





ANOKA COUNTY

NEWS

Volume 2-2019

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Anoka County's Roadways to be Improved



Looking at the map of active road projects in Anoka County, one probably notices it's an array of colors, shapes, numbers and acronyms — there are certainly many improvements going on right now to solidify the county's roadways for years to come, increase safety and improve traffic flow in the area.

All the following projects, except for the Hanson Boulevard reconstruction (No. 3), which is a 2-year project, are planned to be completed in 2019.

1. Crosstown Blvd./Lexington Ave. signal installation: There's a high volume of east-to-west traffic in this part of Ham Lake, so signals are being installed to better regulate traffic flow. Currently, Lexington Avenue is a through street in the area, and vehicles on side streets must wait for traffic breaks to turn onto Lexington.

2. Diverging diamond interchange construction: Construction of this traffic-control measure in Columbus is a MnDOT project with participation from Anoka County. The diverging diamond will replace the two-lane bridge at Lake Drive/Highway 97 and Interstate 35.

3. Hanson Blvd. reconstruction: The county will be turning the 2-lane rural roadway into a 4-lane divided urban roadway with turn lanes from Jay Street to Crosstown Boulevard in Andover.

4. Cedar Dr. NW bridge replacement: Precast concrete box culverts will be installed in place of the old timber bridge on this roadway in Oak Grove.

5. West Broadway Ave. shoulder widening: In Columbus, Anoka County will be widening the roadway shoulders to 8 feet in this area, with 90 percent of the cost being covered by federal safety improvement program funds.

6. Main St. NE reconstruction: This project, from Lexington Avenue to Opal Street in Blaine, includes a signal installation at Lever Street to control traffic near the new elementary school that is being built in the area.

7. West Freeway Dr. realignment: Phase 1 of this project included construction of a new roundabout on Lake Drive last summer. Phase 2 will include the realignment of existing West Freeway Drive to connect to the new roundabout on Lake Drive.

8. Hanson Boulevard railroad grade separation: This safety improvement project will entail this section of Hanson Boulevard in Coon Rapids being reconstructed overtop the railroad that currently passes through the thoroughfare. This will have a significant effect on emergency services response time.

Pavement Preservation

Anoka County has over \$9 million in pavement preservation projects scheduled for 2019. R & O on the map stands for "reclaim and overlay" — these roads will be completely ground up and that material will be used as the base for repaving. M & O stands "mill and overlay" — roads slated for this improvement will have part of the road ground off, and then they'll be topped off with a fresh layer of pavement.

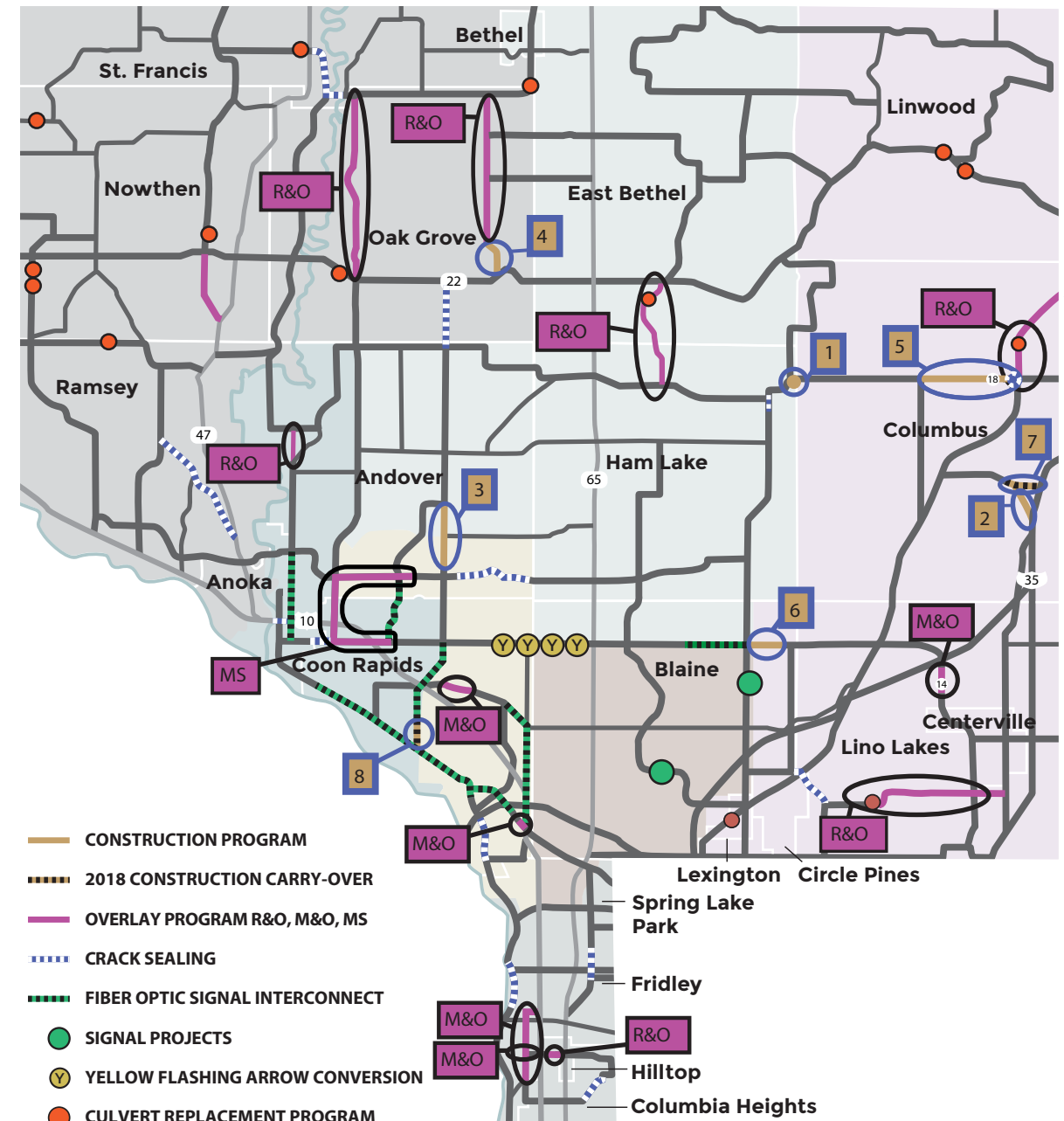
Fiber Optic Signal Interconnect Program

Ever been stopped at a red light, only to be stopped at the next three red lights? Anoka County is seeking to remedy this situation for motorists by expanding its fiber optic signal interconnect program, which essentially allows traffic signals to "talk" to one another to better regulate traffic flow. There are eight projects of this nature planned across the county in 2019.

Yellow Arrow Conversion

Flashing yellow arrow conversions are planned at four intersections along the Highway 14 corridor in 2019. This improvement will allow motorists to make left-hand turns when the arrows are flashing and the intersection is free of approaching traffic.

"All of these projects will improve traffic flow and safety on roads throughout the county," said Commissioner Scott Schulte, chair, Anoka County Board of Commissioners.



2019
ANOKA COUNTY
CONSTRUCTION & PRESERVATION
PROGRAM



Anoka County
MINNESOTA
Respectful. Innovative. Fiscally Responsible

U.S. HIGHWAY 10/169 IMPROVEMENTS in Anoka Fully Funded



All the funding for the Highway 10/169 improvements was secured this spring — over the past three years, this \$80 million project has gone from unfunded to fully funded.

The City of Anoka worked closely with Anoka County and MnDOT to develop a plan for the Highway 10/169 corridor that works for the community and the region. Construction for this critical thoroughfare is scheduled to begin in late 2021 and run through 2023.

Anoka County contributed \$4 million in county funds to this project, in addition to securing \$15 million in Local Road Improvement Program dollars during the 2018 legislative session. The rest of the funding for this project came from the City of Anoka, MnDOT, state bonding and the Metropolitan Council.

The project will transform this signalized corridor into a freeway with an interchange at Thurston Avenue, an underpass at Fair oak Avenue, and a reconstructed interchange at West Main Street. The project includes a frontage road network on both the north and south sides of the highway. Over 60,000 vehicles travel the corridor daily, which causes significant congestion during peak times. After this construction project is complete, corridor delays are expected to be reduced by 75 percent, and crashes are estimated to decrease by 57 percent.

“The entire region will benefit from the improvements along this corridor,” said District 1 Commissioner Matt Look. “It’s a big investment that will result in safer roads and fewer traffic jams.”

Right-of-Way Tree Removal and Trimming: Needed for Safety

Motorists who drive along roadways in Anoka County have likely seen contractors and public works crews busy trimming or removing trees that border roads.

Tree removal and trimming is a common work element on county road construction projects. It provides the necessary clear space to accommodate turn lane construction, make drainage improvements, install roadway signage/signals, and construct or modify pedestrian facilities. Sometimes tree removal or trimming takes place when no road construction projects are underway, which can lead to questions about why this work is being conducted.

There are several reasons Anoka County strives to keep the road right-of-way clear and clean, but the primary reason is for the safety of roadway users. When trees are in the right-of-way and too close to the roadside, they create dangerous obstacles for drivers if they lose control of their vehicles. A wider ditch, free of trees, is far safer than one that has large established vegetation.

Minnesotans also likely realize how abundant and active wildlife is in the state. In 2017, in Anoka County alone, there were 100 total crashes that involved deer, according to the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety. Having better sight lines along roadways due to the removal or trimming of trees reduces the chance of motorists colliding with deer and other animals, because they can see them sooner.

Tree removal and trimming also makes roadways safer in the winter. Roadways that are less shaded from trees thaw faster than ones that are sheltered from the sun. According to the National Weather Service, the average icy road fatality count is 3.6 times the total deaths from all other weather hazards combined.



Anoka County News

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS TO BENEFIT



Businesses & Residents

The period that comprises spring, summer and fall is unofficially dubbed “road construction season” in Minnesota.

Undoubtedly, many businesses owners and residents in Anoka County and other counties across the state become frustrated when roads are rerouted during construction and delays arise.

Please keep in mind the long-term goal with these projects is to improve efficiency and safety, and improvements to roads, especially those in growing areas, can lead to economic benefits for nearby businesses and homes, according to the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies.

Anoka County’s residential population is projected to surge by more than 80,000 people in the next 20 years, and 20,000 new jobs in the county are anticipated. With all these new residents, businesses and jobs, it’s important that Anoka County plans for the future and has highway infrastructure that accommodates for the rising population.

Businesses in certain areas of the county, like along the Highway 10 corridor, will see improved roadway efficiency

and safety soon, as the Highway 10 improvements in the City of Anoka are scheduled to begin in 2021, finishing in 2023. Further down the corridor, the City of Ramsey is working in partnership with Anoka County and MnDOT

to advance improvement plans for Highway 10. This is an area that sees in excess of 60,000 vehicles per day, and that number is expected to rise to 74,000 a day by 2040.

From the increase in job opportunities, workforce and road improvements, the future of Anoka County is looking bright with all of the changes to come.

By **2040**
ANOKA COUNTY
 + 80,000 people
 + 20,000 new jobs
BLAINE
 + 30,000 people
 (from 64,557 to 94,000 population)
Source: Metropolitan Council

Visit anokacountysuccess.org to learn more about the business opportunities in Anoka County.

Attorney’s Office Integral in Transportation Initiatives



The Anoka County Attorney’s Office is a key player in county-involved transportation endeavors. Transportation and transit projects involve property issues, infrastructure and road construction, and multiple funding sources. Like any big contracting firm, the county needs a good lawyer to help navigate all the contracts and jurisdictional issues involved.

The Civil Division of this office has worked on transportation issues ranging from park trails to highway

bridges to airports.

Attorneys navigate legal issues involved with land condemnation when the county identifies properties impacted by road expansions. They negotiate and litigate contract terms with construction companies. They broker agreements between government agencies when projects cross between cities or counties. They facilitate federal and state funding agreements for transit projects. And they provide counsel on long-term planning.

FEATURED EVENTS

Big Truck Day



Monday, July 29, Noon – 1:30 p.m.
Roe Family Singers 12:30 p.m.
Rum River Library

See big trucks up close and speak with the drivers, take a peek inside. Stay for a special musical performance by the Roe Family Singers and meet community representatives inside the library.

Dracula, Frankenstein, and King Kong: Monster Movies of the '20s & '30s

Tuesday, July 30, 6 p.m.
Northtown Library

Presented by North Metro TV's Eric Houston. Trace the history of monster movies from the silent era's "Nosferatu" and Lon Chaney, through Universal Pictures' Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff, to King Kong. Learn how Lugosi almost didn't play Dracula, see rare photographs and great film clips.

Book Puzzler

Thursdays Aug. 1, Sept. 5, Oct. 3,
1 p.m.
North Central Library

Combination book discussion and puzzle solving event - discuss a book while putting together jigsaw puzzles or solving crossword, Sudoku, or other types of puzzles. Call 763-324-1570 North Central Library for book choices.

Mobile Menders Clinic

Monday, Aug. 12, 5 p.m.
Mississippi Library

Have a shirt with a button that's missing, a blanket with a tear in it that you can't bear to part with, or a pair of pants in desperate need of hemming? Mobile Menders will be onsite to provide a free mending clinic on a first-come, first-served basis. The menders ask that you bring a maximum of three clean items per session. Walk-ins welcome! www.mobilemendersewing.com



The Wolfman, the Creature, and Godzilla: Monster Movies of the '40s & '50s

Tuesday, Aug. 13, 6 p.m.
Northtown Library

Presented by North Metro TV's Eric Houston. Monster movies came roaring back to movie screens in the 1940s and '50s with some of the greatest monsters yet: the Wolfman, the Creature from the Black Lagoon, Godzilla, and more. Learn how the fading genre came back with a vengeance in the '40s, how Lon Chaney Jr. became Universal's go-to monster movie star, and how America saved Godzilla from obscurity.

Anime Matinee: Summer Wars

Saturday, Aug. 17, 1 p.m.
Johnsville Library

Anime fans can attend a viewing of Mamoru Hosoda's feature film, "Summer Wars." Chairs are provided, but feel free to bring your own pillows and blankets to get comfy. Cosplay is encouraged. Bring your own snacks and drinks. Rated PG.

Dementia Dialogue

Tuesday, Sept. 3, 6:30 p.m.
Rum River Library

A book and film discussion group that explores dementia through stories, both real and fictional. Presented in coordination with the Anoka County Family Caregiver Connection. We will discuss the titles "Dad's Camera" by Ross Watkins and "Forget Me Not" by Nancy Van Laan. Call 763 324-1520 to request your copies of the books.

Bike Safety

Saturday, Sept. 7, 1:30 p.m.
Northtown Library

Want to ride your bike but wish you felt more confident about how to ride safely on the roads? Come learn all about bicycle safety on our bicycle course and how to use Bike-Fix-It stations for repairs.

Family Fun Night

Tuesday, Sept. 10, 6:30 p.m.
Centennial Library

Monthly program that includes a story and related craft project. Fun literacy or STEM-based activities including songs, games, and photo ops. Suited for school-aged children (4-10) and their parents or caregivers.

Escape Room

Wednesday, Sept. 8, 4 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 21, 10 a.m.
Crooked Lake Library

Solve the puzzle, decipher the clues, and escape the room. Call the Crooked Lake Library at 763-324-1530 to reserve a spot for your group. Ages 10-plus.

Now Open: Centennial Library

100 Civic Heights Circle, Circle Pines
Phone: 763-324-1540

The remodeled library has been completely transformed with new and improved spaces including a creative lab, the IQ KITCHEN featuring

- Full classroom kitchen
- 3D printer
- Sewing machines
- Silhouette vinyl/paper cutter
- Kitchen Collection

New spaces also include the community room, private study rooms, art shadow box exhibits and more.



Local Author Fair

Saturday, Oct. 5, 10:15 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Northtown Library

Save the date for the 4th Annual Local Author Fair. Connect with local writers living and working in the community. Author Brian Freeman will kick off the event as the keynote speaker. Known for his fast-paced, psychological thrillers, Freeman is a winner of the Minnesota Book Awards in 2019 for Genre Fiction. Following the keynote address, there will be an open exhibit hall for authors to discuss books, sell their work, and chat with community members until 1 p.m.

Creative Hands

Friday Oct. 11, 10 a.m.
St. Francis Library

Create something new with a hands-on craft project. Using toothpicks and other household items, learn to paint dotted mandalas on Lake Superior stones. Instructions and materials are provided.

Visit anokacountylibrary.org for more information on upcoming events & programs.

FEATURED COLLECTIONS

Free access with your library card

New Kitchen Collection

The only bakeware collection in the metro area! Save space in your cabinets, while expanding your ability to try new recipes and techniques. 20 different cake pan shapes allow you to bake unique cakes specifically tailored for your special occasions.



Foreign Language Collection

- Books in 10-plus languages
- Languages include Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Vietnamese, and Somali
- Non-fiction and fiction for all ages

EBooks MN also offers digital books in languages other than English.

Improve your English skills or learn a second language - *Transparent Language Online* offers reading, speaking, writing, and listening resources in 80 languages.

Public Health, Mercy Hospital Addressing Area Health Concerns

To better understand health issues in the county, Anoka County Public Health and Environmental Services partnered with Mercy Hospital, nonprofits and others last year to conduct a community health needs assessment.

As part of this effort, 4,000 surveys were mailed out to randomly selected residents in Anoka County, and the survey was made available online. About 850 adults completed the survey.

The result of the survey was the formulation of summary reports that detail health topics of interest or concern to stakeholders in Anoka County. The summary reports touch on overall adult health, community concerns, health habits, health status/health care access and mental health.

With this data in hand, Public Health and Mercy Hospital organized four focus groups over the winter and early spring to gain more information about community health concerns. The focus groups were conducted with the Anoka County Head Start Policy Council, the Northwest Community Health Advisory Council, Alexandra House and the Liberian Health Initiative.

After considering the top community concerns from the survey, along with other information, Public Health and Mercy Hospital worked with key community partners and stakeholders to prioritize those issues facing Anoka County residents. Priorities identified were: chronic diseases and health habits, drugs and substance use, mental health, and violence emerging as priorities to address in the next several years.

The feedback presented at these meetings was recorded and analyzed to distill it into key themes. Those themes are now in the process of being used to tailor what's going into the Anoka County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHIP is a 2020-2022 initiative focused on a collection of activities aimed at making positive changes on health priorities facing the community. It is facilitated by Anoka County Public Health staff, but it is owned by the community.

Sivarajah is New Anoka County Administrator



The Anoka County Board of Commissioners appointed Rhonda Sivarajah as the new Anoka County administrator at the board's May 14 regular meeting.

Sivarajah moved into the position June 12, after the retirement of Jerry Soma, who has served as administrator since 2011.

The selection of Sivarajah came after an internal search process that yielded 24 applicants. Sivarajah had been a member of the Anoka County Board of Commissioners, representing District 6, since 2003. She



The next step with this process is working to implement changes that positively affect the health of the public in the area. Anoka County Public Health staff will be meeting with the Community Health Advisory Committee — a group of people representing various community organizations and stakeholders — in September to review strategies aimed at addressing the health priorities identified through the assessment.

"This partnership between Anoka County Public Health and Mercy Hospital has yielded positive results when it comes to identifying important health issues in our area," said District 4 County Commissioner Mandy Meisner. "Now we can use the data collected to improve the collective health of the community."

To learn more about the community health needs assessment and community health reports, visit anokacounty.us/2212/Community-Health-Reports

had been board chair since 2011. Prior to her tenure on the board, she worked as an income maintenance supervisor and financial assistance specialist at Anoka County for more than 12 years.

"I'm honored to be transitioning into this new role at Anoka County," Sivarajah said. "During my time in the county, both as an employee and a county commissioner, I've come to learn a great deal about how the county operates, and I'm prepared to learn even more as county administrator. I'm excited to work with the commissioners, county staff and the public to ensure Anoka County remains a great place to live and work."

Enhancements to Improve Experience at Chomonix Golf Course



Those who have played Chomonix Golf Course in Lino Lakes know it has much to offer. Situated within the Chain of Lakes Park Preserve, the course is a nature oasis not far from the heart of the metro.

Users of this 18-hole public course can enjoy the challenges of the winding greens, all the while taking in the sights and sounds of wildlife such as deer, foxes, pheasants and herons. There's plenty to like about Chomonix, and now Anoka County is undertaking initiatives to make it even more of a destination.

As part of the county's mission to be fiscally responsible, it conducted a review of every county department last year and found Chomonix was an area that needed further review. To improve the financial standing of the course, a 3-year plan was developed to carefully evaluate golf course expenses and bolster revenues.

The approach the county has taken to enhance the course is multi-faceted. One of the primary additions to the course is the new golf operations manager, Mark Johnson. Johnson accepted the position at Chomonix and started his employment with Anoka County April 15. Previously, Johnson was the head golf professional at Talega Golf Club for 10 years in San Clemente, California. He is a 2008 graduate of the San Diego Golf Academy with a degree in golf complex operations and management.

Upgrades to Chomonix's facilities have also been completed. A new roof and siding were put on the clubhouse, and the interior restrooms were remodeled. The pro shop was reorganized with new apparel and other saleable items, and work was done to improve the Blue Heron Banquet Room. Chomonix also now features a new fleet of golf carts, and new mats have been installed at the driving range.

Over the past several years, forest management initiatives have been undertaken — some trees have been pruned and others removed to slightly widen the fairways on certain holes.

To keep elected officials and the public aware of the financial standing of Chomonix, Anoka County established an online transparency portal. This webpage can be accessed by visiting anokacounty.us/691/Transparency-Portal and clicking on the "Chomonix Golf Budget Information Link" at the bottom of the public notices.

"The enhancements at Chomonix seek to make this course more of a destination for golfers in our community and surrounding areas," said District 5 Commissioner Mike Gamache. "We're excited to see what the future holds for Chomonix."

Check Out Chomonix's New Tee Time Reservation System

Chomonix has a new mobile-friendly reservation system called "Chronogolf." Simply click on the "book a tee time" tab on Chomonix's website, chomonix.com, and select a day and a time that works for you. Reservations, either for tee times or for the Blue Heron Room, can also still be made by calling 763-324-3434.

BIKING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION



Many people think of bikes as equipment for recreation, not vehicles for transportation. With more than 100 miles of regional trails in Anoka County, utilizing bikes for transportation to work or other facilities might be an available option. There are 10 regional trails in Anoka County providing connections to community facilities and amenities throughout the county. Being prepared before you tackle this new method of transportation should include researching different ways to get to your destination. After you determine a route, practice on the weekends to get comfortable with the timing and feel of the route. Biking turn signals are important for communicating with other trail users. Always signal about 100 feet before making a turn or lane change to give vehicles or other bikers enough time to know where you are headed.

A few parks in the county have installed bike fix-it stations where you can make quick repairs or add air to your tires free of charge. Bunker Hills Regional Park, Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve, Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park and Riverfront Regional Park all have these stations in case if you need a little extra help on your way to your next destination. If you already enjoy biking for recreation, we encourage you to try one of the many miles of trails in the Anoka County Parks system as alternative transportation to your next destination.

5 BENEFITS OF BIKING



SAVE MONEY
The American Automobile Association (AAA) estimates that the real cost to drive a car one mile is about 54 cents. At 15,000 miles per year in an average sized sedan, that adds up to \$8,115.



STAY FIT
Biking provides a low impact exercise as you travel.



SAVE TIME
A bike is often the fastest way to take short trips. For longer trips, combine a bike with a bus or trail.



REDUCE YOUR IMPACT
An average passenger vehicle produces tons of emissions each year, affecting air quality. Bike travel is virtually emissions free.



ENJOY YOURSELF
It's enjoyable and suited to socializing; it's easy to ride and chat.



WARGO NATURE CENTER'S **FREE**

FALL FESTIVAL

OCTOBER 19 • 2-4 PM

CIDER PRESS, NATURE ACTIVITIES, AND MORE!



MONIKER OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

FEATURING THE COMMON MAN, DAN COLE, FROM KFXN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

1:00 PM SHOTGUN START

12:00 PM LUNCH

\$59 Includes lunch, 18 holes, cart, driving range, and contest hole prizes

SIGN UP AT CHOMONIX GOLF COURSE OR CALL 763-324-3434

Know the Difference Between Licensed and Unlicensed Child Care

Parents of young children are probably already aware of the challenges when it comes to finding available, convenient and affordable child care. Even though parents want the best for their children, these factors sometimes have to be considered. That might mean seeking a form of unlicensed care.

Many people have likely heard recent tragic stories in the news about deaths of young children occurring in child care, which is very unsettling. It is important to be aware of significant differences between licensed and unlicensed child care. Visit anokacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/21846/What-Does-It-Mean-If-You-Choose-Unlicensed-Care to learn what it means if you choose unlicensed child care.

Licensed child care providers must meet many requirements intended to help them provide safe, quality child care. Visit anokacounty.us/666/Finding-Child-Care to obtain resources to assist parents in locating child care and making informed decisions.

To obtain detailed licensing history for family child care providers, email childcarelicensing@co.anoka.mn.us or call the Child Care Licensing Unit at 763-324-1235. Those who are also considering child care centers can call the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Licensing Division, at 651-431-6500 — press 3 then 1, or email dhs.ccc.licensing@state.mn.us to inquire about specific center licensing history.



Foster Care Online Orientation

Making the Process of Becoming a Foster Parent Simpler



For those interested in becoming foster parents or learning more about the opportunity, the ability to start that process is just a few clicks away.

Through its Connected Kids Initiative, which was developed in 2016 to help Anoka County mitigate the dwindling number of licensed foster care homes available to serve families, the county developed an online orientation for potential foster care providers that simplifies the process of becoming licensed.

The orientation is designed so people can complete it on any device — computer, tablet or cell phone. Previously, orientations were held every other month, so if someone called the day after orientation they'd have to wait two months to start

the process. If they couldn't come to a daytime event, and chose to wait for an evening orientation, that would be a four-month delay. This likely led to losing people along the way.

Anoka County is the first county in the state to offer an online foster care orientation process. Other counties see Anoka County's Child Foster Care website as a helpful resource and frequently refer their clients to it.

The orientation includes a foster parent story, an overview of foster care, information about the types of children served, a section that has examples of foster parent characteristics, information about the licensing process, foster parent training, financial considerations, frequently asked questions, next steps and interviews featuring Anoka County foster parents.

Visit anokacounty.us/3204/Child-Foster-Care to find out if becoming a foster care provider is right for you.

"This online orientation is informative, easy to use, and more importantly, it's helping our county gain much-needed foster parents," said District 3 Anoka County Commissioner Robyn West.

ANOKA COUNTY JAIL

WORKING TO MEET HEALTH CARE NEEDS



Health care has been the subject of complex conversations in recent years for elected officials and the public. This issue becomes even more complicated when applied to the people housed within jail facilities. It is critical for the public to understand that providing health care to people in custody is a constitutional obligation. Jail staff are sometimes asked to define constitutional health care. Unfortunately, this is not easy to explain. The definition changes frequently based on rulings by federal courts. In many cases, the first sign jails have that they may be lacking in this area is when they are named in a lawsuit.

It is important to understand that jails are a microcosm of society. Jail staff see individuals with the same medical and mental health issues that are found in everyday society. For example, as the population ages, an increased number of elderly people are detained in the jail. This directly impacts jail medical services and the cost of these services. The jail is also seeing people incarcerated who need a high level of care due to physical, addiction, and mental health issues.

The Anoka County Jail is currently striving to meet health care needs through a combination of trained medical personnel and trained jail detention deputies. The jail currently contracts with Anoka County Public Health and Environmental Services (PHES) to provide health care for detainees in the jail. PHES utilizes a combination of internal staff, contract staff and specialized health care providers to meet detainees' needs. These services are provided 7 days a week, 16 hours a day. Jail detention deputies also receive medical and mental health training. Unfortunately, this level of care is inadequate given the ever-increasing needs of detainees.

So, what is the jail doing to meet these needs? Jail staff continually review and assess the services the jail provides, and an outside firm was hired to look at medical services. This has helped the jail identify two critical gaps.

The first issue involves medical coverage. The 16 hours a day nursing staff was on site was not adequate. People with profound medical issues are frequently brought into the jail outside of established coverage hours. This puts jail detention staff, who have less medical training than nurses,



in the unenviable position of having to address these medical issues. In addition, the jail is seeing more and more individuals requiring 24-hour care arrested and held in the facility. To address these concerns, the Anoka County Board of Commissioners granted approval for 1.5 additional registered nurse positions. This gives the jail 24/7 medical coverage. The second issue being addressed involves the mentally ill in the jail. Some studies have indicated that as high as 50 percent of the people incarcerated in jails have some form of mental health issue. Some of these individuals are also at risk self-injury and/or suicide. Many of these individuals run the risk of becoming victims if not properly treated. Increasing mental health hours allows the jail to provide better care for these individuals, treat their underlying conditions and house them in a safe and secure manner.

Dealing with the mental health of detainees at the jail is also always a challenge. To address this issue, a jail mental health project work group, composed of jail command staff, Human Services leadership and personnel from other county agencies, was established. This group looked at mental health needs in the jail and recommended an increase of 8 hours of mental health services. This recommendation was well received by the Board of Commissioners and is being implemented.

