



# Richfield State of the City



*Above: Rendering of the Richfield Municipal Center*

Dear Richfield residents:

The City of Richfield has a lot to reflect on from the past year. A few of the highlights include: Groundbreaking on the new Municipal Center building, re-opening of the Lyndale Avenue bridge over 494, and maintaining a balanced budget in a tough economic environment.

The most notable highlight of the year for the City was the groundbreaking of the new Richfield Municipal Center building back in October. Members of the City Hall Advisory Task Force joined the City Council at the ceremonial event that capped years of meetings, studies, and planning. At approximately 98,000 square feet, the new facility will house the Police Department, Fire Department, Motor Vehicle Licensing, and City administration. Included is meeting room space that will be available for public use. Other new features include covered and secured parking for public safety vehicles and a site plan that minimizes the building's impact on the surrounding park.

The Municipal Center is being built on the same site as the existing City Hall building at 67<sup>th</sup> and Portland Ave. The existing facility will remain open during construction of the new building thanks to some well-planned construction phasing and the addition of temporary parking spaces both in front of and behind the building. In the end, this is a building that will be more accommodating to the public and to the staff who provide the outstanding City services residents have come to expect.

In late October, the Lyndale Avenue Bridge over 494 re-opened to traffic. The bridge was down for nearly one year, causing a temporary inconvenience for neighboring residents and businesses. The new bridge is much larger and the traffic flow is greatly improved. Plus, the new bridge is needed as part of future plans to improve the 494 corridor. Richfield Mayor Debbie Goettel kicked off a grand opening event that featured many dignitaries including U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar and MNDOT Commissioner Tom Sorel. The bridge would not have been possible, however, had it not been for the federal funding that former Congressman Martin Sabo secured.

Progress on the Honoring All Veterans Memorial continued in 2009. Three large impressive black granite tablets were installed with the names of individuals who served in the U.S. armed forces. The memorial, located appropriately in Richfield's Veterans Memorial Park near the Legion Hall along Portland Avenue, will continue to grow in the coming years. The centerpiece of the memorial is a statue of Charles Lindberg, a W.W. II hero from Richfield.

Although there's much to be excited about, these are challenging times for the City of Richfield. The State has reduced the City's Local Government Aid over the years (from \$3.5 million in 1999 to just over \$2 million in 2009). Some steps have been taken over the year to help offset these budget constraints, including early retirement packages and staff reductions. Still, the City's budget remains steady and has received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association.

- Mayor Debbie Goettel and Council Members Sue Sandahl, Pat Elliot, Fred Wroge, and Tom Fitzhenry

# Looking Back at 2009

This report contains some of the City of Richfield's accomplishments and highlights over the past year. Many of the topics reflect goals the City Council established at the beginning of 2009.



Members of Richfield's City Hall Advisory Task Force joined the City Council at the Ground-breaking Ceremony in October.



Out and About co-hosts Steve Devich and Pam Dmytrenko filmed the 100th show by reviewing clips from previous episodes.



The Property Excellence Task Force assisted staff in redesigning the 'Welcome to Richfield' guidebook for residents.

# Executive & Administrative Services Departments

## Richfield Municipal Center Celebrates Groundbreaking

The City held a groundbreaking ceremony on October 31<sup>st</sup> to celebrate the new building and to acknowledge the efforts of all the residents who served on the City Hall Task Force (CHAT). The City hired Stahl Construction, Wold Architects, and Orfield Laboratories to assist with various aspects of the project including construction management and design.

Site preparation began in October with construction to begin early this year. The project is scheduled to be complete by the summer of 2011. The existing building will remain operational until that time thanks to careful planning and the addition of temporary parking along Portland Avenue.

Residents can follow the building's progress via the City web site where there's a link to project information. The project hotline is 612-861-0511.

