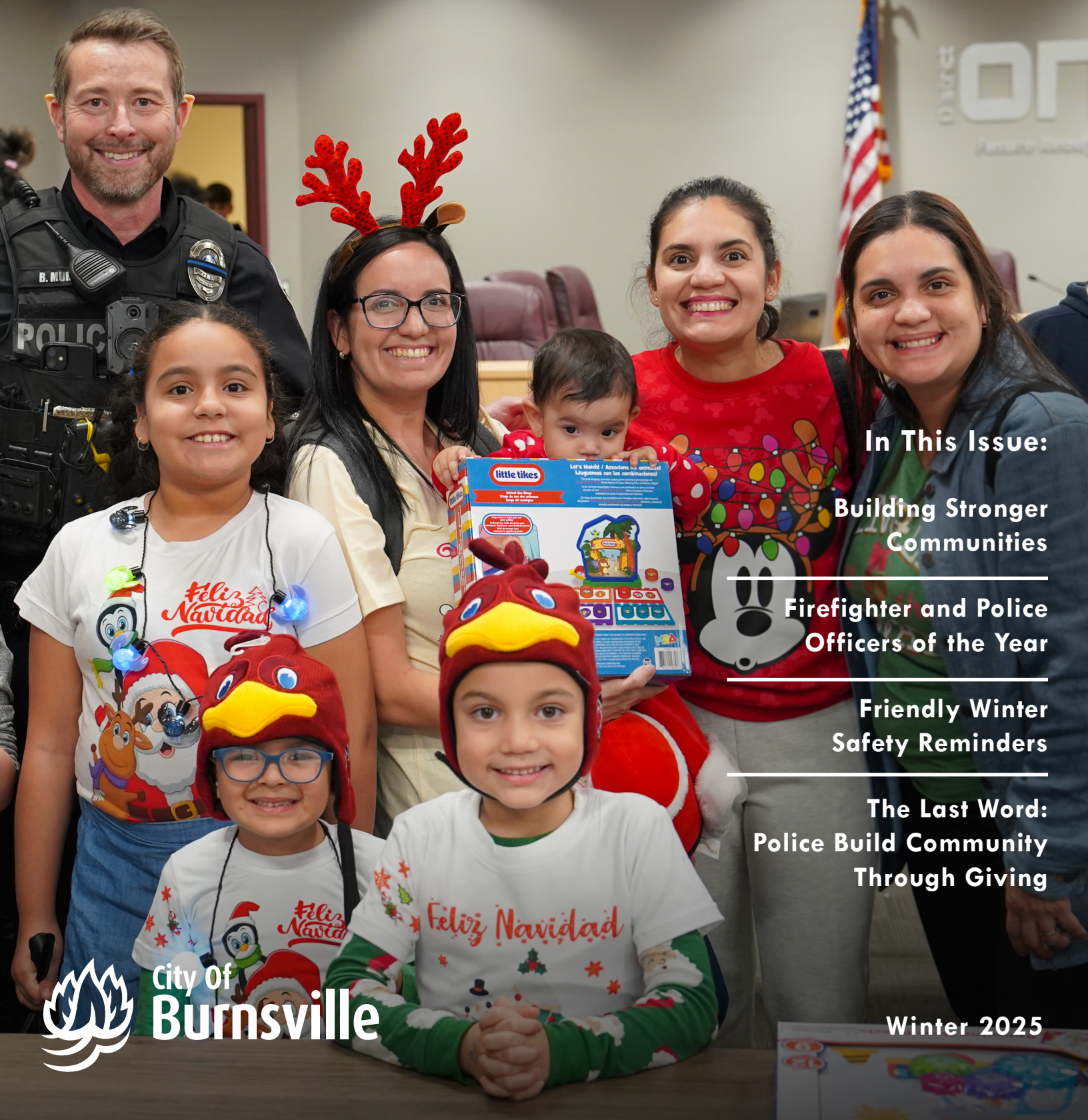


CITY OF BURNSVILLE

bulletin



In This Issue:

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Communities**

**Firefighter and Police
Officers of the Year**

**Friendly Winter
Safety Reminders**

**The Last Word:
Police Build Community
Through Giving**



City of
Burnsville

Winter 2025

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Burnsville Bulletin

Questions about the Burnsville Bulletin can be submitted to 952.895.4400 or info@burnsvillemn.gov.

Cover: Police Sergeant Brent Murray and local families smile in the toy room at Tinsel, Treats and Giving. (See page 22)

Burnsville City Council

Elizabeth Kautz	Mayor
Dan Gustafson	Council Member
Dan Kealey	Council Member
Cara Schulz	Council Member
Vince Workman	Council Member

Mayor/City Council Message Center

952.895.4403

Email

burnsvillecouncil@burnsvillemn.gov

City Manager

Gregg Lindberg



[@cityofburnsville](https://www.facebook.com/cityofburnsville)



[@burnsvillemn](https://www.instagram.com/burnsvillemn)



[@burnsvillemn](https://twitter.com/burnsvillemn)



[@cityofburnsvillemn](https://www.youtube.com/c/cityofburnsvillemn)

events

Winter Golf

Saturday, Jan. 25

Tee times begin at 9 a.m.

\$10 per golfer

Register: burnsvillemn.gov/rec

Get into the swing of winter at Birnamwood Golf Course with this unique experience! Large, gator-skin dodge balls will be used as “golf balls,” and holes will be marked in the snow. Fuel up with onsite food and alcoholic beverage vendors.

Polar Fest

Saturday, Feb. 8

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

North River Hills Park, 11501 19th Ave.

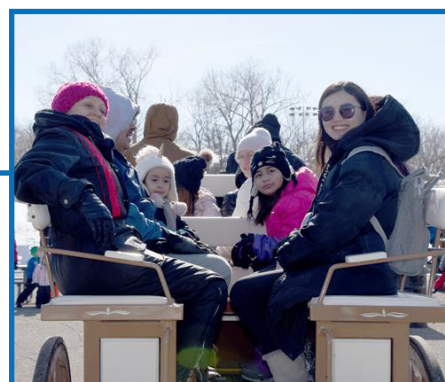
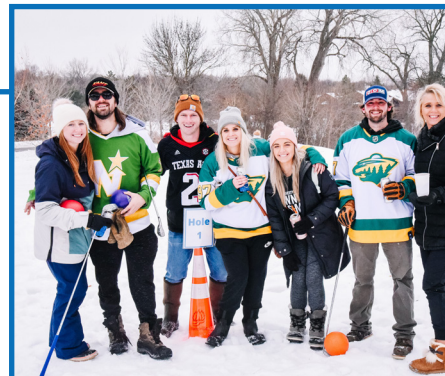
Free admission

Families are invited to North River Hills Park for fun winter activities. There will be a live DJ, horse and carriage rides, food trucks, adult snow softball games, sledding, skating, ice bowling, a bonfire and much more! All equipment will be provided by our Recreation Department; all you need to do is dress warm!

