's proposed 2023 levy strives to maintain the meaningful services residents expect in a challenging economic environment.

In September, the city council set its maximum 2023 preliminary tax levy. The levy calls for a 6.85-percent increase, due in large part to rising fixed energy, fuel and personnel costs.

"Our tax levy funds the majority of our operational budget, so inflationary, cost-of-living increases can have a direct impact on taxpayers," said Finance Director Darin Nelson.

The proposed 2023 budget, to be discussed in November, includes a handful of new positions related to public safety.

"How we operate is changing, whether it's 24/7 fire staffing, more reliance on crime data or hiring in a tight market. Our challenge is to continue to meet the needs of the community in a responsible yet innovative manner," City Manager Mike Funk said.

The decertification of a long-standing TIF district will reduce the levy's impact on taxpayers by providing an estimated \$500,000 of additional tax capacity. The city also plans to use reserve funds for capital projects and \$500,000 in remaining federal COVID aid.

Minnetonka has relied on federal aid to provide property tax relief to residents the past two years. However, with those dollars ending, the city must make up the gap to meet budgetary needs in future years.

### Property tax impact

Residential property owners are anticipated to bear a bigger piece of the tax pie in 2023 due to residential valuation increases surpassing commercial property increases.

In Minnetonka, a median-valued home that increased in value to \$468,500 could see a monthly tax increase of \$8.25 per month. Estimates will be available on the proposed 2023 tax notices to be mailed in November.

### What's next?

- November:** Property owners will receive proposed 2023 tax notices from Hennepin County
- Nov. 21, 2022:** Council study session to discuss 2023 budget proposal
- Dec. 5, 2022:** Public meeting at 6:30 p.m.; council adopts final levy and budget

### Learn more and provide input

- Learn more about the city's budget process and submit feedback at [minnetonkamn.gov/budget](https://minnetonkamn.gov/budget)
- View the Sept. 12 city council meeting at [minnetonkamn.gov/tv](https://minnetonkamn.gov/tv)

## Prepare for winter heating season and save money

It's never too late to improve your home's energy use and save money with colder weather on the way. The Home Energy Squad has a wide range of easy solutions available, whether you live in a single-family home, condo or apartment. Minnetonka residents are also eligible for discounts on energy saver and planner visit.

**Energy Saver Visit** – Best for newer houses, condos and renters

- Install energy-saving materials such as lightbulbs, weather stripping, smart thermostats and high-efficiency water fixtures.
- Assess and adjust water heater temperature.

**Energy Planner Visit** – Recommended for homes built before 2000

- Install energy-saving materials and assess water heater temperature.
- Perform a blower door test to measure your home for air leaks.
- Complete an insulation inspection of your attic and walls using an infrared camera.
- Perform a safety test on your home's heating system and water heater.

Visit [minnetonkamn.gov/green](https://minnetonkamn.gov/green) to learn more and schedule a visit. Virtual or phone consultations are available if preferred.

## Fire Station 3 update

Minnetonka firefighters held a push-in ceremony at Fire Station 3 to mark the arrival of their newest apparatus. The station, along Rowland Road near the Opus area, is now staffed 24 hours a day.





# Investigating crimes one hit at a time

Minnetonka Police Crime Scene and Evidence Specialist Kelly O'Donnell is no stranger to a crime scene.

The former crime scene investigator now uses her expertise to help Minnetonka officers gather more useful evidence on the scene of a property crime.



Since they began tracking in 2020, Minnetonka police have recorded up to a 58-percent "hit" rate on items processed for latent fingerprints or DNA. This means more than half of evidence collected by O'Donnell and officers has resulted in a viable sample for identification.

For example, in 2020, O'Donnell swabbed a latent fingerprint off an intricate knot on a tow rope left behind when a criminal was attempting to steal copper pipe from a burned-out apartment building. The perpetrator was identified and the evidence helped convict him to seven years for a similar crime.

