



# City Contact



A Quarterly Publication from the City of Mound

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Dear Neighbors,

The City Council approved the preliminary budget and the maximum tax levy projections for 2021 at its September 8, 2020 regular meeting. This significant step sets the stage for final budget approval which is anticipated at the December 8 regular meeting; and allows the County to pull together property tax statements for taxes to be paid in 2021. It also continues to build on work the Council and Staff started in 2017 to build better decision-making and consistency into annual budget and tax levy discussions.

In 2017, the Council and Staff took a longer term look at anticipated expenditures necessary to maintain city properties, infrastructure, buildings and equipment. This cost of ownership is crucial in sustaining the smart investment choices we have made over the last 17 years. This analysis informs our short term decision making with a longer term context to prevent us from falling into "feel-good" traps. That longer term analysis was crucial in this year's levy decision where the Council considered both 3.5% and 5% levy increase scenarios.

Under the more favorable-looking 3.5% scenario, our long term projections show that we would add another 4-million dollars in debt over the next 10 years... passing excessive current costs on to future tax payers. The 5% scenario reduces the need for debt and increases our reserve funds.

One of the objectives stated in 2017 when we looked at longer term financial health was to position the City so that street assessments would not be necessary in future infrastructure renewal. This necessitates building responsible reserves. Knowing these predictable renewal costs allows us to define what reasonable reserves means and prevents building excessive amounts. Prior to encountering those investments, we're able to use these total bottom line balances to cover shortfalls in our utility funds, avoiding the need for significant, near-term utility rate increases. In addition to basic fiscal responsibility, continuing on the path laid out in 2017 helps us manage a balance between property taxes and utility rates; which we also know is important to our residents.

It is important to note that when discussing the levy, I refer to the total amount of tax revenue needed to cover costs. This is different from tax rate. Because we continue to see favorable growth in property values compared to projected total levies; our tax rate has continued to drop over each of the last 6 years from its post-recession high in 2014 at 57%. The projected rate for 2021 is 40%, a 5% reduction in rate over 2020.

The modest increases in total levy projected in 2021 and anticipated for the future represent a responsible investment in the financial strength of the City. Staff and Council will revisit this every year in the budgeting process to make sure we are still on track, reasonable, and responsible.

As always, information on agendas, the 2021 budget and upcoming meetings is available at [www.cityofmound.com](http://www.cityofmound.com) by clicking on the "Government" tab and scrolling to the "Mayor and Council" line for Council/HRA and "Advisory Commissions" for Planning, Parks, and Docks and Commons. Council meetings can also be streamed on the LMCC-TV.org website.

Respectfully,

Ray Salazar  
Mound Mayor

NOV DEC JAN  
2020/21



Mayor  
Ray Salazar

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## Winter Snow Removal and Parking Reminders

Winter brings two weather conditions, snow and ice, that affect our street safety. Here are some important reminders and answers to frequently asked questions.

**Snowplowing operations** begin when two or more inches of snow have accumulated, there is an accumulation of drifting snow, or if ice and/or freezing rain affect road conditions. In most cases, plowing operations begin between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. so that major streets are plowed before the morning rush hour. The exact time depends on the predicted start of the snowfall, the intensity of snowfall, and the expected end to the snowfall.

**Winter parking restrictions** prohibit parking on streets between the hours of 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. from November 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition, during a snow event, parking is not allowed on the street until the street has been plowed. Vehicles left on the street create a problem for snow removal crews. Clean, unobstructed streets facilitate the flow of traffic, allow passage of emergency vehicles and reduce the number of accidents. Vehicles in violation will be tagged and/or towed.

**Never pass a snow plow** by driving on the shoulder. Plows frequently stop and backup. The driver has a "blind zone" and may not see your vehicle if you are following too closely. Please give plows plenty of room to work. Never drive into the "cloud" a snow plow kicks up. It can create a total "white out" and cause total loss of visibility.

**Driveway aprons are property owners' responsibility.** During heavy snowfalls, snowplowing is accomplished in three separate operations. The first pass is intended to provide an initial access path in the road. Full-width widening can occur several hours later after all streets have received a first pass. Final clean-up occurs within the next day and provides for intersection clean-up, plowing back of snow banks, ice control, and plowing where vehicles were parked. City ordinances prohibit the removal of snow or ice from private property and placing it in the roadway of any street or private road. Therefore, private plow companies and property owners can't push excess snow into or across the street and property owners are responsible for clearing the snow ridge created by the city plow trucks at the end of their driveway. In addition, property owners are also responsible if their mailbox is knocked over by snow heave, so please be sure your post is secure!

Thank you for your cooperation in these matters, our public safety depends on it!



## 75.5% of Mound Households have responded to the 2020 Census as of October 1st! Have you?

Instructions were mailed to all households in mid-March on how to respond on-line, by phone or by mail. Thank you to those households who have already responded. For those that haven't, please do so online at <https://2020census.gov> or by calling (844) 330-2020 or by mailing back the paper questionnaire that was sent to your home. *Let's Count, Minnesota!!*

### City Hall Hours

**Note: Currently closed to the public, please call (952)472-0603 for assistance.**

#### May through October

Monday - Thursday 7:30 am - 5 pm  
Friday 7:30 am - 11:30 am

#### November through April

Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

### City Contacts

General Information 952-472-0600  
**[www.cityofmound.com](http://www.cityofmound.com)**

Planning & Building 952-472-0607

Police Department 952-249-4700  
After Hours Dispatch 952-258-5321

#### **911 Emergency**

Public Works 952-472-0603  
After Hours Dispatch 952-258-5321

## NOW SEEKING COMMISSIONER APPLICANTS!!

The City of Mound has three advisory commissions, including the Planning Commission, the Parks and Open Spaces Commission and the Docks and Commons Commission. Mound's advisory commissions are comprised of citizens who are appointed by the City Council. They volunteer to serve on commissions that meet on various topics within their purview and make recommendations to the to the City Council based on their findings.

The **Planning Commission** is a nine-member advisory commission that includes an appointed City Council liaison. Serving as a Planning Commissioner is a great introduction to local government. The Planning Commission's primary function is to help implement City plans by making recommendations to the City Council on long range planning issues, including the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission is also responsible for review and recommendation of land use and subdivision applications as well as other matters that are planning and zoning related. There are currently two openings, one for a two-year term and one for a three-year term beginning January, 2021. Regular meetings of the Planning Commission are held at 7:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month with a second meeting reserved for the third Tuesday of the month. Special meetings and workshops of the Planning Commission are scheduled as needed.

The **Parks and Open Spaces Commission (POSC)** considers all matters pertaining to parks and open spaces, including capital improvement priorities and amenities. The POSC meets on an as needed basis on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm (typically 6 times per year). The five-member commission has one vacancy for a three-year term.

The **Docks and Commons Commission (DCC)** is seeking a non-abutting dock or multiple slip holder currently in the program to serve a three-year term. The DCC is made up of two abutters, three non-abutters (dock or slip holder) and one City Council liaison. The commission makes recommendations on City Code pertaining to the dock program as well as capital improvement priorities and responds to participant concerns. The DCC meets on an as-needed basis on the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm (typically 5 times per year).

The City of Mound appreciates residents' participation in these important advisory commissions. Each commission plays a part in shaping the policies, projects and programs that preserve the quality of life we enjoy.

Applications for each commission are available at [www.cityofmound.com](http://www.cityofmound.com) or by calling 952-472-0603. **Applications are due by Monday, November 2nd at 5:00 pm** and applicants must be available to attend the respective November (December 1 for Planning) commission meeting to participate in interviews. Final appointments will be made by the City Council at the December 8th final meeting of the year.



A sincere thank you to our outgoing commissioners for their dedication, service and expertise:

Planning Commission: David Pelka (Chair), Sue Pilling

Parks & Open Spaces (POSC): Jody Smith

Docks and Commons Commission: Jim Funk, (Past Chair and Vice Chair — served since the late 1980's!)