Don't miss the Polar Fest Snow Softball Tournament!

Two games per team, 11 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

Email Scott.Heitkamp@burnsvillemn.gov for more information.



Winter Pop Up Parks

Wednesday, March 5 at Paha Sapa Park, 15016 Chicago Ave. S.

Thursday, March 6 at Northview Park, 14831 Deerwood Drive

10 a.m. - noon

Free to participate; no registration needed

Families are invited to join us for a variety of fun activities (weather-dependent). Activities may include arts and crafts, games, prizes, hot chocolate and more! All materials will be provided by Burnsville Recreation Department; all you need to do is dress for the weather!



Annual Report to the Community

Our team is working on the 2024 annual report, a collection of stories that captures the work we did together this year to make Burnsville a vibrant city, boldly leading, and welcoming to all.

Our annual report will be available to the community via burnsvillemn.gov later in January.



State of the City Address

Mayor Elizabeth Kautz will deliver the State of the City Address at the Ames Center this April. Date, time and additional details will be available soon. We invite you to attend in-person or watch remotely through Burnsville Community Media on Comcast channels 14 (799 high-definition) and 16 (859 high-definition), within Burnsville.

Watch for updates at burnsvillemn.gov/sotc.



Park Shelter Reservations Are Open

Our beautiful park settings provide the perfect backdrop for celebrations and gatherings. Choose from park buildings that provide indoor space or one of our open park shelters, many offering electricity and grills. We also offer rental space at our Ice Center, ballfields and more.

Get started at burnsvillemn.gov/reservations.



Community Garden Plots

Returning gardeners: Registration opens Jan. 6

New gardeners: Registration opens Feb. 3

Garden plots are available at Crosstown East Park, Neill Park and Wolk Park

Learn more at burnsvillemn.gov/garden.



Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth

Firefighter of the Year

Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth was known to many as a team player who loved being a firefighter. His service-oriented mentality was second to none, and he took pride in ensuring he was prepared for the physical and emotional demands of the job. Adam was not only committed to his own preparedness, but he was also steadfast in his loyalty to his fellow firefighters, promising to do everything he could to ensure they, too, were ready to meet the challenges of their chosen career.

Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth was nominated by his peers and department leadership for this award. He was recognized for his sincere dedication to the department, his caring and selfless demeanor towards the citizens of Burnsville and the ultimate sacrifice he made on that fateful day – February 18, 2024.

On September 19, 2024, Firefighter/Paramedic Finseth was awarded, after his death, the Fire Department's Medal of Honor Award, the International Association of Fire Fighters' Martin E Pierce Medal of Honor and was named Burnsville's Firefighter of the Year.



Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth

During the awards ceremony, Chief BJ Jungmann gave a heartfelt presentation of the award, explaining, "Every year we solicit nominations for firefighter of the year; this year's nomination was unanimous.

"This year's nominee joined the Burnsville Fire Department in 2019, was part of the Emergency Action Group tactical team, served as a water rescue trainer, sat on the City's health and wellness committee and tirelessly advocated for firefighters' overall wellbeing – promoting regular workouts and pushing for health and wellness initiatives and equipment to rehabilitate and prevent firefighter injuries.

"He was so dedicated to helping others; he was always inquisitive, empathetic and humble. He was an example of how to treat people with respect and kindness.

"Firefighter/Paramedic Finseth exemplified bravery, heroism and outstanding courage, and he placed the safety and welfare of the people of Burnsville above all. He showed his commitment and unwavering dedication when he responded during his days off, in the middle of the night, because seven children were at risk. His bravery and heroism – to risk his own life to aid officers who were down – are nothing but awe-inspiring, and we could not agree more with Sergeant Adam Medicott's words when he called him 'the bravest person he's ever known.'"

A dedicated husband, father, son, brother, veteran and friend to many, Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Finseth was a true hero both on and off duty. The protection, leadership, friendship and absolute devotion that Adam displayed every day will forever be remembered.

Officer Paul Elmstrand

Officer Matt Ruge

Police Officers of the Year

In a typical year, either Officer Paul Elmstrand or Officer Matt Ruge could have been named Burnsville Police Officer of the Year. Both officers took immense pride in their work, were dedicated to serving their community and had genuine passion for their profession.

February 18, 2024, was the most tragic day in the Burnsville Police Department's history. Officer Paul Elmstrand and Officer Matt Ruge will forever be honored and remembered for their ultimate sacrifice. Their selfless actions serve as a testament to bravery and extraordinary teamwork. For this reason, and many more, Officer Paul Elmstrand and Officer Matt Ruge are Burnsville Police Department's 2024 Officers of the Year.

While Officer Elmstrand and Officer Ruge played critical roles on February 18 in the heroic attempt to rescue seven children held hostage by an armed gunman, their careers were marked by much more than that tragic event.

Officer Paul Elmstrand, Badge No. 176

Officer Elmstrand began as a Community Service Officer with the Airport Police Department, where he welcomed travelers and enforced property regulations. His positive influence at the Airport Police was so significant that they retired his community service officer badge in recognition of his contributions.

In August 2017, Officer Elmstrand joined the Burnsville Police Department, quickly becoming a favorite among his colleagues. His sharp sense of humor and lighthearted use of movie quotes helped brighten the mood, even in tense moments. However, it was his deep respect for his fellow officers that made him a true friend. He always remembered the little things about his partners, displaying a genuine care that made him stand out.

Before becoming a police officer, Officer Elmstrand was committed to honoring those who had fallen in the line of duty, attending funerals for fallen officers as a community service officer. After his promotion to police officer, he joined the Honor Guard, where he took great pride in his work. Officer Elmstrand also successfully applied for the Minnesota Law Enforcement Memorial Association's Honor Guard. He was an integral part of the Burnsville Police Department's mobile command post, the Domestic Abuse Response Team and served as a field training officer.

His most memorable contributions came in his interactions with the community. Whether dealing with a victim, witness or suspect, Officer Elmstrand treated everyone with respect, leaving a lasting positive impact. After his tragic death, a civilian shared with police staff that he recalled working with him on neighborhood issues. Officer Elmstrand recommended installing security cameras and even suggested the best brands and locations. The civilian, profoundly impacted by his kindness, later named their newly installed cameras the "Officer Elmstrand Memorial Cameras."

Beyond his dedication to the department, Officer Elmstrand's love for his family – Cindy, Maria and Mateo – was evident. When talking about his loved



Officer Paul Elmstrand

ones, including his dog, Officer Elmstrand's infectious smile said it all. His affection for them reminded everyone of the importance of family and connection.

Officer Matt Ruge, Badge No. 183

Officer Matt Ruge joined the Burnsville Police Department in April 2020, during the confusion of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges, Officer Ruge's positivity and willingness to share a smile made him an excellent addition to the team. He excelled during field training, quickly earning the respect of his colleagues.

Officer Ruge later joined the Crisis Negotiator Team, the Domestic Abuse Response Team and the Crime Scene Team. His most impressive work, however, came as a patrol officer. Officer Ruge was a reliable partner who adapted well to uncertain situations and always treated others with respect. He received two Distinguished Service Awards for his involvement in a homicide investigation at the Burnsville Inn and Suites and an officer-involved shooting on Highway 13. Additionally, Officer Ruge was honored with a Life Saving Award by the Burnsville Fire Department. Though his career was tragically short, his impact on the community was undeniable.

Officer Ruge was a confident and self-disciplined officer who held himself to the highest standard. This was evident in his approach to handling service calls as a primary officer, as well as his commitment to training and supporting his fellow officers. A notable example of his expertise came in 2023 when he received recognition from the Dakota County Attorney's Office for his thorough investigation and detailed report in a domestic incident case. His meticulous attention to detail set him apart.

Described by his colleagues as one of the most reliable partners to work with, Officer Ruge was consistently the first to volunteer for support during traffic stops or high-priority calls. He preferred rover assignments, as they allowed him to assist his partners whenever needed. To Officer Ruge, being a dependable team member was of utmost importance. His unwavering commitment to excellence made him an outstanding officer, though he remained humble about his achievements. To his peers, Officer Ruge embodied courage and was considered the epitome of bravery.

Outside of work, Officer Ruge's life centered around his family and close friends. He found his greatest joy in spending time with them, as well as with his beloved dog, Ranger.

Community Heroes

Officer Elmstrand and Officer Ruge were two of the finest officers the Burnsville Police Department has ever had, and their dedication was evident on the morning of February 18. Both officers were on the scene, working to rescue seven children held hostage by an armed individual. Officer Elmstrand displayed remarkable courage, protecting his fellow officers, while Officer Ruge worked to negotiate a peaceful surrender from the suspect.



Officer Matt Ruge

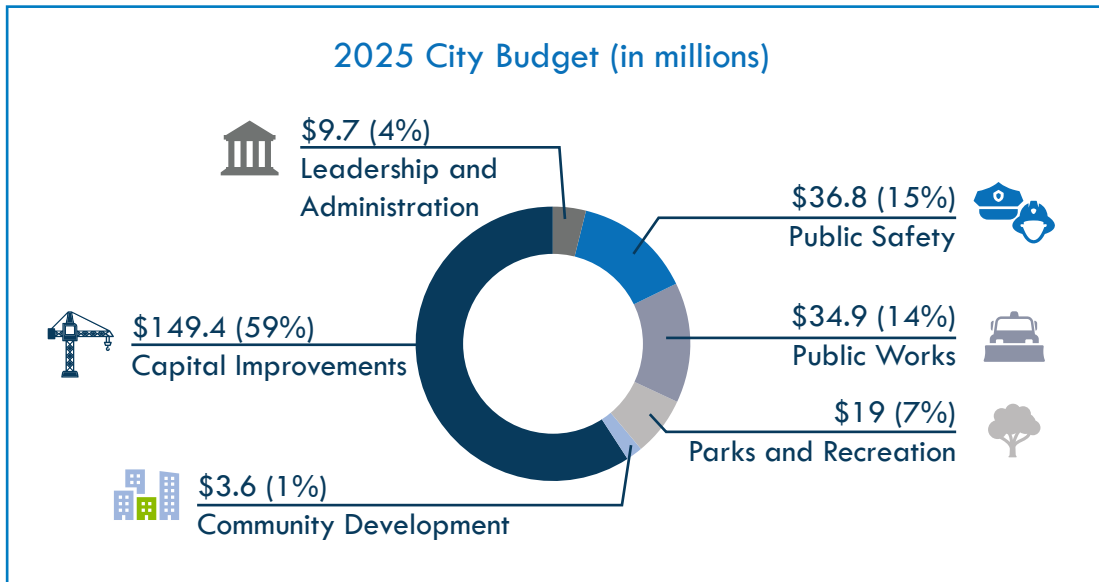
Without warning, the suspect opened fire and wounded multiple officers. Officers returned fire and worked swiftly to evacuate their critically injured partners. Tragically, Officer Matt Ruge and Officer Paul Elmstrand died in the line of duty that morning serving the community and department they loved. We recognize the courage and bravery of our fallen who – despite facing imminent danger of rapid gunfire – acted decisively, selflessly and heroically. We will always remember their ultimate sacrifice.

It has often been said that it's not how these officers died but how they lived that made them heroes. This could not be truer for Officer Elmstrand and Officer Ruge. They weren't just present when needed – they consistently gave their best, always with a smile. Their dedication and positive spirit made them true heroes.

Both officers were unanimously nominated as Burnsville's Police Officers of the Year.

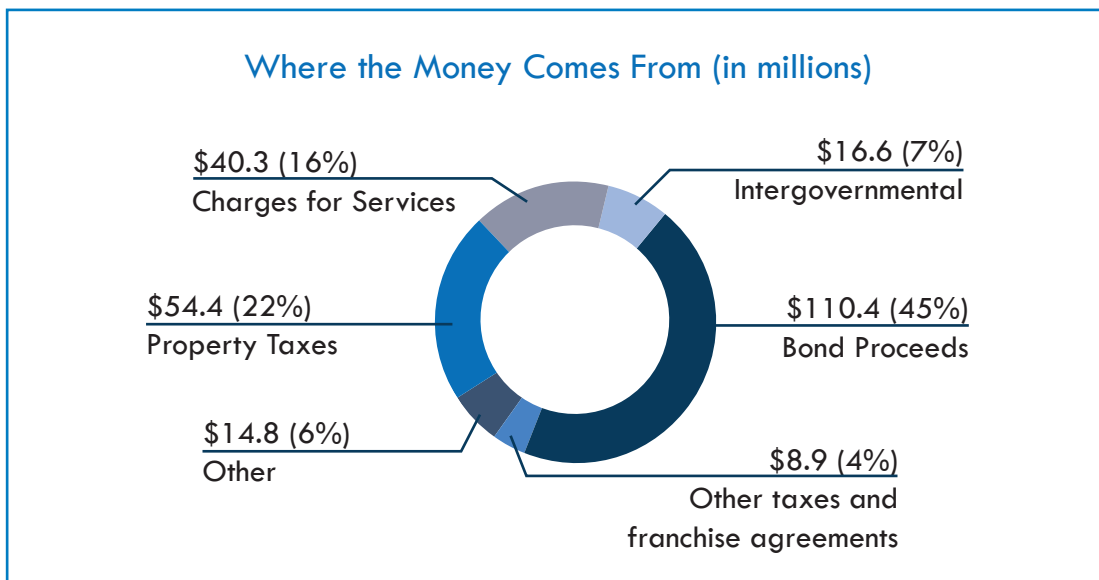
2025 budget

On December 3, the City Council adopted the 2025 City Budget, an investment of \$253.4 million dollars into the community. The City Council approves a budget each year to pay for day-to-day operations, including public safety (police and fire), capital improvements (roads, buildings, vehicles and more) and parks and recreation. These funds ensure that residents, businesses and visitors receive quality services at a good value. For more information on the budget, visit burnsvillemn.gov/budget.



Where Does the Money Come From?

In 2025, property taxes will fund about 22% of the City's budget, or \$54.4 million. Charges for services includes user fees in the utility funds that fund 16%, or \$40.3 million. Bonding includes \$110.4 million or 45% of capital. The remaining funding comes from a variety of sources.



property taxes

City Tax Levy Increase

The property tax levy is \$54.4 million, an increase of 7.06% over last year.

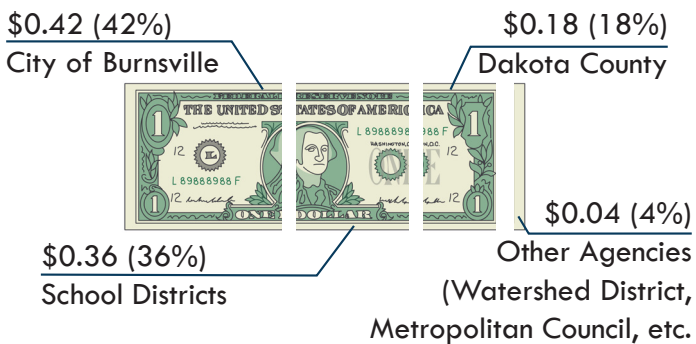
Will My Property Taxes Go Up?

The tax levy increase, coupled with home values rising, will likely result in an increased tax bill for residents. However, for the median-valued home this levy increase equates to about \$8/month.

Where Do the Rest of My Property Tax Dollars Go?

Property taxes fund everyday essentials such as public safety response, plowing through unpredictable winters, physical connections (roads, facilities, technology infrastructure) and recreational opportunities. The City receives almost half of your property tax: for every dollar you pay, the City of Burnsville receives 42 cents. Other recipients of your property taxes include Dakota County (18 cents), your local school district (36 cents), and other governing agencies, including the Watershed District, Metropolitan Council and the Dakota County Community Development Association (4 cents).

Where Your Property Tax Dollars Go



Minnesota Property Taxes

Property taxes are based on the classification and market value of your home or property as determined by the county, and are also impacted by:

- New construction that increases a taxing

district's base (may lower rates)

- Property tax levies imposed by the city, county, school districts and special taxing districts, as well as federal and state mandates
- Increases or decreases to property values

Property Tax Statements and Valuation Notices

Dakota County mails property tax statements and value notices in March. This will be the basis for the following year's property taxes.

If you have questions or concerns about your property valuation or classification, contact the Dakota County Assessor's Office at 651.438.4200, assessing.services@co.dakota.mn.us or through the online form at co.dakota.mn.us/homeproperty/assessing/appeal.

If your concern is not resolved after discussing with your assessor, you may:

1. Bring your case to the Special County Board of Appeal and Equalization. Call 651.438.4200 before May 1 for an appointment and more information.
2. Petition the Minnesota Tax Court at 651.539.3260. Tax petitions can be filed after you receive your Notice of Valuation and before April 30.

Property Tax Payment Dates

The first half of your property taxes are due to Dakota County in May, and the second half is due in October. The Dakota County Assessor's Office provides information on property tax payment dates, how to read your property tax statement, definitions for property tax terms, how property taxes are determined and property tax resources at co.dakota.mn.us/HomeProperty.

tax refunds

Several state programs can assist eligible residents to afford the rising cost of property taxes. For additional information about property tax refunds and programs, visit the Minnesota Department of Revenue's website at revenue.state.mn.us/property-tax-refund or call the tax helpline at 651.296.3781.

Homeowner's Homestead Credit Refund

Minnesota has two property tax refund programs for homeowners: the regular Homestead Credit Refund (based on your income and property taxes) and the special Homestead Credit Refund (based on how much your property tax increased). You may qualify for either or both of these refunds, depending on your income and property tax increase, if you:

- Own and occupy a home
- Have your home classified as a homestead with your county
- Pay or arrange to pay your property taxes

Learn more about these programs, see if you're qualified and download an application at revenue.state.mn.us/homeowners-homestead-credit-refund.

Senior Citizens Property Tax Deferral Program

This low-interest loan program for qualified seniors limits property taxes to 3% of their total household income. The state pays the remainder as a loan. When you sell your home or voluntarily cancel the

deferral, you must repay the loan plus interest (rate not to exceed 5%). The state may take individual tax refunds or other payments and apply them to this loan. You may qualify if all of the following are true:

- You are 65 or older in the year you apply. If married, one of you is 65 or older and the other is at least 62
- Your household income is \$96,000 or less
- You have owned and lived in your home for the last five years
- Your home has been homesteaded for five years
- You do not have a reverse mortgage, a life estate or any state or federal liens on your property
- Other liens against your property are less than 75% of the estimated market value

Call Minnesota Department of Revenue at 651.556.6091 for questions or more information, or visit revenue.state.mn.us/property-tax-deferral-senior-citizens.

Coming to a Park Near You: New Playgrounds

We're excited to announce that eight local parks are getting new playgrounds! We will be asking for your feedback to select playground designs, so keep an eye out for an open house in February where you can put in your two cents. Watch for more information and a chance to vote on designs at burnsvillemn.gov/PlaygroundProjects.

Parks selected for playground replacements include:

- Colonial Park
- Crosstown West Park
- Hollows Park
- Lac Lavan Park
- Northview Park
- Paha Sapa Park
- Terrace Oaks East Park
- Wood Park



neighborhoods

Building Stronger Communities

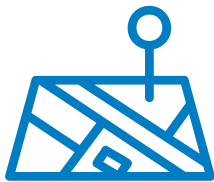
How do we grow a more connected community? It starts with bringing people together – neighbors getting to know one another, working side by side and creating spaces where everyone feels welcome. That's why we're excited to introduce neighborhood organizations – a meaningful way to unite neighbors, build relationships and create lasting, positive change in our community.

Why Form a Neighborhood Organization?

Neighborhoods are near-home geographic areas where people live, work and play; they are hubs of collaboration, support and engagement. When neighbors come together, they build safer, stronger and more vibrant surroundings. Neighborhood organizations provide a foundation for meaningful connections and lasting friendships, shaping a future where everyone belongs.

Defining Your Neighborhood

The first step is defining your neighborhood's boundaries. A neighborhood typically includes multiple blocks and uses natural landmarks – such as major streets or parks – as boundaries. It's essential to consider including diverse housing types, such as multi-family residences, to represent the entire community. We'll help you define your neighborhood when you get started.



Getting Started: Resources and Support



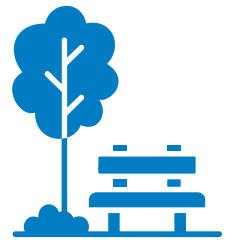
We'll provide a comprehensive Neighborhood Organizing Toolkit to help! From planning initial meetings to building leadership teams, the toolkit offers step-by-step guidance. We will



also support you with boundary planning, outreach materials and communication strategies.

Opportunities for Growth

Beginning in 2025, our Neighborhood Grant Program will offer grants up to \$10,000 for neighborhood projects in recognized neighborhood organizations. Eligible projects may include community-building events, shared assets like benches or gardens and other activities that benefit the public. Details on grant eligibility and the application can be found in the toolkit.



Join Us in Building a Stronger Burnsville

Whether you want to connect with neighbors, solve challenges or leave a lasting legacy in your community, we hope you'll join us. To learn more or get started, visit burnsvillemn.gov/neighborhoods.

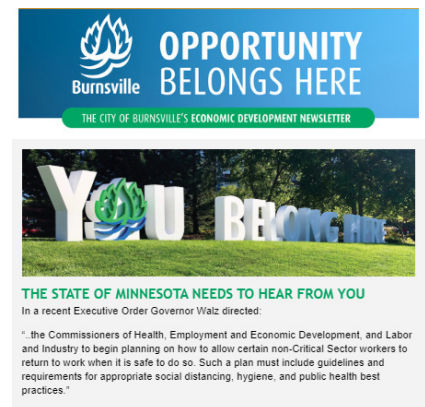
Let's build stronger, more vibrant neighborhoods together!

BUSINESSES BELONG HERE

Opportunity Belongs Here Newsletter

If you're looking for a way to stay in-the-know about new development and redevelopment in Burnsville, be sure to sign up for the Opportunity Belongs Here email newsletter. Articles feature new businesses, developments under construction, events, business resources, available land and more!

Signing up is easy! Visit burnsvillemn.gov/business.



GrowMinnesota! Visits

In a competitive business landscape, the long-term success and growth of a community depends not only on attracting new businesses but also on fostering the growth and sustainability of existing ones. The partnership between the City of Burnsville and the Burnsville Chamber of Commerce plays a critical role in supporting local businesses through retention and expansion visits via the GrowMinnesota! program. These visits are more than just a networking opportunity; they provide essential insights, resources and support to ensure Burnsville’s businesses thrive.



Grow Minnesota!
Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

GrowMinnesota! is a statewide initiative created by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce that focuses on maintaining and growing existing businesses across the state. The City of Burnsville and the Burnsville Chamber of Commerce have participated in this program since 2020 as part of our strategy to support our local businesses. Through one-on-one visits with local business owners, the program seeks to understand the unique challenges and opportunities each business faces, offering tailored resources to address those needs.

We’d love to visit your business to learn more about you and what you do! If you’d like to schedule a visit, contact Jennifer Harmening at the Chamber at jennifer@BurnsvilleChamber.com.

utility rates

2025 RESIDENTIAL UTILITY RATES

 WATER \$2.58 per 1,000 gallons +\$0.12 from 2024	 METER BASE \$10.31 flat fee +\$0.49 from 2024	 SEWER BASE \$7.72 flat fee +\$0.67 from 2024	 SEWER \$5.00 per 1,000 gallons +\$0.43 from 2024
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Storm Water Base ... + \$0.19	Major Roadway Lighting .. no change
Sidewalk & Trail..... +\$0.01	Street Lighting* no change
State Surchargeno.....change	Sidewalk Snowplow** + \$0.06

*Only for properties with continuous street lighting.
**Only for properties adjacent to a sidewalk.

Average Household Cost (based on 5,000 gallon usage)	
Water	\$12.90
Meter Base	\$10.31
Sewer	\$25.00
Sewer Base	\$7.72
Storm Water	\$7.98
State Surcharge	\$0.81
Major Roadway Lighting	\$0.36
Street Lighting*	\$2.95
Sidewalk & Trail	\$0.22
Sidewalk Snowplow**	\$1.99
Total	\$70.24
+4.17 (+6.31) from 2024 average	

safety tips

Friendly Winter Reminders From Our Team

POLICE DEPARTMENT



Brent Murray
Police Sergeant

Running Cars

It's easy to get into the habit of leaving your vehicle running, especially when it's cold out. Be sure to lock your vehicle when leaving it unattended. It only takes a second for it to be stolen.



Home Address Numbers

Visibility is key – night and day. Be sure numbers can be seen from the road and are at least four inches high. Winter is a great time to trim greenery that will flourish and block visibility in the spring.

PUBLIC WORKS



Steven Plaszcz
Streets Maintenance

Waste Bins

Back those bins up and move your vehicle out of the street. If the plows are out, keep the roadways clear. Year-round, there is no parking on City streets from 2 – 6 a.m.



Leave Space for Our Plows

Our plow drivers need lots of space on the road; there are many blind spots and drivers often need to back up. Please have patience and provide space. More space = fewer accidents.

FIRE DEPARTMENT



Chris Walker
Fire Captain

Adopt a Hydrant

Be sure to clear at least three feet of snow around every hydrant. See a neglected hydrant in your neighborhood? Adopt it!

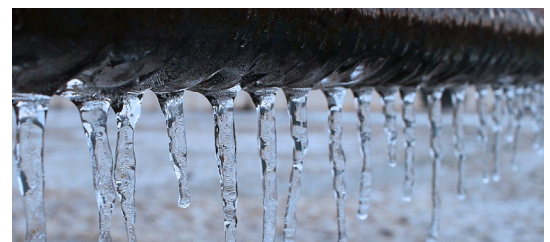
Portable Heaters

Stay warm safely. Keep portable heaters three feet from anything flammable, and turn them off when exiting a room or going to sleep.



Protect Your Home – Prevent Frozen Pipes

- Keep your home above 55 degrees Fahrenheit
- Seal any cracks in walls or floors
- Protect exposed pipes with a pipe sleeve or heating tape
- Promote air circulation by keeping cabinets and doors that surround pipes open
- Watch for warning signs: bulging pipes, strange drain odors or reduced water flow



Safety Tips for Winter Driving

Driving in the winter means changing the way you drive because of the potential for hazardous road conditions due to snow, sleet and ice.

Before you start:

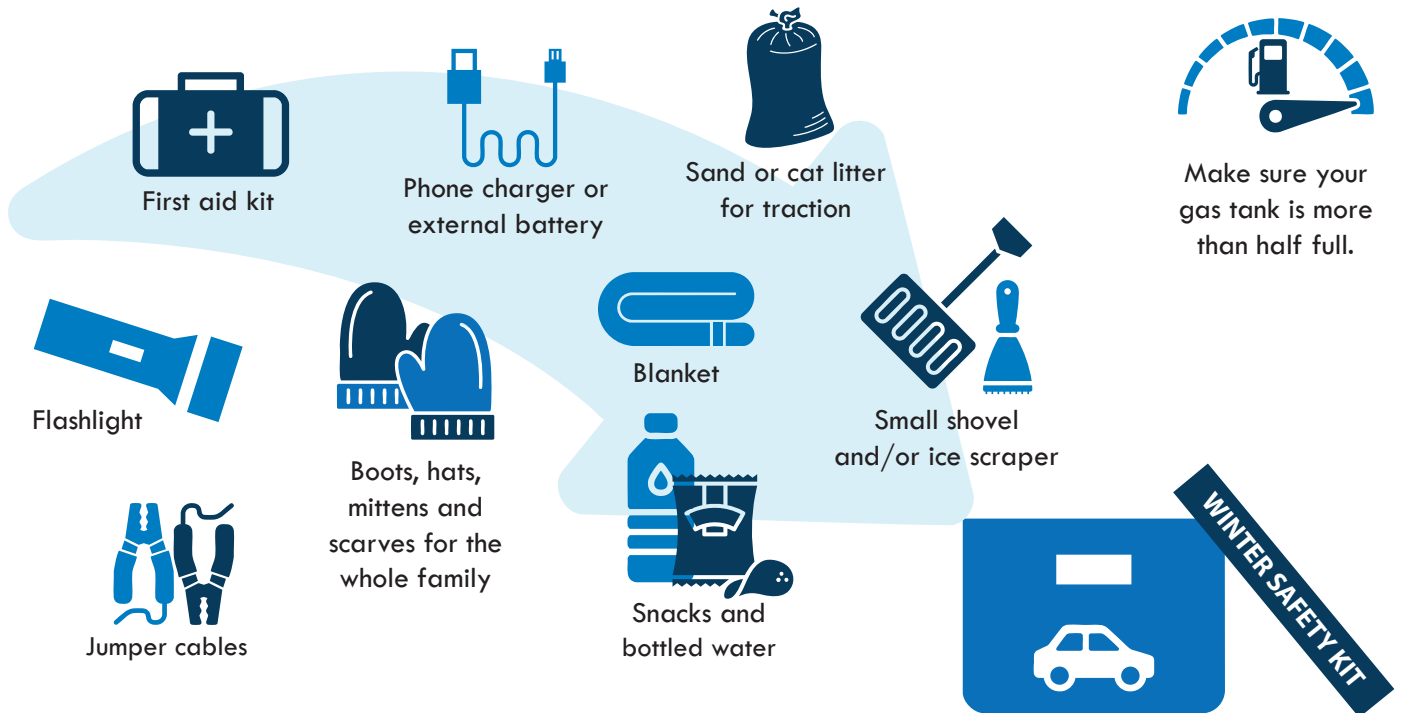
- Clean your car's mirrors, camera lenses and lights. Remove dirt, ice and snow from sensors to enable any assistive driving features, like automatic braking, to work properly.
- If you warm up your car before you drive – do it safely! To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, never run a car in a garage attached to a house, even with the garage door open. If your garage is detached, ensure your garage door is open.

On the road:

- Go slowly. Always lower your speed to account for lower traction when driving in snow or ice.
- Beware of black ice; the road may look clear but it can still be slippery.
- Don't use cruise control in snowy or icy conditions.
- Know your breaks. If you have anti-lock breaks, they'll "pump" for you if you skid.

Make a Winter Survival Kit for Your Car

Use an empty tote or box and fill it with important safety items to keep in your car this winter.



community builders

In October 2024, the Burnsville City Council recognized nine community members and groups for their contributions to building a vibrant and connected city. Congratulations, and thank you to the 2024 Community Builder Award recipients! For more information visit www.burnsvillemn.gov/communitybuilder.

Amanda Ferris

Amanda is the author of two books that make a positive impact on our community. Her first, "You: The Sting Operative" showcases the kindness and community required to create a better "neighborhive" where people work together for the common good. Proceeds from this book went to support first responders, police officers and those serving in the military. Her second book, "Big Bad Beeple Bumps," educates children about bees while exploring the power of difficult emotions. In nominating her, Craig Hansen said Amanda is "what the community of Burnsville is all about."



Laurie Lysne

Laurie wears many hats for the Festival and Fire Muster. She organizes the parade, informing everyone where to be and when to be ready! More than that, Laurie serves as board secretary, ensuring the smooth operation of meetings and coordination of volunteers. Laurie helped develop our volunteer sign-up system, which provides everyone a role to play and allows the event to go off without a hitch! As her nomination stated, "There are 24 hours in a day and somehow Laurie utilizes each hour with a smile and a willingness to help everyone!"



Jennifer Green

Jennifer has an infectious spirit of giving and rolls up her sleeves to get things done. Jennifer is a newer leader at the senior center who didn't hesitate to help ensure the t-shirts were all properly rolled and ready to go for our annual Festival and Fire Muster. When Vel's team asked if Jennifer could mobilize volunteers to make the shirts ready for the event, Jennifer made it happen with the help of our friends at the Senior Center.



Leticia Suffle

Since she moved to Burnsville, Leticia has been volunteering and strengthening our community in a variety of ways; at local churches and schools, her volunteer efforts connect people and make them feel like they belong. In Burnsville, we say "You Belong Here!" Leticia lives that every day, and we are grateful she calls Burnsville home.



Michael Hunter

Coach Mike is a proud and loyal Burnsville resident, “bleeding” black and gold. A graduate of Burnsville High School (and the captain of the football team), Coach Mike has remained involved in the community. You might know him for the epic neighborhood yard party he hosts at his house during Festival and Fire Muster. In Burnsville Youth Football, Mike is a coach, commissioner and, most importantly, a mentor for young players. His nomination noted, “Mike models high expectations, endless care and persistent energy. He is a role model for so many and an action-focused leader who is increasing individual participation, excellence and growth for young people in our community.”



The Semlings

Some laughingly call Adam, Jaime, Paxton, Rossi, Everest and Emerlyn Semling the “garbage family,” but there’s a good reason for this – they are often found picking up trash in the neighborhood, cleaning out storm drains or collecting trash floating in the pond at Vista View Park. In fact, one of the Semling kids built a special tub on wheels to collect garbage. These amazing kids also collect gently used pencils, pens, crayons and other school supplies to clean and donate to schools, churches and places where they are put to good use. Finally, the Semling family hosts an art auction each Thanksgiving. Dad plays auctioneer, auctioning off the kids’ artistic creations. Last year, they raised \$600 from across the country. After a small commission to the artists, the Semlings donated the remainder to Toys 4 Tots.



Suela Bace

If you’ve checked out a book at the Burnhaven Library, you’ve seen Suela’s friendly face! She makes sure you find everything you want at the library, while also making you feel welcome and valued. Suela volunteers with City staff, connecting with community members and facilitating communication among the communities who call Burnsville home. A knowledgeable contact for residents seeking election and voting information, Suela makes information easy to understand. Suela is known for going above and beyond to help others in big and small ways.



Yusuf Haji

Yusuf is passionate about serving the community. For the past two years, he’s hosted Somali Independence Day events here in Burnsville and ensured the entire community felt welcome to join in the celebration. This year, Yusuf’s event drew more than 1,000 people to its family-friendly festivities. He brought a vast array of vendors to showcase and help our community connect with Somali culture.



Kari Owens

Kari saw a need in our community and organized members of St. James Lutheran Church to help by sponsoring a garage sale providing gently-used items at great prices to those in need. This year’s sale drew more than 300 people – many of whom came from our Spanish-speaking community. Her nomination reads, “Kari has the heart of a champion for those who need to be seen and loved in our community.”



natural resources

Landscaping for Clean Water

Introductory Course

Thursday, Feb. 20
6 p.m.
Burnsville City Hall

Design Course

Tuesday, March 18 and
Thursday, March 20
6 p.m.
Burnsville City Hall



The City of Burnsville and Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District are offering Landscaping for Clean Water courses for Burnsville residents. The courses will focus on rain gardens, native plant gardens and shoreline restoration projects that benefit local water quality and pollinators.

**Receive a \$250 grant
for your landscaping
project!**

Registration for the FREE introductory course is now open and required to receive the grant. Visit dakotaswcd.org/classes/landscaping-for-clean-water/.

After learning about various project types at the introductory course, homeowners take the design course and design their project with assistance from our staff. Participants who attend both courses and install a project are eligible for a \$250 grant upon completion.

Note: The above courses are the only ones offered in Burnsville. Additional courses are offered across Dakota County and are also open to Burnsville Residents.

Neighborhood Water Resources Enhancement Grant

To make Landscaping for Clean Water more accessible, the City of Burnsville offers grants of up to \$1,000 for residents who add a raingarden, shoreline restoration or native planting to their property. Individuals, neighborhood groups and community organizations are eligible to apply.



**Receive a grant
up to a \$1,000 for
your Clean Water
landscaping project!**

Want to strengthen your application? Attending the Landscaping for Clean Water courses can help!

Applications are due by Friday, April 25. For more information or to download an application, visit burnsvillemn.gov/WQGrant.

Living with Suburban Coyotes

Over the last two decades, coyotes have moved into many metro area suburbs, adapting to living in close proximity to people. Coyotes are wild members of the dog family, typically averaging around 30 pounds in weight and standing 18 inches high at the shoulders.

Coyotes are present in Burnsville all year, but sightings increase in the fall as visibility increases when the trees drop their leaves. Coyote sightings generally occur near natural areas, but they may be seen almost anywhere in town.

Conflicts with coyotes are rare, but take these precautions to avoid issues with coyotes:

- Do not feed coyotes.
- To avoid attracting coyotes to your yard, make sure all potential food sources are secure, such as compost bins, garbage cans or outdoor pet food bowls. Coyotes are opportunistic and will eat a range of food, but their primary foods are rabbits, mice, other small mammals, birds and fruit.
- If you see a coyote, “haze” it by making a lot of noise and otherwise acting intimidating to scare it off. This keeps them from becoming too comfortable with people.
- Keep cats indoors. Keep an eye on small dogs in your yard, especially if you live near a natural area.
- Keep dogs on leashes when walking in parks.



Smart Salting

Winter salt is harmful for our aquatic life. Reducing the impacts of winter salt while maintaining safety is a great goal! Here are some tips:

- 1. Shovel Promptly:** Remove snow quickly to prevent compacting. Use a good-quality shovel or a snow blower to make the job easier and prevent the formation of ice.
- 2. Select Eco-Friendly Alternatives:** Look for environmentally-friendly de-icing products, such as magnesium chloride or calcium magnesium acetate. Or, consider using sand or cat litter for traction on icy surfaces.
- 3. Apply Sparingly:** When using salt, aim for a 3-inch gap between granules. This not only conserves salt, but also allows for more effective melting. You often need less than you think!
- 4. Sweep Up Residue:** After the snow melts, sweep up leftover salt, sand or de-icer to keep surfaces clean and reduce runoff. Store it for future use.
- 5. Monitor Temperature:** Be mindful of weather conditions. When temperatures drop below 15°F, salt is less effective. Instead, consider using sand for traction.
- 6. Educate Others:** Share these tips with neighbors and community members to promote collective action in reducing salt usage.



sustainability



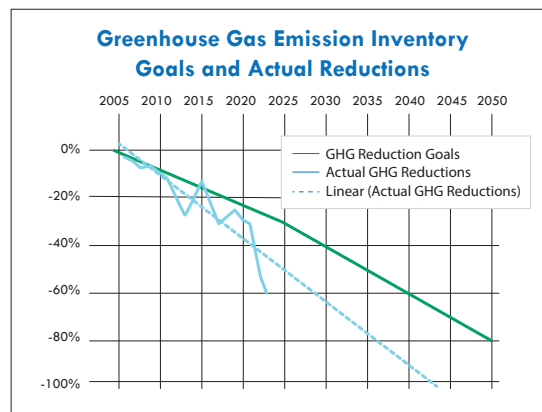
2023 CITY OPERATIONS GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY

GOALS

Using 2005 as a baseline, Burnsville set a goal to reduce City operations greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2015, 30% by 2025 and 80% by 2050.

RESULTS

A recent inventory shows that City operations have **reduced greenhouse emissions by 61% since 2005**. The City reached its goal 17 years ahead of schedule, even though we've heated and cooled more space, pumped 27% more water and increased services as our population increased.



GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY SOURCE



41%

Buildings and Facilities



37%

Potable Water



14%

Transportation



7%

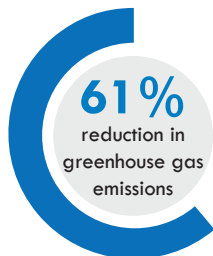
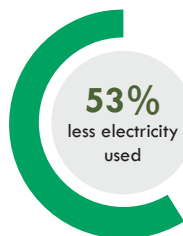
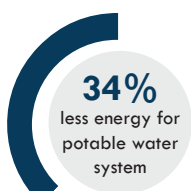
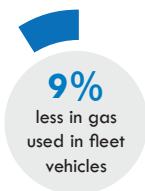
Streetlights
and Signals



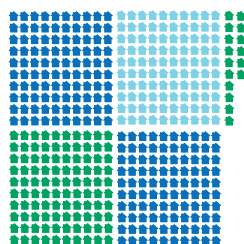
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Sanitary
Sewers

SUCCESSES SINCE 2005



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Equivalent to preventing emissions
from 416 homes annually!

JOIN US!



Get an energy audit from the Home Energy Squad. An expert will come to your house to help you save energy and money on your bills. [Centerpointenergy.com/homeenergysquad](https://centerpointenergy.com/homeenergysquad)



Find rebates and incentives for your home or business to reduce costs for appliances, solar installation, electric transportation and more! [Burnsvillemn.gov/sustainabilitydashboard](https://burnsvillemn.gov/sustainabilitydashboard)

Guide to Managing Energy Costs



Schedule a visit from the Home Energy Squad®

The Home Energy Squad helps you learn about energy-saving opportunities in your home. A team will conduct an inspection of your home and install needed energy-saving materials. These upgrades can increase efficiency and lower the carbon footprint. After the inspection, you will get recommendations to help you save money and energy in the future.

Home Energy Squad is provided by CenterPoint Energy and Xcel Energy.

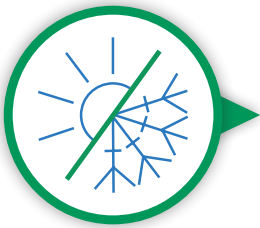
Sign up now at centerpointenergy.com/HomeEnergySquad or call **612-328-6220**. Free visits available for income-qualified residents. All Burnsville residents receive an automatic 50% discount.



Apply for the Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program for Dakota County helps income-qualified households maintain affordable and continuous home energy. Services include bill payment and energy crisis help. Both homeowners and renters are eligible.

Call the Community Action Partnership at **651-322-3500** or visit capagency.org/energy.



Take Advantage of the Weatherization Assistance Program

Burnsville households that are enrolled in the Energy Assistance Program may be eligible for home weatherization assistance. Potential free energy upgrades include:

- Exterior wall and attic insulation
- Air leakage reduction
- Furnace, boiler and water heater repair or replacement
- Ideas to help you reduce your home's energy use such as using a programmable thermostat

The Weatherization Assistance Program may be reached through the Energy Information Center. Call **800-657-3710** or email energy.info@state.mn.us.



CITY OF BURNSVILLE AND XCEL ENERGY ARE PLEASED TO WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE OUR COMMUNITY ENERGY GOALS.

building community through giving

Burnsville Police Department Builds Community Through the Season of Giving

Each holiday season, our Police Department's enthusiasm for spreading joy shines even brighter! Stemming from a need in the community – and a want to answer the call for help – our Police team gets to work creating magical experiences and building incredible connections with the community through a festive annual event – Tinsel, Treats and Giving – and by creating holiday memories to last a lifetime for families who need a bit of help crossing items off their kids' wish lists.

Gifting Joy

The story began four years ago with a generous donation of bikes and gift cards from a local business. What started as two good-humored



officers dressed as Santa and his elf delivering gifts to ten families has increased into a community celebration along with delivering wrapped gifts to deserving families that touches hundreds of lives.

"I personally believe that opening a present is a big deal," shares Sergeant Brent Murray, who leads the Community Engagement unit. This simple philosophy captures the essence of how Burnsville Police approach community service – with attention to detail and genuine care for every resident's experience.

Today, the initiative has grown exponentially. With the help of ISD 191, the Police Department now sponsors 28 families during the holiday season,

carefully selecting those most in need. The commitment runs deep – Sergeant Murray and his team personally shop for gifts, checking off items from the kids' wish lists. Together with City Hall staff, they spend hours wrapping hundreds of presents to ensure every child experiences the joy of unwrapping a special package.

"It's really the highlight of the year," reflects Officer Ben Archambault, "helping families in need while also making positive connections with neighbors in meaningful ways."

Tinsel, Treats and Giving

The magic doesn't stop there. The Tinsel, Treats and Giving event has evolved into an inclusive community celebration that offers something for everyone. Face painting stations buzz with activity, cookie decorating tables overflow with creativity and children beam with excitement while taking photos with Santa. Throughout the evening, officers – some sporting elf ears – (we like to call them our elf-icers) engage with families, building bridges of trust through simple moments of shared joy.

The success of this initiative stems from strong community partnerships. "Know Your Neighbor"





through ISD 191 Community Education, the Burnsville Savage Lions Club and Schmittys and Sons all play crucial roles. Thanks to these collaborations, families

receive transportation to the event, warm winter gear from 360 Communities, books from The Free Book Buggy, and food staples from BrainPower in a Backpack. An incredible toy donation from the First Responders Children's Foundation's "Toy Express" adds to the celebration.



Throughout the event, one can witness K-9 Duke, sporting festive reindeer antlers, pausing for pets and photos amidst the joyful squeals of children. These simple interactions exemplify the Burnsville Police Department's approach to community policing – creating genuine connections that extend far beyond traditional law enforcement roles.

From its humble beginnings – from hosting 400 people to this year's attendance of 1,300 – the

event continues to grow. But more than numbers, it's about the intangible moments: the spark in a child's eye when receiving a new book, the relief on a parent's face when handed warm winter gear and the natural conversations that flow between officers and residents.

For the Burnsville Police Department, community isn't just part of the job – it's the heart of everything they do. Through initiatives like Tinsel, Treats and Giving, they demonstrate that true police work extends beyond responding to calls. It's about building lasting relationships, creating joyful memories and ensuring every resident feels valued and supported, especially during the season of giving.





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AMES CENTER



Folsom Prison Experience

February 1, 7:30 p.m.

Prepare to step back in time and immerse yourself in the unforgettable atmosphere of the legendary 1968 Johnny Cash show at Folsom Prison, where the spirit of that historic day springs to life. As the doors swing open, you'll find yourself instantly transformed into an inmate, ready to embark on a captivating firsthand experience. Marvel at the commanding presence of Johnny Cash himself, joined by the incomparable June Carter and the melodious harmonies of the Statler Brothers. Sense the palpable tension as the warden and his guards maintain order within the prison walls.

A memorable show for all ages.

Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus

February 6, 7:30 p.m.

This uproarious show, a seamless blend of theater and stand-up, has been revamped for 2025. Moving swiftly through a series of vignettes, the show covers everything from dating and marriage to the bedroom. This hysterical show will have couples elbowing each other all evening as they see themselves on stage. Sexy and fast paced, this show is definitely for adults, but will leave audiences laughing and giggling like little kids! When Mars and Venus collide, the adventures are earth-shatteringly hysterical. It's a great recipe for a date night out: a little storytelling blended with some comedy and a dash of sage wisdom from the book.



One Night of Queen

March 24, 8 p.m.

For over 20 years Gary Mullen and The Works have been performing their world-renowned One Night of Queen live concert. For over two decades, Gary Mullen & The Works have performed to audiences around the world, playing more than 2,500 live shows to audiences in over 20 countries - performing and selling out many of the same venues that Queen have, all around the world.

They WILL ROCK YOU and are GURANTEED TO BLOW YOUR MIND! Don't miss your chance to celebrate One Night Of Queen with Gary Mullen & The Works! The Show DOES go on!



Scan For Full Event Listings & To Purchase Tickets

12600 Nicollet Ave. Burnsville, MN