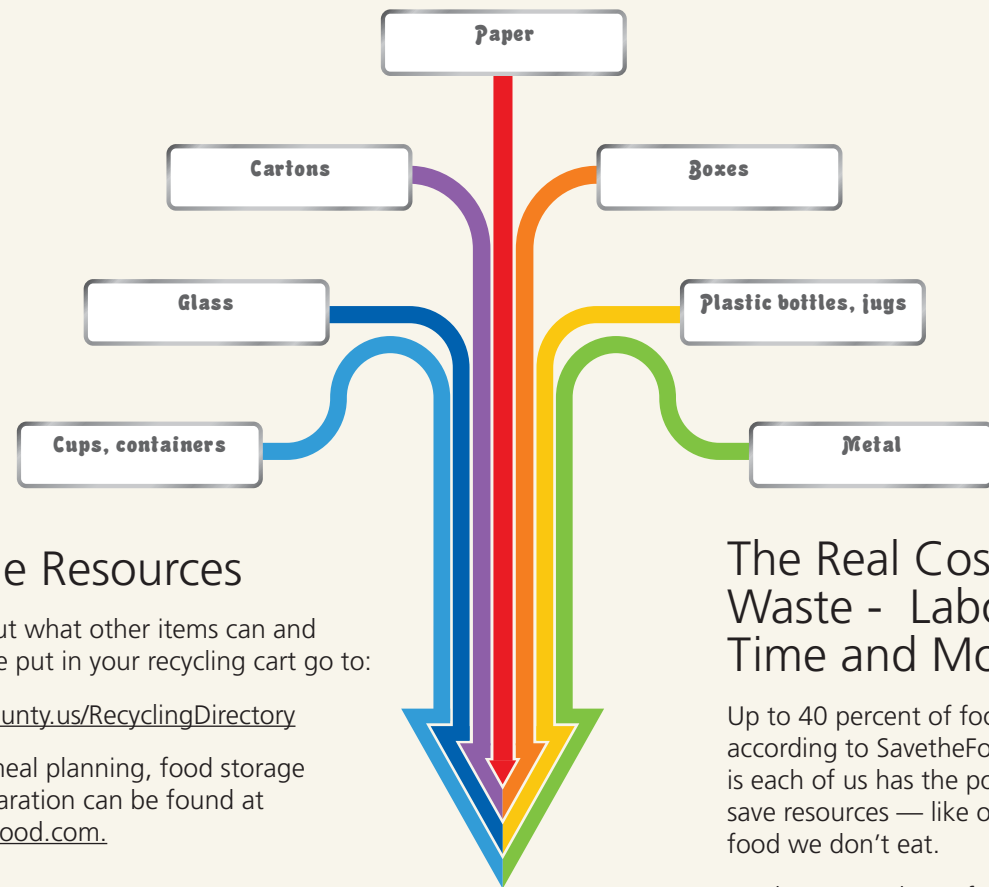
"These changes at the jail help Anoka County meet its obligation to provide health care to detainees, and they also increase safety for jail staff," said District 2 Anoka County Commissioner Julie Braastad.

Recycle Smart: Know What Goes in Your Recycling Cart

Recycling has been in the news a lot lately due to shifts in international policy changes. This has left many people wondering what is happening to the recycling placed in their carts, and what they can do to support recycling. First, know your recyclables are getting recycled! Unlike on the coasts where they rely on international markets, recyclers in Minnesota send most of the material they collect to local and regional markets to be processed into new products. And Minnesota state law prohibits materials separated for recycling from being trashed.

The best thing you can do to support recycling is to recycle the right stuff!

Keep these items out of the recycling cart: Plastic bags, large plastic items, metal items other than a food or beverage container, single-use plastic utensils and straws, paper plates, cups and to-go containers, propane tanks, cords and string lights, needles and sharps, styrofoam, clothing.



Online Resources

To find out what other items can and cannot be put in your recycling cart go to:

AnokaCounty.us/RecyclingDirectory

Tips on meal planning, food storage and preparation can be found at SaveTheFood.com.



The Real Cost of Food Waste - Labor, Resources, Time and Money

Up to 40 percent of food in America is wasted, according to SavetheFood.com. The good news is each of us has the power in our own homes to save resources — like our hard-earned cash on food we don't eat.

Anoka County has a food storage guide to help you keep your food fresher, safer and longer. Go to: AnokaCounty.us/recycle, look under publications for a food storage guide.



JOB TRAINING CENTER

Helps Local Man Start New Career



In August of 2015, Felipe Ruiz lost his manufacturing manager job as the company he worked for shut down and relocated to India. With a wife and eight children to take care of, Ruiz felt little to no hope for the future. After Ruiz lost his job, he began searching the job market to find suitable employment and earn enough income to take care of his family.

Ruiz enrolled in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) at the Anoka County Job Training Center and began working with a senior vocational counselor. After exploring various career options, Ruiz expressed high interest to pursue truck driving. Later, researching the requirements to obtain a CDL Class A license, Ruiz took the CDL Class A permit exam. A few weeks after obtaining his CDL permit, Ruiz applied to several truck driving companies. Ruiz soon received 15 pre-hire letters from various companies.

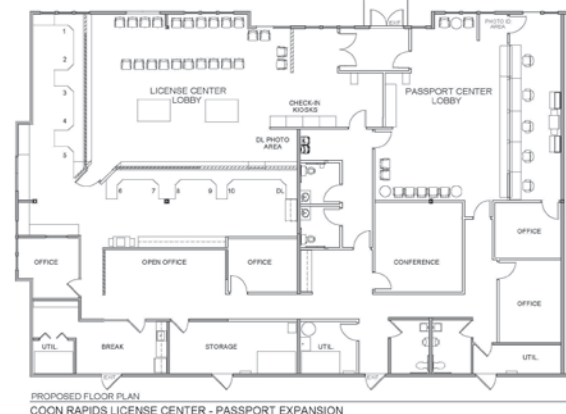
The next step for Ruiz was to take the CDL Class A training program to obtain his license. After discussing this with his senior vocational counselor, the Anoka County Job Training Center approved his CDL training at Century College. This fast track 4-week course was difficult for Ruiz. After the second week, Ruiz called his senior vocational counselor and requested to drop out of the program. He had little hope he would pass the license exam due to the vast amount of information he had yet to learn. After some brainstorming with his counselor, Ruiz decided to continue and complete the program. With 14 hours per day of studying on top of job searching, Ruiz obtained his CDL Class A license. Ruiz was one of the two in the class of 15 students to pass the exam.

Days after the training ended, Ruiz began a 3-week training program in Wisconsin at Schneider International. He spent 12-hour days studying and was away from his family for three weeks. After passing the weekly exams and successfully completing the training program at Schneider International, Ruiz was offered a full-time job with benefits as a local truck driver for US Foods. Ruiz accepted the offer at US Foods, his family's income increased substantially, and he successfully exited the Minnesota Family Investment Program.

Fast forward, June 2019 — Ruiz is going on year two of owning his own truck driving business. Two years ago, he purchased a beautiful 5-bedroom home and this fall, two of his children will begin college. Ruiz has many plans for his future including starting another business and branching out to the food industry. He credits his successes to the Anoka County Job Training Center for giving him the opportunity to attend the CDL Class A training at Century College and supporting him throughout the process. This opportunity paved the way for a successful bright future for Ruiz and his family.

CareerForce in Blaine, 1201 89th Ave. NE, continues to help people like Ruiz every day through its various programs, which includes Career Connections. This program offers no-cost training to eligible applicants for careers in fields such as office and administration, precision sheet metal, health care pathways, 911 telecommunications, call centers and warehouses. For more information on how to start, advance or change your career, contact CareerForce in Blaine at 763-324-2300, visit careerforcemn.com/blaine, or email CareerForce@state.mn.us

Expansion of Coon Rapids License Center, Passport Office Planned



With just over 120,000 transactions annually, the Coon Rapids License Center and Passport Office is Anoka County's busiest location.

Those who frequent this location, 455 99th Ave. NW, Ste. 100, know the office can get packed during peak

hours, and oftentimes there's just not enough space to comfortably accommodate all the people who come in to conduct business. To remedy this issue, plans are in the works to increase this location's footprint by 3,000 square feet, almost doubling its current size.

"Increasing the size of the Coon Rapids License Center and Passport Office should alleviate some of the frustration that arises when this location gets crowded," said Scott Schulte, chair, Anoka County Board of Commissioners.

The expansion is planned to be complete by late fall. Construction will be conducted in phases, so service interruption at the Coon Rapids License Center and Passport Office will be minimal. As part of the construction, the county is considering adding kiosks to cut down on paper usage and streamline driver's license application and renewal processes.

Anoka County
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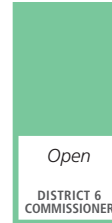
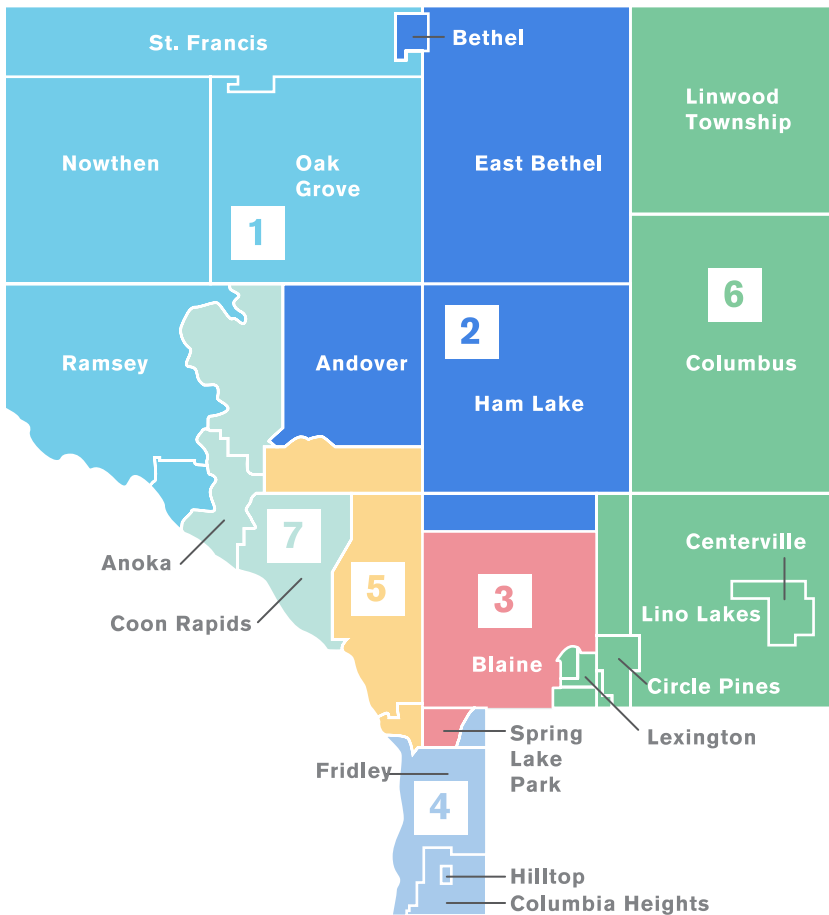
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County board meetings are generally held the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 9:30 a.m. in Room 705 of the Anoka County Government Center in Anoka. Watch board meetings live at anokacounty.us. "Anoka County News" is produced by Anoka County Communications, Erik Thorson, Director, 763-324-4612 publicinfo@co.anoka.mn.us • anokacounty.us/newsletter
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