

CITY OF SAINT PETER HOT SHEET



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The following information is a publication of the City of Saint Peter, City Administrator's Office, 934-0663, 227 South Front Street. Please contact us at barbaral@saintpetermn.gov www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter



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MAKES ME WONDER (BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR TODD PRAFKE) – (This is Part 2 of an article on the City tax process, levy, and priorities and laws.)

The Council thus far has considered a proposed budget and suggests a Levy that will increase our projected tax rate from 47.27 to 50.85 based on a gross levy increase of 11.34% or \$259,029. Continuing evolution of the tax capacity numbers will occur until the 2017 tax notices are distributed by Nicollet County. The projected 2017 tax capacity is based on a 3.5% increase, and again we will get a County determination of this value closer to December. Previous tax rates look like this:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rate</u>
2012	49.00
2013	50.67
2014	51.13
2015	46.79
2016	47.27
2017	50.85 (estimated)

The biggest plans and changes as compared to the 2016 budget are shown below:

- LED crossing signals on Jefferson Avenue \$10,640.
- Ameresco is doing a study to determine if there are utility savings that can fund improvements to various City buildings. We should have a report back to determine if additional capital improvements will be made in 2017.
- Municipal Building maintenance in 2017 is proposed to include changes to address security issues, garage door replacement, paint, ceiling tiles, carpet, plumbing and fixtures (\$53,600).
- The sidewalk replacement plan that has been discussed with by City Council includes \$150,000 in 2017 as well as \$150,000 to be planned for in 2018. There may be an opportunity to spread this planned project over a three year period.
- Reconfiguring of a building at Public Works to house the mechanic's shop. The anticipated budget for 2016 is \$86,013 and \$85,005 for 2017. This will be allocated between all funds and has an impact of \$68,407 to the general fund over both years.
- Street maintenance for 2017 is planned for an additional funding of \$37,000 over the 2016 budget. The City's ongoing street program provides maintenance on one of our biggest investments that is very expensive to replace. This number represents our best guess of inflationary impacts.
- Gardner Road intersections at Broadway and Jefferson will have additional work of \$350,000, which is anticipated to be funded with Municipal State Aid (MSA) funds. Gardner Road between the two intersections will have the majority of the funding coming from a Township grant.
- Township Road 361 improvements are dependent on the State legislation opening up a Township grant program again. No dollars are planned for the 2017 budget year on this project.
- Broadway Avenue improvements funded by State, Federal and Municipal State Aid (MSA) is also anticipated for 2017. This project will include the use of MSA in the amount of \$400,000 (20% match plus 100% engineering).
- AED replacements are addressed for most of our departments.
- Parks staffing is proposed to increase with an additional Groundskeeper starting in March as

planned. There is also an additional revenue stream for this position which will be paid in part by a contract with School District 508 should that agreement comes together.

- Councilmembers discussed and directed staff to work toward the completion of a gravel trail around Hallett's Pond. This was funded out of the 2016 Parks maintenance budget, but there is an anticipated cost of \$16,000 to address wetland credits in 2017.
- Working with Damon Farber Consulting to address park planning, signage and branding is budgeted to complete their recommendations which include costs of \$15,000 in 2017 and another \$15,000 in 2018.
- In the proposed 2017 parks budget we are also recommending experimenting with providing additional "shade sail" units at various parks (\$18,000).
- Asphaltting the Jefferson Park parking lot (\$26,000) and adding ADA compliance sidewalks (\$20,000) at Jefferson Park is also included in the general fund budget.
- ADA compliance sidewalk improvements at Warren Park (\$34,000).
- The Fire Department budget includes \$7,500 which will contribute a third year to a replacement fund for equipment items that have certification expiration needs. This is part of the policy the Council put in place about 3 years ago.
- The 2017 budget includes an allocation of \$2,500 for The Third Floor Youth Center. This is very much a wild card as District 508 reconfigures their space midway through our fiscal year.
- The 2016 and 2017 revenue budgets also include the anticipated building inspection revenues spread over 3 years instead of collecting it all in 2016.
- The 2016 and 2017 expenditures reflect the use of \$405,000 in reserves to cover the expense of Magner Subdivision improvements. (This is in addition to the \$465,000 previously designated for this use.) This was part of the Council's plan for this development.



- Local Government Aid (LGA) increased \$75,000 in 2017.
- Health insurance renewal has been determined to be a 15.9% increase.

For 2017, we will use the same philosophy we have over the past years. We do not look at the total levy and then make cuts or additions. We look at the divisional budgets line by line and think about needs and priorities the Council has set, make changes, and then look at how that would influence the total.

The philosophy in the past was to bring the Council budgets based on the programs and service standards we have had in place without puffing it up needlessly, simply to be cut later in October or November to show how great a job we can do budget cutting. That is to say, we bring a budget that will provide for the operation the Council has told us they want.

Reserves are used for emergencies or efforts that are unknown to us at this time. In some past years we have used reserves for a deal that is too good to pass up or to pay an unexpected costs.