## Out & About in Richfield Airs 100th Show

Richfield's government access program, 'Out & About in Richfield,' filmed its 100th show in March. The show, hosted by City Manager Steve Devich and Assistant to the City Manager Pam Dmytrenko, included many clips from past shows. Out and About can be seen on cable channel 16. For those without cable, the show is available online on the City's web site.

## 'Welcome to Richfield' Guide Gets Revamped

City staff and the Property Excellence Task Force worked together to redesign the 'Welcome to Richfield' book. 'Welcome to Richfield' is a guide that contains everything new and existing residents need to know about the City. The new book is more concise, accurate, and costs much less to produce.

The City is looking to distribute the new and improved guidebook to residents in 2010. However, the book can always be viewed online on the City web site. Just look for the 'Resident Guide' link on the top right.

## Airport Update

As of December 2009, the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) completed noise mitigation modifications to approximately 170 eligible Richfield homes. Many homes are in construction or pre-construction phases. Only homes located in the 60-65 DNL of the 2007 Noise Exposure Map are eligible to receive varying levels of noise relief. For questions, visit [www.macnoise.com](http://www.macnoise.com).

## Budget and Tax Levy

In December, the City Council approved the 2010 Budget and tax levy. The City will operate in 2010 with a balanced General Fund budget of just under \$19.2 million. The 2010 gross tax levy represents an increase over the 2009 tax levy of 6.88%. The increase is comprised of four components; a General Fund Levy increase of 2.26%, Debt Service Tax Levy that includes bonds for the new Richfield Municipal Center, which represents 4.36%, a tax levy to recover a portion of the 2008 LGA Unallotment, and a tax levy for the Cedar Point Tax Abatement District that makes up the balance of the gross levy at .03%.

## Issuance of New Debt

During 2009, the City successfully issued Series 2009A bonds in the amount of approximately \$4.5 million. These bonds will be used to fund the construction of the new Richfield Municipal Center.

## Local Government Aid Reduction (LGA)

In December 2008, the Governor unallotted portions of state aids and credits payable to Minnesota counties and cities. Furthermore, the unallotments were effective for 2009 and into 2010. For the City of Richfield the unallotments will result in reductions of LGA of \$619,183 in 2008, \$561,357 in 2009 and an estimated \$1.295 million for 2010. It has been forecast that the State's budget deficit issues will continue to the next biennium budget which could result in further reductions.

# Public Works Department

## ROAD PROJECTS

- The City reached substantial completion and celebrated the opening of the new Lyndale Avenue Bridge over I-494.
- The Metropolitan Council completed the design for the 75<sup>th</sup> Street / 76<sup>th</sup> Street sewer interceptor project. The project will include a new streetscape and a regional bike trail along portions of the route. Construction will begin on both the east and west sides in the spring and will conclude in 2011.
- This year Mn/DOT wrapped up its third year in the four-year construction period needed to rebuild the 35W and Highway 62 Crosstown Project. To improve safety and mobility in the commons area motorists will be directed to Lyndale Avenue to access TH 62 and 66<sup>th</sup> Street to access I-35W. For more information contact the Crosstown Project Hotline 1-866-743-6590.
- The City completed an evaluation of the major north-south arterials (Portland, Nicollet, Lyndale, and Penn Avenues) to determine if the existing design meets current and future needs. Following several public meetings, the Council approved the Transportation Commission's recommendation of four-lane to three-lane conversions on the four arterials. Sidewalk and bicycle access would be improved as would vehicle traffic.

## STREET MAINTENANCE

- In reaction to cuts in Richfield's Local Government Aid, the City initiated a Street Light User Fee. Roughly \$271,000 will be generated and the money will be used to recover operating costs for the City's street light system.
- The Public Works Department utilized approximately \$700,000 in franchise fee revenue to sealcoat 30.2 miles of streets. In preparation, manholes and catch basins, and curbs were rebuilt.

