

# CITY OF SAINT PETER<sup>©</sup>

## HOT SHEET



All the City news you need to know and a little bit more.  
City Info Line 507-934-0675 TDD #711  
The City of Saint Peter is an equal opportunity provider.



The following information is a publication of the City of Saint Peter, City Administrator's Office, 934-0663, 227 South Front Street.  
To request an email subscription to this newsletter, or for more information, please contact us at [barbaral@saintpetermn.gov](mailto:barbaral@saintpetermn.gov)  
[www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter](http://www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter)



9/29/2021

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING CANCELLED** – The regular City Council meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup> was cancelled due to a lack of a quorum. A minimum of four Councilmembers is required to be in attendance to conduct City business.

This is an unusual occurrence that has happened maybe one other time in the last 30+ years and while notice of the cancellation was widely distributed through the City's normal social media and other channels, we apologize to anyone who planned on attending the meeting only to find it had been cancelled.

The agenda items that were scheduled for consideration at the cancelled meeting will be considered by the Council at a future regular meeting.

For more information on City Council agenda items, please visit the City's website at [www.saintpetermn.gov/AgendaCenter](http://www.saintpetermn.gov/AgendaCenter).

### CANDIDATE FORUM –

With ten different candidates vying for four different seats on the City Council, many voters want to learn more about the people who may represent them in the future. If you count yourself among them, you may wish to check out the candidate's forum.

The forum, which was sponsored by the League of Women Voters, St. Peter Area Chamber of Commerce and the St. Peter Herald, is now available for viewing on the City's YouTube channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8SV0HXPZWU&t=7s>.



The group also sponsored a forum for School Board candidates which can also be found on YouTube.

**CITY OFFICES CLOSED** – All non-emergency City offices will be closed on Tuesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> until 1:30 p.m. for staff training.

City staff meet for generalized training twice a year during a normal year. This training session is the first in almost two years due to the pandemic.



Regular office hours will resume at 1:30 p.m. We apologize for the inconvenience.

**DON'T MISS THIS** - Do you want to know more about the November 2<sup>nd</sup> local option sales tax ballot question and the upcoming Fire Station project? Then please plan on joining City staff and members of the St. Peter Fire Department at the Fire Station for two upcoming open houses. It's a perfect opportunity to learn more about the City Council's drive to fund a new station by implementation of a local option sales tax of one-half of one percent and the needs of the Fire Department that are driving the new station.

Fire protection is an essential service that the Department is not able to provide effectively using the current Fire Station which was constructed in 1929. The City Council has moved forward with a project to construct a new building that provides for the space needed for today's modern firefighting equipment and allows additional space for Firefighter training and safety protocols. The total

project cost for a new facility is estimated at \$9.4 million.

Open houses at the current Fire Station (227 West Mulberry Street) will be held as follows:

Wednesday	October 6 <sup>th</sup>	6-8 p.m.
Saturday	October 9 <sup>th</sup>	9 am - noon

There will be charts and graphs and renderings of the new station along with detailed information on the impact a local sales tax will have on funding the project.

We hope to see you there!

**HYDRANT FLUSHING - WATER** crews will begin fall hydrant flushing and flow testing on Monday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Work is done overnight (between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.) to minimize disruption to customers and the work will continue until all hydrants are flushed which is estimated to be October 15<sup>th</sup>.



As this work continues, water could become cloudy. This would be temporary, but residents should check the water quality before doing laundry.

Hydrant flushing is done twice a year to remove residue from the main pipe system, which helps keep the supply of water to homes free from sediment.

While flushing occurs flow tests are done at each hydrant to ensure adequate pressure for pumping to City fire trucks. This helps keep fire insurance costs, something we all pay as part of our property owner's insurance, at a reasonable rate.

Having accurate flow information is also an important consideration for certain businesses that consider locating in Saint Peter.

**KEEP LAWN CLIPPINGS WHERE THEY BELONG** – After a summer so dry most people didn't need to mow their lawns for weeks on end, the sound of mowers is once again becoming a regular occurrence in the community.

