



16200 Eagle Creek Avenue S.E.
Prior Lake, MN 55372

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Public can count on city government functioning during transition period



City Manager
Frank Boyles

On July 11, 1965, stakeholders of what was then the village of Prior Lake gathered at the corner of Arcadia Avenue and Dakota Street to dedicate a new “village hall” for their community.

Little did they know then that the building – which actually opened as a school way back in 1941 – would remain the primary headquarters of municipal services for four more decades, seeing Prior Lake evolve from “village” to a thriving city of more than 21,000 residents.

Today, as the 40th anniversary of that dedication approaches, we find ourselves in historic territory once again.

Over the next six weeks, city services will be moving out of our existing city hall building at Arcadia and Dakota to temporary locations that will serve as their home through the end of 2006 when we expect our new city hall and police station to open. As we turn the page and begin this very significant transition, we are not losing sight of the historic significance of our existing city hall building and its important link to the past in Prior Lake.

On June 20, the City Council directed staff to explore ways in which elements of the existing city hall (and the former Kop/Felix property at Main Avenue and Kop Parkway) might be retained after the building themselves are removed from the property. We will be presenting that report to the City Council during its July 18 meeting.

At the same time, we are inviting everyone who worked or attended school in the existing city hall building between 1941 and 1965 to a building commemoration and photo shoot Monday, Aug. 1 at noon. If you count yourself in this category, please join us for hors d'oeuvres, beverages, cake and ice cream, and get a free photo of yourself in front of the building in the process. What a perfect way to kick off Lakefront Days week in Prior Lake!

Assuming no snags in the awarding of the bid, the existing city hall and the three private properties north of Dakota will be removed in August and September, which will clear the way for construction of the new police station and city hall to begin.

We've been told it will take approximately 18 months to complete the project, which will mean that for those 18 months, city services now headquartered at city hall will be relocated to other municipal buildings around the city.

To minimize the disruption to our residents, the relocation of the departments will be staged. Here's the plan:

■ **Administration, Finance and Recreation will be moving to Fire Station No. 1 (16776 Fish Point Road) by Tuesday, July 26.**

■ **Engineering, Building Inspections and Planning will be integrated into the Maintenance Center (17073 Adelman St.) by Monday, Aug. 22.**

■ **Police will be set up in a mobile trailer adjacent to the existing police annex building by Wednesday, Aug. 3.**

All phone numbers will remain the same.

This approach is the most cost-effective and least impactful way to maintain the effective delivery of city services during the 18-month transition period from the old building to the new. Numerous other

sites around the community were explored, but in the final analysis, none provided the flexibility or cost savings of our existing city facilities.

For this transition to be a smooth one, we must do a good job of communicating the changes that are forthcoming and how they will impact our residents.

Over the next several weeks, you will see signs posted outside the existing city hall building, stories and guest columns in the *Prior Lake American* and our *Wavelength* newsletter, special programs on PLTV-15, and regular progress reports on our Web site, www.cityofpriorlake.com. On our Web site, you will also have the opportunity to sign up for regular project updates delivered via e-mail.

This is an incredibly exciting time as we close the book on the past and begin a new chapter in Prior Lake's history. As always, I welcome your input or questions about the project, and can be reached at (952) 447-9801.