O'Donnell's expertise allows the department to go above and beyond in collecting evidence at crime scenes when the

Hennepin County crime lab cannot attend. This results in more evidence connecting suspects to a scene and leading to stronger convictions.

In addition to her forensic skills, O'Donnell also provides

crime scene photography, assists detectives with executing search warrants and inventories and catalogs items seized during an investigation. Her skillset is unique among departments and is helping Minnetonka take a more aggressive approach to solving crimes.

"Without Kelly's skills, many items would not be processed at all for fingerprints or DNA," Capt. Andy Gardner said. "She's using her training and experience to collect evidence and get hits that identify criminals and build stronger cases."

## Top three crime scenes

- Thefts of vehicles
- Burglary
- General thefts

## How evidence is collected

- Hennepin County crime lab investigators or local departments collect evidence on the scene of crime.
- Evidence is prepared for processing on site or in the department's processing room.
- Hennepin County Sheriff's Office Forensic Science Laboratory processes evidence. This can take several months or up to a year.
- Viable, identifiable samples are matched with local database or entered into the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS).



# Show off the best of Minnetonka in this year's annual photo contest

The annual photo contest is underway and we're looking for your best photos of Minnetonka. We want to see your shots of people, activities, pets, events and landscapes; everything that shows the beauty of our city.



## Contest Rules

- All photos must be taken within Minnetonka city limits.
- One submission per photographer.
- If multiple submissions are sent, city staff will select one for the contest.
- You must be a Minnetonka resident to participate.

## Entry information

Send your photo to **webmaster@minnetonkamn.gov**. The entry period is Monday, Sept. 26 through Friday, Oct. 14 at 4:30 p.m.

## Voting and winners

City staff will select finalists and social media fans will vote for their favorites from Oct. 21-28. The photos with the most votes will win First, Second and Third Place, with a few Honorable Mentions.

Winning photos will be featured on the city's website, social media accounts and in the *Minnetonka Memo*. All entries become property of the City of Minnetonka and may be used in city publications.

More information at **minnetonkamn.gov/photocontest**.

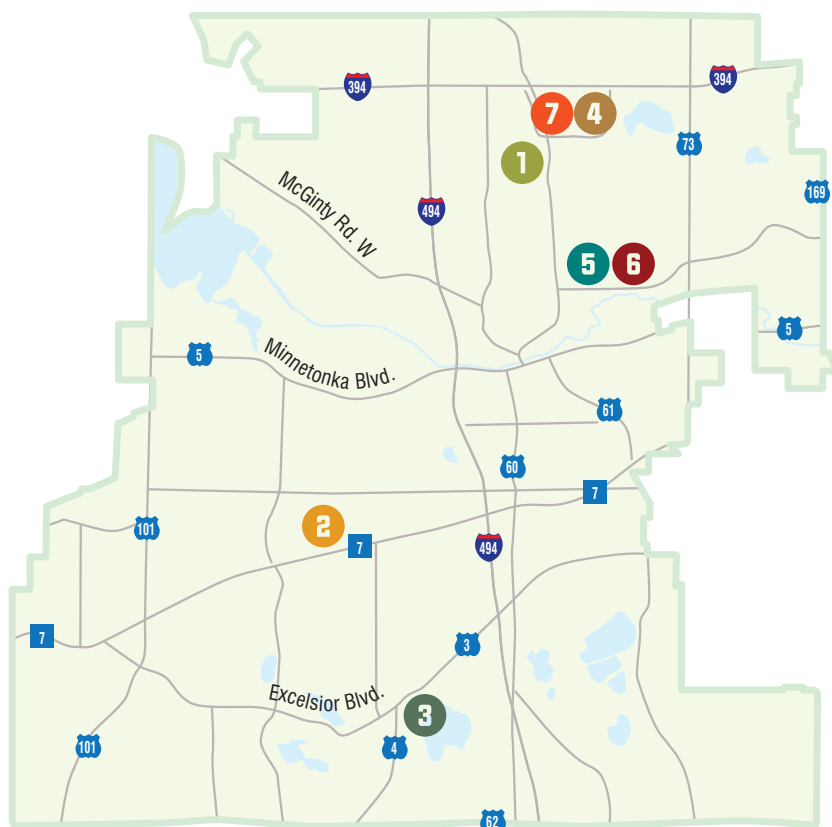
## Important dates:

- Contest runs: Sept. 26-Oct. 14
- Finalists chosen: Oct. 17-19
- Community voting: Oct. 21-28
- Winners announced: Nov. 4



# NEW EATS IN MINNETONKA

Minnetonka has welcomed a variety of new restaurants in the past year. Here's just a sampling of new places to add to your list.



## COMING SOON

**5 Brito's Burrito**  
11044 Cedar Lake Road

**Opening Date:** Fall 2022

**Cuisine:** Mexican

**Did you know?** Its second location, Brito's currently operates in St. Louis Park.

**6 First Light Donuts and Café**  
11014 Cedar Lake Road

**Opening Date:** Fall 2022

**Cuisine:** Donuts and Coffee

**Did you know?** Women-owned, First Light is the family's second Minnetonka business; also owns Great Harvest Bread Co.

**7 Wineside**  
1641 Plymouth Road

**Opening Date:** Fall/Winter 2022

**Cuisine:** Wine bar, sandwiches, soups, salads, charcuterie

**Did you know?** Will feature self-serve wine tasting of more than 100 varieties.

## NOW OPEN

**1 Toma Mojo Grill**  
12977 Ridgedale Drive

**Date Opened:** August 2021

**Cuisine:** Mediterranean (Spanish and Portuguese inspired)

**Did you know?** Features seven homemade sauces.

**2 Duke's on 7**  
15600 Hwy 7

**Date Opened:** June 2021

**Cuisine:** American fare, craft cocktails

**Did you know?** Dog-friendly, year-round "Pawtio," serving up a three-course dog menu.

**3 Kazoku Minnetonka**  
5445 Eden Prairie Road

**Date Opened:** December 2021

**Cuisine:** Japanese cuisine, sushi

**Did you know?** Kazoku translates to "family" in Japanese. This is the second location in the metro.

**4 The Tavern Grill**  
12653 Wayzata Blvd.

**Date Opened:** February 2022

**Cuisine:** American fare, build your own pizzas, burgers and salads.

**Did you know?** Sixth metro location, featuring a fully customizable menu and brunch.

# Play indoor pickleball at Williston

## Open Play

- Monday-Thursday 6-9:30 a.m.
- Tuesday 7-9 p.m. - NEW!
- Friday 6-9 a.m.
- Saturday 6-9:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m.

## NEW! Weekly Pickleball Drills

- Beg./Adv. Beginner and Intermediate Drill (rotates every other week beginning Oct. 5)
- Wednesday 7:30-9 p.m.
- Registration required

More info:

[minnetonkamn.gov/pickleball](http://minnetonkamn.gov/pickleball)

## Young Person Sustainability Commission Opening

Are you a Minnetonka resident under 25 years old? Are you passionate about sustainability? If yes, apply to be a sustainability commission member and make an impact in our community.

Members must attend evening meetings (every other month) and community events (one to two events a year) to help educate the public about sustainability opportunities.

Want to apply? Visit [minnetonkamn.gov/green](http://minnetonkamn.gov/green) and look under Sustainability Commission. Applications are due by Oct. 24.

Questions? Contact Drew Ingvalson at [dingvalson@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:dingvalson@minnetonkamn.gov) or 952-939-8293.



## Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra Concert

Sunday, Oct. 30 | 3 p.m.

Minnesota Landscape Arboretum,  
MacMillan Auditorium

Free with  
Arboretum  
admission

More info:  
[musicassociation.org](http://musicassociation.org)



# NATURAL RESOURCES HAPPENINGS

October  
2022

Advance registration is required for these events.  
Visit [minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents](https://minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents) for details.



## Volunteer with us!

Fall dates are posted at  
[minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents](https://minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents).

## Buckthorn Workshop

Thursday, Oct. 6  
6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Minnetonka Community Center

Learn how to nip this invasive species in the bud.



## Rain Garden and Shoreline Buffer Workshop

Tuesday, Oct. 25  
6:30-8 p.m.  
Discovery Point  
12800 Gerard Dr., Eden Prairie

Learn how rain gardens and buffer plantings can  
capture stormwater runoff and improve water quality.



## This fall, think about spring

Fall yard work is crucial in Minnesota to protect your plants against the elements of winter and prepare them to thrive the following spring. As you embark on your outdoor fall chores, follow these tips to remedy small problems or begin changes that will bear fruit in the future.



- Seed (or overseed) bare spots in your lawn. Try fescue grasses in shady or damp spots where conventional grass hasn't thrived.
- Pull weeds when the ground is moist - ideally, after it rains. Place weeds in plastic bags and deposit in the trash.
- If you need to use herbicide, spot-spray problem areas rather than applying broadly. Don't do it when it's windy or rainy to avoid the spread of chemicals.
- You can plant trees, shrubs and perennials in the fall if they are properly mulched and receive an inch of water per week until the ground freezes. Add wire caging around woody plants to protect from wildlife.
- Collect native plant seeds and distribute them over the soil.
- Spread a thin layer of leaf litter atop planting beds for protection, shelter and nutrients.
- Rather than clearing perennials, cut them to 8-12 inches high. Bees can spend the winter inside the dried stems.



PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
CITY OF MINNETONKA

## City of Minnetonka Calendar

- 3** City Council & Economic Development Authority, 6:30 p.m.
- 5** Park Board, 6:30 p.m.
- 6** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 11** Senior Advisory Board, 6:30 p.m.
- 11** Fire Dept. & City Open House, 5 p.m.
- 18** Senior Book & Pie Sale, 11 a.m.
- 20** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 24** City Council & Economic Development Authority, 6:30 p.m.
- 27** Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
- 28** Burwell Spooktacular, 5 p.m.

City meetings are held in person. Visit [minnetonkamn.gov/participate](http://minnetonkamn.gov/participate) to learn how to participate remotely. Watch meetings live and on-demand at [minnetonkamn.gov/tv](http://minnetonkamn.gov/tv).

For up-to-date information, visit [minnetonkamn.gov/calendar](http://minnetonkamn.gov/calendar) or call 952-939-8200.



14600 Minnetonka Blvd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55345

952-939-8200 | [minnetonkamn.gov](http://minnetonkamn.gov)

### Mayor

Brad Wiersum 612-723-3907  
[bwiersum@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:bwiersum@minnetonkamn.gov)

### Council

At Large: Deb Calvert 612-205-5399  
[dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov)

Kimberly Wilburn 952-222-8142  
[kwilburn@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:kwilburn@minnetonkamn.gov)

Ward 1: Brian Kirk 952-451-6251  
[bkirk@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:bkirk@minnetonkamn.gov)

Ward 2: Rebecca Schack 612-590-3735  
[rschack@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:rschack@minnetonkamn.gov)

Ward 3: Bradley Schaeppi 612-770-7447  
[bschaeppi@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:bschaeppi@minnetonkamn.gov)

Ward 4: Kissy Coakley 952-486-9670  
[kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov)

### City Manager

Mike Funk 952-939-8200  
[mfunk@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:mfunk@minnetonkamn.gov)

ECRWSS  
POSTAL PATRON

# BURWELL SPOOKTACULAR

Wear your best costume and have a spooktacular time at this annual outdoor event!

## GAMES



## CRAFTS



## FIRE DEPARTMENT INFLATABLE SLIDE



## FOOD VENDORS



## WARM UP BY THE FIRE

## BURWELL HOUSE TOURS

**Friday, Oct. 28**  
**5-8 p.m.**

Burwell House grounds  
13209 E. McGinty Road\*

\*Free parking is available: St. David's Family Center, 3395 Plymouth Road