Clippings from those suddenly fast growing lawns sometimes end up in the roadway when those mowing aren't careful enough to turn the mower around to avoid it.

Lawn clippings in the street end up in the City's stormwater system and eventually make way into our local waterways including the Minnesota River.



Lawn clippings and other organic materials like brush and leaves, do not pass through the City's wastewater treatment facility and are a significant source of stormwater pollution. As the materials break down they add excess nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus to the water which causes uncontrolled algae growth and the growth of aquatic weeds. Excessive algae blocks out sunlight which reduces oxygen levels in the water and can lead to fish die off.

Yet it is easy to avoid this pollutant by simply turning your mower the other direction when you are near the curb line or sweeping up the clippings that do make it into the street and then properly disposing of the material. In a few weeks when the City starts curbside leaf collection, make sure leaves are kept on the boulevard and not raked into the street.

For more information on stormwater pollution prevention, please contact the Public Works Department at 507-934-0670.



**FIRE PREVENTION WEEK** – October 3-9, 2021 is Fire Prevention Week in Minnesota and Saint Peter Fire Chief Matt Ulman encourages all property owners in Saint Peter to take some very important fire safety

actions to help protect your family:

1. Put fresh batteries in all smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Detectors are your first line of defense against a fire that could take a life or destroy your home. Once the new batteries are installed, test each device at least once a month and make sure the alarm can be heard in each room of your home. The few minutes it takes could save a life.

2. Be kitchen smart. Make sure flammable items like curtains, rags or even chemicals are stored well away from appliances and keep a working fire extinguisher on hand in case of grease fires or other emergencies.
3. Make a family fire safety plan and once developed, practice it so that everyone knows how to get out in the event of a fire. Plan for two escape routes from each room and know where your gas and electric shut offs are. Pick meeting places outside of the home so in the event of a fire the entire family can gather in one spot making it easier to know if everyone is accounted for. And don't forget to teach your kids "STOP, DROP and ROLL" and how to dial 911 in an emergency.
4. Electric blankets, smoking in bed, space heaters and overloaded wall sockets can be hazards anywhere in your home. Avoid overloading circuits and make sure any electric blankets or heaters have automatic shutoffs.
5. Look for frayed wires or damaged cords on your electrical appliances. If you see exposed wires, unplug the unit and replace it immediately with a UL certified unit.
6. Our lives are busy and it's easy to get distracted. Never leave something cooking on the stove or candles unattended. Clean out the lint trap on your dryer after each load.

The volunteer Firefighters of the Saint Peter Fire Department are ready and able to respond in the event of a fire, but they would rather never get the call.

**DON'T BE A SCAM VICTIM - AN** old but apparently effective scam is back to torment utility customers. The caller, claiming to be from Xcel Energy, says you have an unpaid utility bill that must be paid immediately. There are probably some threats of jail time involved or power being shut off.

Unfortunately some folks have fallen for this scam even though....and this is the important part....utility customers in St. Peter receive their electric service from the CITY OF SAINT PETER! Not Xcel, not any other utility provider. The City will never reach out to a customer by phone and ask them to pay over the phone.

Please....if you are contacted by these scammers, hang up. Don't give them your name, address, account number, or anything else including your credit or debit card information! And if you are still tempted, hang up and call the City directly at 507-

934-0664 to see if you do owe money and how you can pay your bill.

If you have become a victim of these scammers, please contact the Police Department immediately (931-1550) to report the crime.

Always remember that when in doubt, call the City and verify before putting your hard earned money at risk. Be safe Saint Peter!

**NOVEMBER ELECTION REMINDERS** – Are you planning on voting by absentee for the November 2nd general election? Ballots are available now through the Nicollet County Public Services Department (501 South Minnesota Avenue).

Before you can get an absentee ballot you must complete and submit an application. Once the County has verified your eligibility to vote, an absentee ballot and if necessary, a voter registration sheet, will be mailed back along with instructions and return postage already affixed.