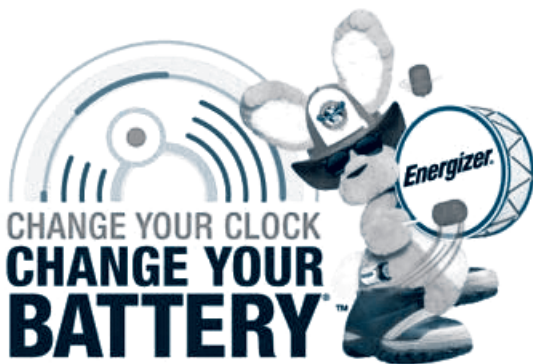


**FEMA GRANT AWARD OF \$151,758.** On July 31, 2020 the Mound Fire Department was awarded a federal grant of \$151,758 from U.S. Department of Homeland Security and FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program. The AFG program is funded to improve fire department operations, with a focus on firefighter health and safety.

This grant will fund the purchase of 22 new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units that meet national standards. SCBA are the air tanks and masks that firefighters wear when entering a hazardous or smoke filled environment. This grant allows us to replace all of our old-obsolete SCBA units that are now 17 years old.

This grant award is very exciting news for our dedicated staff of 40. The primary benefactor of this grant will be the Mound firefighters, but also the 15,840 residents we serve, and \$2.60 billion in property values we protect.

The grant program requires a 5% match, or \$7,587 which is a relatively small amount of the project cost of \$159,346. Congratulations to the administrative staff on successful grant applications resulting in \$515,449 in revenue through donations, fund raising efforts and grants.



Daylight savings time ends Nov 1<sup>st</sup>  
MFD has *free* 9-volt batteries for residents!  
Pick up yours today as quantities  
supplied by *Energizer* are limited.

**ICE SAFETY REMINDERS.** (1) New ice is usually stronger than old ice. (2) Ice seldom freezes uniformly. (3) The insulating effect of snow slows down the freezing process and creates poorer quality ice. (4) Booming and cracking is not necessarily dangerous. (5) Schools of fish or flocks of waterfowl can adversely affect the relative safety of ice. (6) MFD teaches elementary age children about ice safety every year.

#### **THANKSGIVING SAFETY REMINDERS.**

Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment, so: (1) Keep kids away from cooking equipment and hot food/liquids (2) Remain in kitchen while cooking on stovetop and home while turkey is in oven (3) Keep deep fryers well away from house (4) Keep floor clear of tripping hazards (5) Ensure your smoke alarms are working and test them monthly.



Be sure to visit our website for more information on these topics and others such as recreational fire rules at [www.moundfire.com](http://www.moundfire.com). Thank you!



The **Orono Police Department (OPD)** is proud to serve the communities of Spring Park, Minnetonka Beach, Mound and Orono. The police department covers approximately 28 square miles of land and 20,000 citizens.

## Police Chief's Corner



**Crime Prevention.** Wonder if your residence or business is as safe as it could be? Do you own a business and are having trouble with theft related incidents? We can help with a crime prevention assessment and provide recommendations on improvements to your safety. We also provide other resources to aid in crime prevention.

**Crime Warning.** The use of methamphetamine has greatly increased as the use of heroin is slowing. We feel it is important for the community to understand what we are seeing locally. As with normal drug use in our area, we see a spike in crime usually affecting some spikes in property crime. Anecdotally, the increases come in the form of victimizing people who don't follow established crime prevention measures. Those include, not leaving items of value in your vehicle.

**Specialized Vehicles on Roads.** The City of Mound and Minnesota State Law prohibits operating ATV's, UTV's, golf carts, mini-trucks and most other specialized vehicles from being operated on public roadways within the City of Mound. Snowmobiles have some limited operation on city streets. For specific questions about these topics please contact the police department's administrative offices at 952-249-4700. Also see [www.ci.orono.mn.us](http://www.ci.orono.mn.us) for further information.

**Permits.** To obtain a permit to purchase a firearm, contact Mound City Hall, the Orono Police Department or see the police department's website. When you submit your permit you will need to show proof of identification. As long as your identification address is in one of our four communities we can normally process that application within seven days. However, we have seen a very large spike in permit applications since mid-March and that has not slowed since. If you are applying for a permit to carry, you will need to apply with the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office.