## FORESTRY

- The City's Forestry Division joined other organizations to help eradicate Gypsy Moth populations within the City of Richfield. Aerial spraying was conducted and initial data shows that the spraying has been effective.
- Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a new, non-native tree pest. This tree pest has killed millions of ash trees and has recently been found in St. Paul. Richfield has roughly 3,300 ash trees on the boulevards making the City susceptible to an infestation. Staff is currently working on an EAB Preparedness Plan.
- Forestry Staff marked 490 public and private elm trees for removal. Time limits for removal, planting new trees, and stump removals made it impossible for staff to remove all of the trees. Of the 490 removals, contractors removed 390 of the Dutch Elm Diseased trees. This was paid through an increase in franchise fees.

## UTILITIES

- As a result of Minnesota Statute, section 103G.291, public water suppliers serving more than 1,000 people are required to establish a "Conservation Rate Structure". This rate structure is to encourage conservation and was in place by January 1, 2010. Richfield's Rate Structure is as follows:
  - ⇒ \$2.49 per 1000 gallons 0-25,000 gallons
  - ⇒ \$2.74 per 1000 gallons 26,000 – 50,000 gallons
  - ⇒ \$2.99 per 1000 gallons 51,000 gallons and over.
  - ⇒ \$2.99 per 1000 gallons – Irrigation Only Accounts.
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) refers to a system that collects water utility data from various points within a building or in remote locations and then sends this data to a central computer. The computer then assists the operator in controlling components of the utility systems. Utility operations can control components such as water towers (2), well houses (7), sanitary lift stations (9), and storm lift station (1).

## CENTRAL GARAGE

- The Central Garage rebuilt two units in 2009. A Caterpillar front-end loader (Unit #366) and a MT Trackless sidewalk plow (Unit #386). These units were fully depreciated and due for replacement. The total cost for replacing these units would have been approximately \$280,000. Both units were rebuilt primarily in-house by our heavy equipment mechanic at a total cost of just under \$24,000.



Richfield Mayor Debbie Goettel and U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar were among the dignitaries to help open the Lyndale Bridge in October.



The new Lyndale Avenue bridge features a single point urban diamond configuration.



Mn/DOT wrapped up its third year of construction on the 35W / Hwy 62 project. The project should be complete in December 2010.



This front-end loader was rebuilt instead of replaced. The City saved over \$200,000 in 2009 by rebuilding equipment like this.

# Public Safety Department



Police Officers and canines participated in the Department's Teen Police Academy.



Members of the Community Emergency Response Team.



Firefighters responded to over 3,600 fire and medical emergency calls in 2009.



The National Fire Prevention Week Open House in October saw a great turnout.

## POLICE

- In response to a retirement, the Department promoted one Police Detective.
- The Police Department placed an officer on the Hennepin County Violent Offender Task Force.
- Thanks to a Justice Assistance Grant, the Department purchased a new SWAT vehicle.
- Staff conducted the Department's first ever Citizens Police Academy in Spanish.
- Police implemented a community CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Program.
- The Joint Community Police Partnership sponsored a Teen Academy and Cinco De Mayo festival.
- Police staff helped coordinate the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Safety Day program for 60 fourth graders.
- The City participated in the State's Safe & Sober traffic enforcement program.

## INSPECTIONS

- Staff issued more than 4,416 permits and performed over 6,572 inspections for construction related work.
- Over 630 homes received Point-of-Sale inspections.
- The City issued rental licenses for 222 apartment buildings, 114 duplexes and 388 single family homes.
- Revenue from permit and rental license fees totaled approximately \$739,000.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

- From April to November, 1,549 properties received advance notice letters and were inspected by staff under the City's Neighborhood Inspection Program. Of that number, 156 properties were found to have a total of 223 violations.
- H1N1 flu shot clinics were held in Bloomington, Edina and Richfield. They were staffed, organized and put on by Bloomington Public Health using grant funds that were received from the Centers for Disease Control. School clinics were also held in Richfield for school age children. Thousands of H1N1 flu shots were administered. Bloomington Public Health has done an excellent job and has received many positive comments from participants.

# Fire Department

## 2009 STATISTICS

- Firefighters responded to over 3,600 fire and emergency medical calls.
- Firefighting efforts saved \$8.5 million in property from direct loss.
- With an average response of 3 minutes, fire losses are kept low while chances of surviving a medical emergency are improved.
- Over 300 fire and life safety inspections were performed.

## 2009 EVENTS

- Two personnel responded as part of a State of Minnesota incident management team to aid the City of Moorhead with planning and organization during the spring flooding and control efforts.
- Firefighters rescued an unconscious female driver from a burning car on Highway 62. She made a full recovery.
- Two Firefighters with 59 years of combined service retired and one new Firefighter was hired.
- The Department was pleased with the strong turnout for the annual National Fire Prevention Week Open House in October.

## OTHER

- The Fire Department received a federal grant of \$70,000 to purchase computers for fire response vehicles. These computers will aid in dispatching the closest unit to an emergency, provide technical and hazard information during emergencies and streamline our Fire/Life Safety inspection program.
- The Automatic Aid program (utilizing resources of nearby departments) continues to help in large-scale emergencies to keep fire losses low.

# Community Development



Four new homes were built with assistance from the Richfield Rediscovered program.



Five Richfield residents received Transformation Home Loans/Grants averaging \$13,300 to extensively remodel their homes.



Sales remained steady at the Cedar Liquor Store despite decreases at the other stores.



New sign outside the Richfield Liquor Store Penn Avenue location.

## REDEVELOPMENT

- The City Council approved the Penn Corridor Revitalization Plan. Implementation of that plan is now underway. The City began an update of the Lakes at Lyndale Master Plan.
- The City gave preliminary approval for an affordable senior rental development with approximately 50 units at Pleasant Avenue and 77th Street (vacant lot adjacent to Candlewood Hotel). The developer is seeking federal funding in order to start construction by Summer 2010.

## PLANNING AND ZONING

- The City submitted its Comprehensive Plan to the Metropolitan Council and the City Council approved the plan in 2009. The Comprehensive Plan helps to guide future land use decisions in the City and is required to be updated every 10 years. In 2009, the City Council preliminarily approved an amendment to the Plan related to the new Municipal Center and the former Public Works Maintenance Facility. These amendments have been submitted to the Metropolitan Council for review.
- The Zoning Ordinance is a regulatory tool used to effectuate the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. In 2009, the City Council approved revisions to the Ordinance that created a Penn Avenue Corridor Overlay District and rezoned properties within the Penn Avenue Corridor Study Area. The Council also approved revisions to the Mixed-Use District regulations that both clarified language and revised parking standards.

## HOUSING

- The City secured over \$1 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grant funds to buy and remodel foreclosed homes and to help individuals to do the same.
- The Foreclosure Purchase Incentive Program (FPIP) will return 10 to 15 foreclosed and vacant homes to owner-occupied homes.
- The Department participated in the Opportunity Cities program to audit the City's housing programs and recommend changes.
- Four new homes were built with assistance from the Richfield Rediscovered program and five Richfield residents received Transformation Home Loans/Grants averaging \$13,300 to extensively remodel their homes.

## HOUSING ASSISTANCE

- In 2009, the Richfield HRA helped out 31 families with rent assistance under the Kids @ Home Program. The HRA also administers the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program for approximately 290 families living in Richfield. The Section 8 waiting list was opened for a 2 day period; during which time over 10,000 people requested an application.

# Liquor Operations

## SALES/CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Road construction affected sales at three locations. Sales increased slightly at the Cedar Liquor Store, the only location not impacted by road construction. Profits for 2009 should be even with 2008.
- The Department contributed \$450,000 towards various park and recreation improvements within Richfield.

## PROJECTS

- The City completed fiberoptic installation at the Cedar Liquor Store.
- A new telephone system was installed at the Cedar Liquor Store.
- The Penn Liquor Store location received a new sign.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

- Richfield Liquor staff conducted the 16th consecutive Richfield Rotary Club's annual Wine and Chocolate Tasting event. The annual fund raising event drew approximately 200 attendees and raised funds to support various community projects.

# CITY OF RICHFIELD

## Richfield City Council

Mayor: Debbie Goettel

Council: Sue Sandahl, Pat Elliott, Fred Wroge, Tom Fitzhenry

email: [citycouncil@cityofrichfield.org](mailto:citycouncil@cityofrichfield.org)

City Manager: Steve Devich [sdevich@cityofrichfield.org](mailto:sdevich@cityofrichfield.org)

## City Hall

6700 Portland Avenue Richfield, MN 55423

Phone 612-861-9700

[www.cityofrichfield.org](http://www.cityofrichfield.org)

## Hours

Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Licensing/Passports Office is open Mondays until 6:00 pm and

Tuesdays through Fridays until 5:00 pm

*This report is available on the City's web site.*

# Recreation Department

## PROJECTS

- Four ball fields were renovated at the Lincoln Athletic Complex, along with the parking lot, concession building, two new batting cages, play equipment and a shade structure. A favorable bid was received and the total cost of the project is approximately \$1.19 million.

Construction began in August, was 90% complete at year-end, and is expected to open in June, 2010. The new facility will accommodate both girls softball and boys baseball usage. The project was funded through proceeds of Richfield's City-owned liquor stores and a grant from Hennepin County.

- Progress on the Honoring All Veterans Memorial, the City's premier monument, continued with the unveiling of three fully engraved granite tablets bearing the names of 360 veterans.

All the remaining foundations were constructed in 2009 with the help of a \$100,000 grant from the State of Minnesota.

- Thanks to a grant from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, private donations in memory of Michael Frank Perry, and a generous contribution from the Chorzempa Family Fund, a new nature play area was constructed at Wood Lake using only natural materials and intended to provide children with an off-trail active area.
- Staff will continue to study the feasibility of continuing mini-golf in its current location. While 12,997 rounds were played in 2009, staff has reduced operating costs by 10% in an attempt to make the facility more profitable.
- The Richfield Ice Arena is nearing completion of an energy retrofit project that will provide significant savings to energy costs. The total project includes upgrades to the refrigeration system, ceilings, lighting, water system, and roof.  
Projected energy savings each year exceed \$100,000 and will reduce water usage by 800,000 gallons.
- Thanks to the generous support of the Cornerstone Group (developers of Kensington Park), Wood Lake's south prairie was in full bloom this year. The tall-grass prairie is located at the south end of the park and features a new trail and benches.



(top left) Urban Wildland race starting line at Veterans Park. (bottom right) Granite tablets at the Honoring All Veterans Memorial. (top right) July 4th fireworks.

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS

- The Ice Arena was used for 7,546 hours of ice skating activities, including the Junior Gold A Hockey State Championship and a Bantam A Region Tournament. The Richfield Pool hosted the ABC Swim Meet, which brought teams from all over the Midwest and totaled 36,260 visits in 69 days.
- More than 40,000 attended the Fourth of July Celebration.
- The AARP Tax Assistance Program served over 1,000 returns at the Richfield Community Center, the highest of any site in the state. Nineteen volunteers assisted.
- Read-A-Story Theatre read and performed to 3,145 children, Pre-School through Fourth Grade, in the metro area. The program's 16 volunteers staged 70 performances.
- The free summer lunch program, funded by a Federal Grant, served 10,821 lunches in just seven weeks to youth in Richfield at five sites throughout the City.
- The seventh-annual Urban Wildland race attracted over 1,500 runners. Participants, volunteers and spectators enjoyed the many green features, including a green-sourced race shirt, shoe recycling, free bus passes, and a carpool lot. The race continues to support Nature Center programs.