Not registered or not sure if you are? Visit the Secretary of State's website to check your registration and if you aren't registered or are registered at an old address, you can register online at

<https://mnvotes.sos.state.mn.us/VoterStatus.aspx>.

If you have never registered, have moved, have changed your name, or even if it has been several years since you last voted, you need to make sure you are registered at the correct address. This will eliminate standing in at least one line on Election Day and it will also prevent any delays in receipt of an absentee ballot if you request one. The deadline to pre-register for this year's general election is Tuesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>.

Absentee ballots must be received by the Public Services Office at the Nicollet County Government Center (501 South Minnesota Avenue) by 3:00 p.m. on Election Day in order to be counted. **(Please note.....absentee ballots will not be accepted by Election Judges in the polling place.)** Absentee voting has been used in Minnesota for decades. It's safe, easy, and a great way to participate in the most important part of our democracy.



**PRELIMINARY TAX LEVY 2021 (PAYABLE 2022)** - The City Council has approved a preliminary levy which will result in no projected tax rate increase from 2021 to 2022. The rate will remain at 51.7, based on a gross levy increase of \$197,984 or 1.92%. The amount of the levy can go down between now and the end of December but it cannot go up.

Ongoing evolution of the tax capacity numbers will continue until the 2022 tax notices are distributed by Nicollet County. The 2022 tax capacity is based on a proposed 5.9% increase in Estimated Market Value. Again, we will get a County determination of this value closer to December.

The table below shows the estimated tax impact for properties based on the Estimated Market Value:

		City Tax Comparison					
		5.9% increase in tax capacity					
2022 tax capacity	6,827,940	2022 levy	\$3,528,430	City extension rate =	0.5170		
2021 tax capacity	6,446,504	2021 levy	\$3,330,446	City extension rate =	0.5170		
2020 tax capacity	6,270,840	2020 levy	\$3,234,516	City extension rate =	0.5158		
2019 tax capacity	5,959,492	2019 levy	\$2,995,837	City extension rate =	0.50270		
2018 tax capacity	5,402,326	2018 levy	\$2,701,703	City extension rate =	0.50010		
			Annual				Annual
If, your taxable Market Value is .....	2022 Prelm tax	2021 final tax	change if MV stays the same	If, your taxable Market value increased 5.9%	2022 tax		Annual Change from 2021
<b>Homestead value with MV exclusion =</b>							
\$ 60,000	186.12	186.13	(0.01)	63,540	197.10		10.97
\$ 76,000	235.75	235.76	(0.01)	80,484	249.66		13.90
\$ 100,000	371.00	371.01	(0.01)	105,900	404.25		33.23
<b>\$ 150,000</b>	<b>652.76</b>	<b>652.79</b>	<b>(0.03)</b>	<b>158,850</b>	<b>702.64</b>		<b>49.85</b>
\$ 250,000	1,216.29	1,216.34	(0.05)	264,750	1,299.41		83.07
\$ 300,000	1,498.06	1,498.12	(0.06)	317,700	1,597.80		99.69
\$ 500,000	2,625.12	2,625.22	(0.10)	529,500	2,791.36		166.14
<b>4+ rental housing =</b>							
\$ 110,000	710.88	710.90	(0.03)	116,490	752.82		41.91
\$ 150,000	969.38	969.41	(0.04)	158,850	1,026.57		57.16
\$ 200,000	1,292.50	1,292.55	(0.05)	211,800	1,368.76		76.21
\$ 250,000	1,615.63	1,615.69	(0.06)	264,750	1,710.95		95.26
<b>Commercial/Industrial =</b>							
\$ 150,000	1,163.25	1,163.30	(0.05)	158,850	1,254.76		91.46
\$ 175,000	1,421.75	1,421.81	(0.06)	185,325	1,528.51		106.71
\$ 200,000	1,680.25	1,680.32	(0.07)	211,800	1,802.26		121.95
<b>\$ 250,000</b>	<b>2,197.25</b>	<b>2,197.34</b>	<b>(0.09)</b>	<b>264,750</b>	<b>2,349.77</b>		<b>152.43</b>
\$ 1,000,000	9,952.25	9,952.64	(0.39)	1,059,000	10,562.31		609.67