**Reminder: Recreational fires should be fun, not annoying to neighbors!** Please be a good neighbor and consider where the smoke is going! Rec fire area must be no more than 3 ft. square and the flame 2 ft. high and must be attended at all times. Bring your leaves to the Mulch Store in Minnetrista through November 1st—a free service for Mound residents. Only dry wood and starter fuels may be burned in a rec fire.

## The future isn't disposable



When you buy new, the price tag doesn't reflect all that's needed to produce, package, transport and eventually dispose of your purchases. So, buy used. It's a powerful strategy to preserve our natural resources, while saving you money at the register.

How can you help? A simple way to start is by changing the way you think about shopping. Join the Circle of people who strive to get full use out of everyday goods that are already in circulation.

That means buying used whenever possible and donating or selling unneeded usable goods instead of throwing them out. It also means renting and sharing items that are only used occasionally and repairing broken ones when possible. Give it a try.

You'll discover that shopping reuse isn't just easier on your wallet, it's a lot gentler on the planet.

**See [hennepin.us/choose-to-reuse/learn-more](http://hennepin.us/choose-to-reuse/learn-more)**

The City of Mound partnered with **WeCAN** to produce a coronavirus relief resources guide that was mailed to all residents in September. Our organizations hope that anyone financially impacted by the pandemic will reach out to WeCAN to see what help may be available. Our community is fortunate to have this vital resource dedicated to helping individuals and families for over 30 years. Their services include Emergency Assistance, Family Programs, Food Support and Employment Programs. Thanks to the WeCAN staff and volunteers for all that they do!



## SPECIAL CORONAVIRUS RELIEF RESOURCE GUIDE



## 2020 GENERAL ELECTION—NOVEMBER 3, 2020



### **VOTE EARLY BY MAIL ENCOURAGED**

For the safety of our residents and election staff, we highly encourage voting **early** by mail.

Early voting by use of an 'Absentee' ballot began on September 18th. Absentee ballots and voter registration forms can be requested at **MNVOTES.ORG** or by calling **(612) 348-5151**. This website is the best resource for election information and has a special ballot tracking feature to ensure your vote was counted! You can also see what races are on the ballot!

### **CHANGE TO POLLING LOCATIONS**

Polling places were changed for the August 11th Primary Election and those changes will remain in place for the November 3rd General Election. All voters were mailed post cards this summer to let them know where to vote. Voters can also look it up at <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us>.

**St. John's Lutheran Church—Precincts 1 & 3 (St. Johns and former Mt. Olive)** 2415 Fairview Lane, Mound

**Centennial Building Council Chambers—Precincts 2 & 4 (former Bethel Methodist & Gillespie Center)** 5341 Maywood Road, Mound

Polls are open 7 am to 8 pm on election day, November 3rd. In-person absentee voting is currently available at City Hall, 2415 Wilshire Boulevard, during regular hours and will be available on Saturday, October 31st from 10 am to 3 pm. Due to COVID-19, please leave your children at home while we try to maintain social distancing and preserve the safety of all voters.

Thank you for your cooperation and attention to these matters!

### **NEW Community Notification System—*Everyone* Needs to Re-enroll**

Mound changed the City's emergency planning and communications system from CodeRED to **RAVE** in May. The system sends telephone calls, text messages, emails (based on subscriber preferences) and posts to social media channels to inform residents of road closures, watermain breaks, hydrant flushing, policies under consideration by the City Council, seasonal parking reminders and more!

Registering for **RAVE** is quick, easy, and FREE! Everyone needs to sign-up again by visiting the city website and clicking the **RAVE** icon or by contacting Field Officer Andy Drilling at [fieldops@cityofmound.com](mailto:fieldops@cityofmound.com) or 952-472-0605.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021 PRELIMINARY BUDGET & LEVY

The City Council approved the 2021 Preliminary Budget and Levy at the September 8, 2020 regular meeting. All meetings can be viewed at [www.lmcc-tv.org](http://www.lmcc-tv.org) and all minutes are available on the city's website at [www.cityofmound.com](http://www.cityofmound.com). Here are some highlights from the budget presentation:

- Key drivers of property taxes and utility rates include operating & capital expenditures, investments in infrastructure and capital reserve funding to moderate increases to the tax and utility rates and to reduce future reliance on debt and special assessments.
- Mound issued \$75.8M in bonds from 2003—2016 to finance the street improvements and retaining walls, a new water tower, pump houses and watermain, lift station replacements and lining of our sewer pipes to reduce groundwater infiltration, and corrections to the storm water management system to rectify water drainage problems such as washouts, standing water in streets and water in yards.
- Mound established capital reserve funds beginning in 2018 to address the long-term investment needs and reduce future reliance on debt and special assessments. Funding these reserves is key to a sustainable future that reduces volatility in tax and utility rates.
- Property taxes account for approximately 48% of Mound's revenues and utility bills account for 37%. Over 1/2 of all expenditures pay for capital investments and debt service.

### Harbor Wine & Spirits

The team at Harbor Wine & Spirits prides itself on providing the best value and customer service in the area! From everyday 15% off case discounts on wine & spirits (mix & match), to our 10% senior discount on Fridays, to our beer, wine and spirit specials of the month, you are sure to find a wide selection of old favorites and the latest trends. Proudly offering the best selection of local & craft beer, wine, cider & spirits in the West Metro.

In addition, check out these everyday low prices on some of our favorites:

**Jameson**  
liters  
**\$26<sup>99</sup>**



**Prairie Organic Vodka  
& Cucumber Vodka**  
1.75 liter  
**\$31<sup>99</sup>**



**Milagro Tequila**  
750ml  
**\$23<sup>99</sup>**



*And just in time for football season: Charles Woodson's Intercept wine selections. All Types \$19.99!*



Did you know that the Westonka Historical Society's history videos have surpassed 20,000 views on YouTube? Check out the new series *Westonka Memories* featuring interviews with Marvin Johnson, Joy Grundeen, and Grace Gilmer...if you don't know these local treasures and their stories, you are missing out! Please also consider making a contribution to the Westonka Historical Society whom are dedicated to the collection, preservation and dissemination of Westonka history. The museum is located in the Mound Centennial Bldg 5341 Maywood Rd. but is temporarily closed due to COVID-19. See [westonkahistoricalsociety.org](http://westonkahistoricalsociety.org) or call (952)472-9800 for information.



City of Mound  
2415 Wilshire Blvd  
Mound, MN 55364

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### City Council Members



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raysalazar@cityofmound.com



Jeff Bergquist  
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Paula Larson  
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paulalarson@cityofmound.com

\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*

## POSTAL CUSTOMER

### Mound Meeting Calendar (Note: City Council & Planning Commission to be held at Westonka Performing Arts Center thru Nov 17)

- **City Council** meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 pm
- **HRA** meets before regular Council meetings on an as-needed basis
- **Planning Commission** meets the first Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 pm
- **Parks and Open Space Commission** meets the second Thursday of the month beginning at 7 pm on an as-needed basis
- **Docks and Commons Commission** meets the third Thursday of the month beginning at 7 pm on an as-needed basis



Sept 18—Nov 2 Early Absentee Voting  
Nov 2—Deadline for advisory commission apps  
Nov 3—General Election-Polls open 7am—8pm  
Nov 26 & 27 City Offices Closed—Thanksgiving  
Dec 24 & 25 City Offices Closed—Christmas  
Dec 31 & Jan 1 City Offices Closed—New Year's

**Harbor**  
**Wine & Spirits**  
(952) 472-0648  
2135 Commerce Blvd.  
Mound, MN

EVERY DAY **15% OFF** CASE DISCOUNTS ON  
WINE & SPIRITS  
**10% OFF SENIOR DISCOUNT EVERY FRIDAY**

**KEEPING  
WESTONKA WELL  
HYDRATED!**

*The City of Mound, through teamwork and cooperation, provides, at a reasonable cost, quality services that respond to the needs of all citizens, fostering a safe, attractive, and flourishing community.*