We do not believe that additional information about costs projected in a month or two will substantially impact our thoughts on needs and/or priorities so we don't plan to come back to the Council multiple times

between now and December and modify the budget.

It may be important to note that once the legislative session starts in 2017 there is always the potential for a change in the ground rules. Election results and budget surpluses or deficiencies at the State level all influence those issues and right now, we do not have any supernatural ability to predict future outcomes.

We also believe the results from past budgets speak for themselves and that our budgeting philosophy has shown very positive results both from a financial and a service perspective. The positive results are measured by the deviation from budget at the end of each year. That deviation has been very, very small, except for the projected building permits in 2016, as reported by the City's auditors. Further, the Council does not see a flurry of purchases at the end of each year based on the theory of, "if we don't spend it we won't get it next year." We just don't do that.

There are lots of factors and things to consider in a budget and I think the most important things to note here may be that the budget is not just about numbers. It is more about a plan, a work plan, a capital plan, and a plan for operations.

Will you read my next article on our budget or maybe look at the budget documents on our web site? It makes me wonder.....

POWER OUTAGE – Portions of Saint Peter experienced a power outage late in the day on Monday, September 12th. The damage was caused by an unfortunate squirrel that got into the main substation on South Front Street. With that much electricity, the squirrel didn't make it, and the City's equipment sustained heavy damage as shown by the picture to the right. The damage was to the oil circuit re-closure which operates the breaker in the



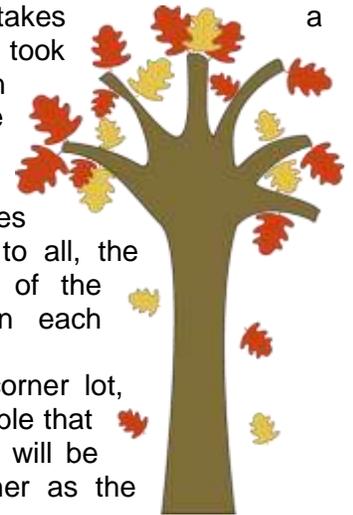
substation. Power was restored when the quick responding Linemen were able to re-route power around the damaged areas. New equipment will be ordered and installed when it becomes available and until then, customers should not see any impact from this damage.

YARD WASTE COLLECTION - The City of Saint Peter will be collecting **brush and garden waste** such as tomato plants, flowers, etc. at curbside the week of September 26th. Brush and garden waste must be placed parallel and adjacent to the curb by **7:00 A.M. Monday, September 26th**. Brush or garden waste will not be collected after the week of September 26th.

Leaves and grass clippings will be collected **south of Broadway** starting at **7:00 A.M. Monday, October 24th** and **north of Broadway** at **7:00 A.M. Monday, November 7th**.

Leaves must be placed within six feet (6') of the curb line and should be parallel to the curb. Please do not put the materials in the street or in bags and do not include animal wastes with the leaves. Do not place brush and grass clippings by trees, posts, etc. and please do not park in front of the yard waste until pick-up is complete.

The collection process takes a long time to complete, (it took five weeks in 2015), and in order to complete the process before it snows, crews sometimes have to start before all the leaves have fallen. To be fair to all, the crews rotate which end of the community they start on each year.



For those living on a corner lot, please note that it is possible that one side of your property will be picked up before the other as the

trucks run north to south and then east to west to be more efficient in the collection process. If you want your materials collected on the same day, make sure to place the materials on the same side.

Crews only go through an area once; so if your yard waste is not out by the dates and times mentioned above it will not be picked up but can be taken to the City's yard waste drop-off site located at the intersection of North Swift Street and West St. Julien Street.

DROP-OFF SITE - The brush and soft yard waste drop-off sites located at the southwest intersection of St. Julien and Swift Streets are open year around (24-7) for use by City residents to drop off brush and soft yard waste.

This service is provided and funded by the Environmental Service Fee on City utility bills.

TREE TRIMMING NOTICE – City crews will be trimming boulevard trees in the next few months. This is done for vehicle and pedestrian safety and to maintain a healthy urban forest. City regulations require boulevard trees to be trimmed to a minimum height of 8 feet above sidewalks and 14 feet above the street.

Should you have any questions about this work, please call the Department of Public Works Office at 934-0670.

CITY MEETING CALENDAR - This calendar is subject to change. Should you have a question on a meeting date/time, please contact the City Administrator's Office at 934-0663 or visit the City's website at www.saintpetermn.gov.

Thursday	September 22	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	September 23	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	September 26	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	September 27	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	September 28	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Monday	October 3	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	October 3	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Tuesday	October 4	until 1:30 p.m.	CITY OFFICES CLOSED – staff training
Thursday	October 6	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	October 10	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	October 11 **	5:30 p.m.	Library Board
	**Rescheduled to November 1st		
Monday	October 17	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	October 17	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Tuesday	October 18		DEADLINE FOR VOTER PRE-REGISTRATION
Monday	October 24	7:00 p.m.	City Council meeting
Tuesday	October 25	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	October 26	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	October 27	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	October 28	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitor's Bureau