Some of the most significant changes to the budget are:

- In 2022, election costs will increase by \$15,537 as a primary election will be conducted in addition to the general election.
- Municipal Building maintenance in 2022 is proposed to include \$5,000 for front door repair and \$22,000 in repair and maintenance items to improve the building and its security.
- Public Works Building maintenance in 2022 is proposed to include \$60,000 for the following work:
  - Improvement to east lot north of the gate for drainage
  - Paving the area west of the building
  - Repairs to east entrance of building B
  - Replacement of the main copier/scanner
- Street maintenance for 2022 is planned for an additional funding of \$50,000 over the 2021 budget for ADA transition plan work.
- Parks budget increased \$384,642 over 2021 budget which includes a \$100,000 increase for park improvements for a total of \$200,000, per the Park Master Plan. \$131,300 DNR Grant work at Minnesota Square (\$65,500 from DNR and a matching requirement of \$65,500 from the City); \$101,000 in wage and benefit increases.

- The Fire Department budget includes \$22,500 which will contribute \$7,500 for a sixth year to a replacement fund for turn out gear and \$15,000 for the second of 15 years funding for SCBA equipment that have certification expiration needs.
- The Insurance Fund has no contributions for the 2022 year. The 2021 projected ending fund balance is \$115,000. You may recall our target here is \$300,000, but it will deplete without future funding.
- The 2021 and 2022 expenditures reflect no use of reserves to cover the expense of Community Spirit Park in the Park Fund. After the pond sale in 2021 the balance in the Parkland Dedication fund is projected to be at (\$50,507).
- Funding is included for the City's portion of two (2) School Resource Officers expected to be in place for the 2021-2022 school year. The School District will fund 70% of wages and benefits for the Officers.
- Local Government Aid (LGA) is projected to increase \$29,874, to \$3,258,290 in 2022.
- There will be a 5% increase in health insurance costs in 2022 and the increase for 2023 will be capped to a maximum increase of 7.5%.
- We have made no significant changes to educational and training dollars as we believe this is an important part of being a progressive organization. We believe the additional State mandated police training and the plans we are working on related to equity and diversity issues for all employees can be covered within the amounts allocated. The training may be "Perspectives" business diversity training or "Life's Journey" training or something similar. Community outreach events are usually funded by either the City Council or City Administrator professional service budgets which collectively have \$9,000 allocated.

In the budget we will have a projected fund balance of \$4,320,862 at the end of budget year 2022. Based on our current projections, the reserve percentage for the end of 2021 will be approximately 52.6% (higher than budgeted) due to both increased revenues and some reduced expenditures and end in 2022 at 48.2%. We have managed under similar circumstances which shows the commitment of both Council and staff to managing to the needs and not to the budget. Again, we don't spend it just because it was budgeted.

If you want to know more about the budget and how it all fits together please feel free to give either the City Administrator (934-0663) or Finance Director (934-0664) a call. You can also read more about the budget and see every number, graph and table the Council sees by reviewing the City Council packet from 9/13/21 at <https://www.saintpetermn.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/09132021-632>

**CITY MEETING CALENDAR** \*\*\*PLEASE NOTE...Until further notice, City meetings may be conducted electronically as authorized under Minnesota Statutes 13D.021. Log-in information for meetings being held either virtually or as a hybrid virtual/in-person will be included at the bottom of the agenda page. Agendas are all posted on the City's website at [www.saintpetermn.gov](http://www.saintpetermn.gov).

Monday	October 4	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>October 5</b>	<b>8:30am – 1:30 pm</b>	<b>City Offices Closed For Staff Training</b>
Wednesday	October 6	6-8 p.m.	Fire Department Open House
Thursday	October 7	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Saturday	October 9	9:00 – noon	Fire Department Open House
Monday	October 11	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	October 11	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Monday	October 18	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	October 18	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Friday	October 22	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau

Monday	October 25	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	October 26	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	October 27	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	October 28	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority