



SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER

MAYOR JOHNSON'S LETTER

I hope everyone is staying warm and healthy and dealing with winter like a true Minnesotan. Just be careful to not slip on the ice and break bones or hit your head.

One nice part of all the snow this year is that the ground is not frozen in most places, and it should absorb the moisture when it starts melting. That should help relive the drought of last summer.

The State and Federal Legislators are now in session. I am not very pleased with how they are functioning. Many years in the past I have attended the National League of Cities Legislative Conference in Washington D. C. in March. This year I am not going but will attend some sessions virtually if that provision is provided.

Our new State Senator, Warren Limmer, and State Representative, Kristin Robbins, have taken the time to attend a Council meeting and are very open to any feedback we can give them.

Soon you as a homeowner will be receiving your new valuation statements from the County. Study them carefully. If you have questions, call our County Assessor before you forget about it. If you still question your value, plan to attend our City Council Board of Appeal at 6 p.m. on April 4th to appeal.

The City is a member of the Highway 55 Corridor Coalition which has been functioning for several years. We have supported and helped to secure funds, both Federal and State dollars, for several intersection projects in Hennepin and Wright Counties. The last couple of years our main thrust has been to rebuild State Highway 55 as a four-lane divided highway all the way from west of Hamel to County Road 19 just north of Loretto and east of our City Limits. This may be the year funding will



Marvin D. Johnson
Mayor

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

??	2
CITY GOV EDU- 2023 BUGDET	3
NO MEMORIAL AMBULANCES & NEW HIRE	4
ROAD RESTRICTIONS & NEW RECYCLE CALENDAR	5
CALENDAR EVENTS	6
MAY 6 TH CLEAN UP DAY	7
PHOTO CONTEST	8

MEETINGS

City Council

1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commission

3rd Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

Workshops are
posted as scheduled.

www.ci.independence.mn.us



become available either via direct state funding or through the Corridors of Commerce special fund. If so, I think in 2024 we could see some construction.

In the near future we will be having our City Audit. ~~Daylight time begins on March 12th. March 20th is the first day of Spring.~~ April 4th at 6 pm is our **City Council's Local Board of Appeal and Equalization** meeting. May 6th from 9am – noon is our annual City-wide **Clean Up recycling Day**. Before we know it, people will be tapping the Maple trees for sap and summer is not far behind. Try to enjoy the rest of winter. and want to address the Council, be sure and call City Hall and get on the agenda for the **Board of Appeal and Equalization Council Meeting on April 4th**. If you are still in disagreement, you then have the right to appeal before the County Board of Appeal in a virtual setting.

Marvin D. Johnson, Your Mayor

Board of Appeal and Equalization Council Meeting—6 pm on April 4th, 2023

If you are questioning the value of your property's recent County assessment , follow these steps:

1. **Call the County Assessor** at #612-348-3046. You will need to enter your PID/Property ID Number & #. Your PID number can be found either on your statement— found online if you didn't receive it via mail.
⇒ From [Hennepin County Property Information Search webpage](https://www.hennepin.us/residents/property/assessment), enter your PID/property ID number or Address, and select Search. Then select 2023 Proposed Property Tax (Truth in Taxation Statement). <https://www.hennepin.us/residents/property/assessment> (Their video is very informative.)
2. **Call City Hall by March 30th** at #763-479-0527 and ask to be added to the Local Board of Appeal & Equalization meeting's Agenda. Then the Council will address yours at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4th, 2023.
3. If needed, appeal at the County Board of Appeal meeting (virtually). Both previous steps are required.



Independence Welcomes North Memorial Ambulances



We are excited and grateful to have our new shared garage facility to house our police cars and public works equipment. We are also very excited to have our partners in public safety, North Ambulance housed in their new ambulance base at our city hall. This will provide for faster response times to our area 7 days a week. We appreciate their service and welcome them to our community!

2023 Budget Information

For the past seven years, City Council has prepared its annual budget using a flat City tax rate of 40%. The result of maintaining a flat tax rate is that if no market value increase is realized for a particular property, there would be no tax increase for the City portion of a property's taxes. (A city's portion of property taxes is approximately 30% of the total taxes.) This year, properties in the City saw a significant increase in market valuations of nearly 20%. Council recognized this significant increase and has worked diligently to establish a 2023 tax levy that meaningfully reduces the City's tax rate to offset some or all of the market value increase impacts. The City Council has adopted a final tax levy based on a City tax rate of 33.12% (more than a 5% decrease year over year). This reduction will allow close to 50% of all properties in Independence to realize no increase or see a reduction in the total property tax bill.

The General Fund tax levy increased \$199,275 over prior year. Increases to the General Fund levy are a result of an increase in operational, equipment and material costs, utilities, wages, and insurance.

The City worked to increase police and staff wages commensurate with inflation.

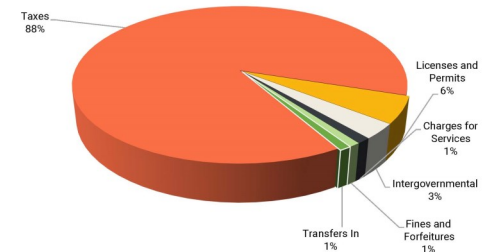
Police protection costs increased \$165,223 or 12.57% over prior year. This increase is largely due to reduced revenue from forfeitures and grants (change in law) and increased insurance, wages, and operational costs.

Fire services increased \$33,525 or 8.86% over prior year.

The City continues to maintain its long range (10 plus year) capital planning for streets, equipment, and buildings. The City will continue to fully fund all capital plans so that acquisition of new equipment and maintenance of buildings and facilities is paid for with cash rather than with issuance of additional debt.

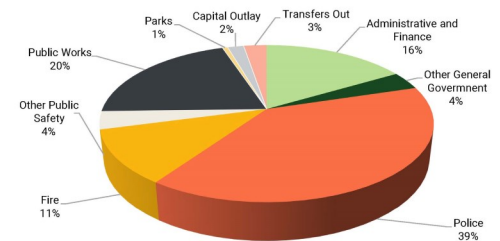
2023 Projected General Fund Revenue

2023	
Revenues	
Taxes	\$ 3,313,823
Licenses and Permits	205,923
Intergovernmental	117,700
Charges for Services	43,208
Fines and Forfeitures	35,127
Interest on Investments	3,150
Miscellaneous	5,250
Transfers In	37,500
Total Revenues	\$ 3,761,680

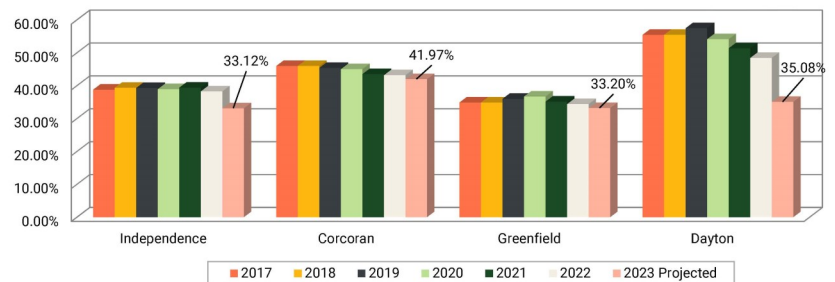


2023 Projected General Fund Expenditures

2023	
Expenditures	
Administrative and Finance	\$ 623,190
Other General Government	139,522
Police	1,482,699
Fire	419,625
Other Public Safety	140,208
Public Works	763,557
Parks	23,025
Capital Outlay	70,000
Transfers Out	99,855
Total Expenditures	\$ 3,761,680



Tax Capacity Rate Graphs



Note: Greenfield does not have its own Public Safety Department.



Spring Clean Up Day

Independence City Hall: 1920 County Rd.

9-noon, Saturday, May 6th, 2023

INDEPENDENCE RESIDENTS ONLY!



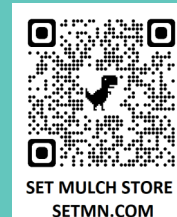
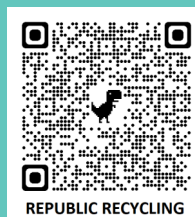
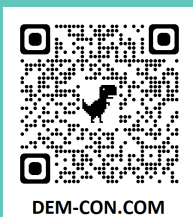
Please note changes as this year will be run differently. Only 1 free load per household will be taken; additional loads won't be accepted at all. Have your ID out when you pull up as they will be checked. Absolutely no commercial business drop-offs will be accepted.

ACCEPTED Materials:

- **Air Conditioners**
- **Appliances** Dehumidifiers, heat pumps, water heaters, microwaves, washers, dryers, refrigerators, etc.
- **Batteries** Auto and Household
- **Bicycles** Donated to a charity who cleans them up and distributes to those in need
- **Bulbs/Fluorescent Tubes, Ballasts, Light Fixtures** In original packaging or surrounded by cardboard. DO NOT tape together. Must be disassembled and ballasts disconnected from housing unit.
- **Carpet (Rolled)**
- **Construction Material/Debris/Junk** Doors, lumber, fences, tile, sheetrock
- **Electronics**
- **Mattresses, Box Springs, Upholstered Furniture**
- **Propane Tanks**
- **Scrap Iron/Metal** ALL plastic removed; Tanks/Barrels must be cut in half.
- **Tires** with or without rims

NOT ALLOWED:

- **COMMERCIAL BUSINESS DROP-OFFS**
- **CONCRETE**
- **CURBSIDE RECYCLABLES**
See Republic Recycling below.
- **YARD WASTE** Scan The Mulch Store QR code below to see their hours and fees. Randy's-Republic doesn't take Yard Waste from Hennepin County residents.
- **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE**
Paints, cleaning chemicals, solvents, etc. (*Delano True Value will take liquid paint only- 5 gallons max./customer.) Put empty, dried latex paint cans in garbage.
- Hennepin County won't be on site, so thank you for following this list closely.
- Utilize Dem-Con or HN County EVENTS and Brooklyn Park and Bloomington Drop-off Facilities. (Scanning QR code takes you to their site and to download brochure to with details by category.)



SEASONAL ROAD WEIGHT LIMITS RESTRICTIONS

BEGAN MONDAY, MARCH 14th, 2022

It's that time of year again to rejoice that spring has arrived which means that road weight restrictions have begun! There are 4-ton limits on gravel roads and 5-ton limits on asphalt roads. Road weight restrictions protect our roads while keeping costs down for taxpayers. **Before scheduling any large deliveries, contact Public Works Director at #763-479-0530 or check the website for specifics.** To see the specific City Code/Ordinances on Road Restrictions on our website, click on Government—City Code and then type "Road Restrictions" to search.

Cain said garbage trucks have a 12ft reaching arm to be able to always get your properly placed garbage can when it's on your property and not in the street.

WHERE TO PLACE YOUR GARBAGE CANS DURING WINTER:

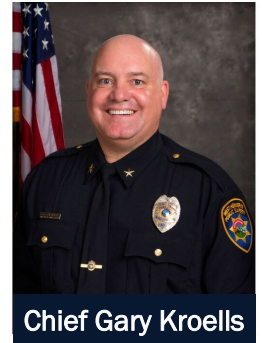
Heavy snow accumulation, icy roads and/or poor visibility during snow removal can make it difficult for snowplows to avoid garbage cans placed alongside the road. PLEASE do not place garbage cans in the roadway. We realize this cleared area is an inviting location to place garbage cans, but it creates a hazard as they can be hit by vehicles or by snowplows. Most garbage trucks are equipped with a hydraulic arm that grasps garbage cans. It is recommended that garbage cans be placed at least 3 to 5 feet off the edge of pavement (but not on top of snow piles), into your driveway, so they are out of the way of the snowplow while the snowplow is clearing the road. Please keep in mind, the Highway Department is NOT responsible for damaged garbage cans.





(IMAGE from SHAWN EBELING)

PUBLIC SAFETY NEWS CHIEF'S DESK WEST HENNEPIN PUBLIC SAFETY CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY



Chief Gary Kroells

WHPS Welcomes Officer Nick Eldred



West Hennepin Public Safety is proud to introduce the newest member of the team, Nick Eldred, as our new Patrol Officer. Nick graduated with a Law Enforcement degree from the Alexandria Technical College in 2002. Nick comes to us from the Wright County Sheriff's Office where he has worked as a Patrol Deputy, Field Training Officer, Detective, and Taser Instructor for the past 18 years. Nick resides in the City of Annandale with his wife, and three children. Nick is a firefighter in Annandale and enjoys time golfing, boating/fishing, and swimming with his family.

Chief Kroells stated, "We are very fortunate Nick joined our team. Finding an experienced well rounded police officer has provided very challenging these past few years. Officer Eldred is a top candidate that has a positive demeanor that citizens and staff will find rewarding".

Officer Eldred stated, "I am excited to continue my Law Enforcement career at West Hennepin Public Safety Department. I look forward to meeting the citizens of Maple Plain and Independence, along with variety of emergency service partners we have. Please feel free to stop and introduce yourselves anytime you see me out and about."

Minnesota Severe Weather Awareness Week is April 17-21, 2023

Are you ready for severe weather? Each year, HSEM in collaboration with the National Weather Service sponsor Severe Weather Awareness Week in Minnesota. The week is designed to refresh, remind, and educate everyone about the seasonal threats from severe weather and how to avoid them. It's also a great time to make and practice your emergency plan and build or refresh your emergency preparedness kit. The most important events during Severe Weather Awareness Week are the two annual statewide tornado drills.



These tornado drills are scheduled for Thursday, April 20 2023 at 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m.

The first drill is intended for institutions and businesses. The evening drill is intended for second shift workers and families. <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/weather-awareness-preparedness/Pages/severe-weather-tornado-drill-day.aspx>



Maple Plain Fire Department 2022 Year in Review

The year 2022 was a busy year for the Maple Plain Fire Department. MPFD responded to 343 incidents in which 4022 hours were logged by fire fighters. The chart to the right shows a breakdown of the incident and hours by city served.

Fire fighters not only respond to incidents when 911 is called they also train nearly every Monday night. The trainings include monthly equipment checks, pumper training using water source from hydrants and tanker/dump tanks; high angle rope rescue, medical scenario's, ice/cold water rescue, warm water rescue, pre plan of commercial properties, crash extrication techniques, live burn training, confined space rescue, weather related incidents, incident command systems, forcible entry techniques, scene safety training, personal protective equipment and several other trainings that fire fighters have to be current on. Firefighters are trained annually to the minimum standard of Emergency Medical Responder (First Responder) with several firefighters advancing in their certifications to EMT and/or Paramedic to better serve each of you."

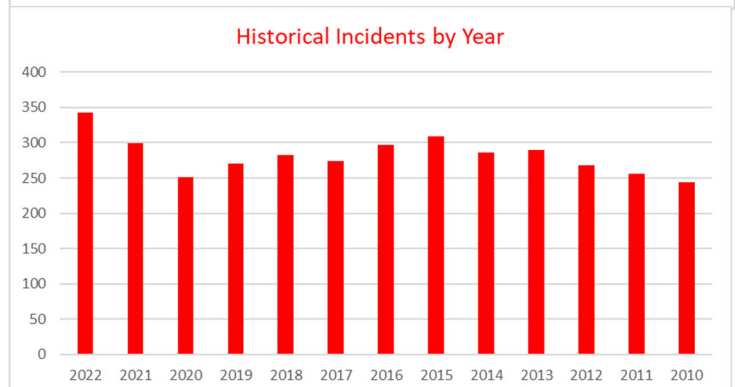
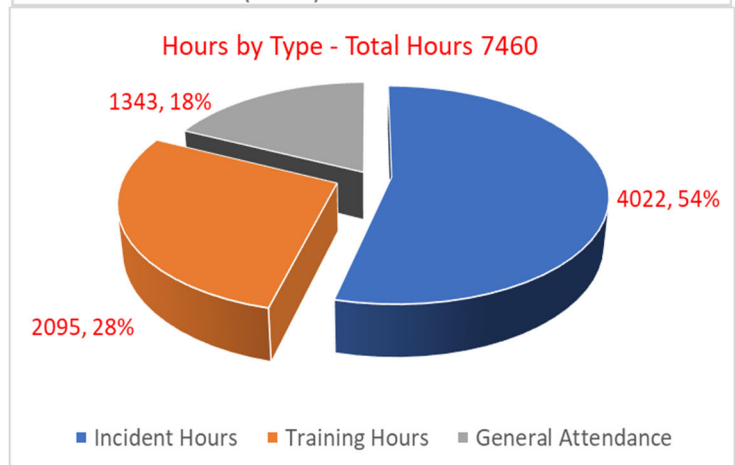
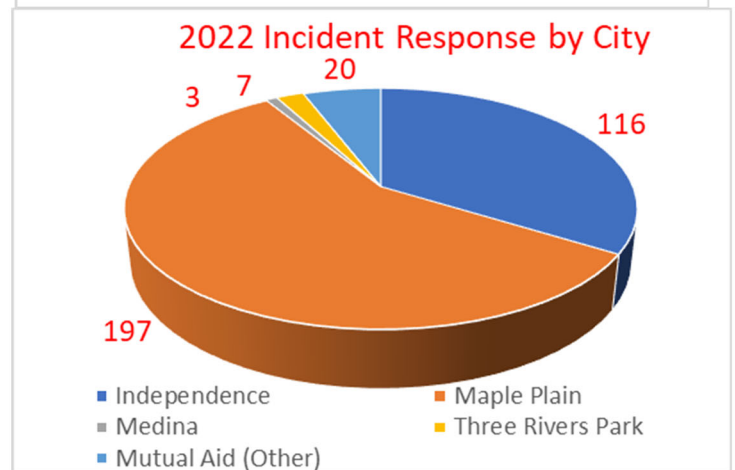
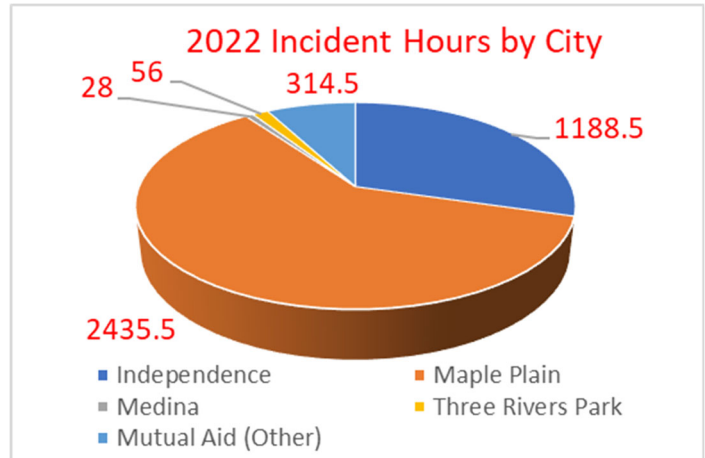
Additionally, fire fighters participate in numerous community events such as fire prevention seminars with our schools, fire prevention open house, national night out events, fire station tours for many community groups such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, trick and treat events, area community parades, fixing and repairing equipment and building maintenance. These hours are logged as General Attendance hours.

Maple Plain Fire Department currently has 24 paid on call members. They each carry a pager for incident notification. In addition they are notified on their cell phones with incident description and location. In 2022 we had an average 9 firefighters per call responding. As highlighted in the third chart, Incidents are only 54% of the hours served by our dedicated fire fighters.

The 3rd chart shows the breakdown of how many hours were put in by our dedicated Maple Plain firefighters.

The bar graph shows the general trend lines of incidents over the past 13 years.

Maple Plain Fire Department is always looking for dedicated individuals to serve as firefighters. If interested, please contact the fire department at 763-479-0520 or City of Maple Plain at 763-479-0515 for an application.





Scan the code to view the brochures!



Spring & Summer 2023

CLASSES & PROGRAMS

Over 300 offerings for all ages!

STEM - Art & Theater - Sports & Aquatics

Special Interest & Academics - ECCE & Preschool

Adult Enrichment & Recreation - and more!

REGISTER NOW!

oronocommunityed.com

952-449-8350

Orono Community Education
Orono Public Schools



2022 marks the 41st anniversary of the grassroots food and fund drive, which aims to fight food insecurity and poverty at the local level.

Western Communities Action Network (WeCAN) in Mound helps fight local hunger via its unique Mobile Market, which delivers food directly to low-income residents who have barriers to accessing a traditional food shelf. WeCAN also supplies paper products, personal care items and cleaning supplies to clients in need.

The March Campaign offers the opportunity to earn a proportional match for all of the financial contributions and product donations, including food, paper products, cleaning supplies and personal care items, which are received during the campaign which runs from February 28 through April 10.

Financial donations can be made on the WeCAN website, wecanmn.org or via mail, 5213 Shoreline Drive, Mound, MN 55364. Product donations can be dropped off during regular WeCAN hours, Monday - Thursday, 9 - 4:30. Call WeCAN if you have any questions, 952-472-0742.



12th Annual

**All –You – Can – Eat
Pancake & French Toast
Breakfast**

Sunday, April 24th 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Adults \$8, Children \$5

Come and support your Loretto Fire Department!

259 North Medina Street, Loretto, MN

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE

1920 County Road 90

Independence, MN 55359

Ph: 763-479-0527

Fax: 763-479-0528

ljohnson@ci.independence.mn.us

asimon@ci.independence.mn.us

City Officials

Mayor

Marvin Johnson

City Council

Brad Spencer

Lynn Betts

Ray McCoy

Steve Grotting

Planning Commissioners

Robert Gardner, Chair

Anita Volkenant

Leith Dumas

Hal Tearse

Steve Thompson

Jon-Paul Story, Alternate

Timothy Usset, Alternate

City Staff

Administrator/City Planner

Mark Kaltsas

Public Works Supervisor

Shawn Bode

Building Inspector

Bruce Satek

Admin. Services Dir.

Amber Simon

Administrative Asst.

Linda Johnson

Carrie Solien

SUBMIT YOUR SEASONAL PHOTOS FOR PHOTO CONTEST!

When seeing beauty all around us in Independence, sharing it can bring joy to all. What makes living in Independence special to you? Please share a glimpse of it with us by participating in our Seasonal Photo Contest by submitting your quality photographs to Linda (LJohnson@ci.independence.mn.us) in the following categories: (Each category will be by each season: Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter)

- OUTDOORS
- ACTIVITIES
- PEOPLE
- NATURE
- CLOSEUP
- WIDESCREEN