

# The Arlington Report

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

Jim Kreft -- Mayor  
 Jim Pederson -- Council Member  
 Bob Pichelmann -- Council Member  
 Curt Reetz -- Council Member  
 Jason Ruehling -- Council Member  
 Galen Wills -- Council Member

## APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Matt Jaunich -- City Administrator  
 Lisa Tesch -- Deputy Clerk  
 Vicki Pomplun -- Admin. Asst.  
 Jennifer Strack -- Community Center Coordinator  
 Dan Thomes -- Streets/Parks Supt.  
 Jeff Paine -- Maintenance Worker  
 Bruce Rovinsky -- Chief of Police  
 Scott Bennett -- Police Officer

## CONTRACTED SERVICES

Ross Arneson -- City Attorney  
 Cynthia Smith-Strack -- EDA, Planning & Zoning Consultant  
 Darin Haslip -- Building Inspector  
 PeopleService -- Water/Wastewater  
 Joel Hawbaker (Bolton & Menk) -- City Engineer

## PHONE NUMBERS

City Hall: 964-2378  
 Fax Line: 964-5973  
 After-Hours On-Call:  
 507-327-6601  
 Fire Garage: 964-2279  
 Police Dept.: 964-5200  
 Library: 964-2490  
 Hospital: 964-2271  
 S.E. School: 964-2292  
 Post Office: 964-5503

## OTHER SERVICES

*Water/Sewer/Electric Services*  
 City of Arlington (964-2378)  
*Gas Service*  
 CenterPoint Energy (800-245-2377)  
*Cable Service*  
 Mediacom (800-332-0245)  
*Internet/Phone Service*  
 Frontier (800-435-1504)  
*Garbage Services*  
 Waste Management (800-422-5785)  
 Renville-Sibley Sanitation (866-800-6244)

## 3rd ANNUAL ARLI-DAZZLE

Arlington's 3rd Annual Arli-Dazzle Celebration is set for Saturday, December 3 this year. The Celebration, brought to you by the Arlington Area Chamber of Commerce, encompasses a day filled with fun and the holiday spirit. The schedule for the day is as follows:

*Visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus* -- Sponsored by the Arlington Public Library League & Sibley Medical Center, the event takes place from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Arlington Community Center.

*Bethlehem Express* -- This event tells the story of the Nativity with songs, crafts, snacks and more. It will take place from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

*Arlington Greys vs. Mankato Baltics Snowball Game* -- Brought to you by the Arlington Greys, the event takes place at 3 p.m. at the Sibley East playground.

*Horse & Carriage/Sleigh Rides* -- This event, sponsored by First State Bank of Henderson, will take place from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Main Street.

*Carolers/Music* -- From 2 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., the Sibley East Carolers & Brass Horns, along with the Peace Church Youth Bell Choir will be playing on Main Street.

*Food Vendors* -- Food vendors will be available on Main Street from 2 p.m. thru the parade.

*Santa & his Reindeer* -- Santa and his reindeer will visit Main Street starting at 4 p.m.

*Christmas Photos* -- Create an Arli-Dazzle family memory from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Main Street parking lot & in front of the Police Station. Families can get a Christmas photo taken with Angela Archer Photography.

*Arli-Dazzle Parade* -- The Arli-Dazzle Parade will take place at 5:30 p.m. The parade route will be on Main Street, from 1st Avenue to 4th Avenue NW. For additional information, contact the Arlington Area Chamber of Commerce or visit their website at [www.arlingtonmnchamber.com](http://www.arlingtonmnchamber.com).

## 2012 BUDGET/LEVY NEAR COMPLETION

After nearly five months of work, the City Council is getting set to hold a public hearing on its 2012 budget and tax levy. The hearing will take place on Monday, December 5 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Community Center. The City Council is currently looking to set the 2012 tax levy somewhat lower than the 5% increase that the preliminary tax levy was set at in September. However, all three utilities are expected to see a rate

increase. All Arlington residents and business owners are encouraged to attend the public hearing to express their opinion on the proposed budget and tax levy. The Council will likely finalize the budget and tax levy at their December 19 meeting.

## CITY SEEKING APPLICANTS FOR CITY BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS

Have a passion for a certain area of local government? Interested in volunteering for your community? Want to be involved in the decision making process of city governance? The Mayor and City Council are seeking interested residents to fill open positions on the following commissions/committees/boards, which become effective in January: Cemetery Committee; Economic Development Authority; Library Committee; Parks Committee; Planning & Zoning Committee; Police Committee; Sibley Medical Center Board. Committees usually meet on a monthly or quarterly basis, and some committees meet more often than others. For anyone interested in one or more of the above committees, please contact the City Office for an "Application for Appointment to Advisory Boards/Commissions/Committees" form. Forms are also available on the City's website at [www.arlingtonmn.com](http://www.arlingtonmn.com). Applicants must be a City resident and all applications must be turned into the City Office by Friday, December 9 at 12:00 p.m.

## SNOW EMERGENCY REMINDER

Residents and business owners should remember that the City of Arlington will be plowing and hauling snow anytime there is a snowfall of two (2) inches or more. The City asks that all residents park all vehicles and trailers off the streets and avenues until they are plowed from curb to curb or they will be ticketed and towed. Vehicles that interfere with City maintenance activity, such as snow removal, may be towed to a designated area at the expense of the owner. The vehicle will be impounded until all parking fines, towing and storage charges have been paid.

## REMINDER TO UPDATE ACCOUNTS

City Staff would like to remind utility account holders that they should update their account information with the City when they move and/or change addresses. This includes the changing of a PO Box number or the conversion of a PO Box to/from route delivery. The City is also encouraging utility account holders to provide the City with a phone number, including a cell phone, which they may be reached at in the case of an expected outage or other emergency at their property. **City Offices will be closing at Noon on Friday, December 23 and will be closed all day on Monday, December 26 for the Christmas Holiday.**

## City of Arlington, Sibley County

Contact us at:

204 Shamrock Drive  
Arlington, MN 55307

Phone: 507-964-2378

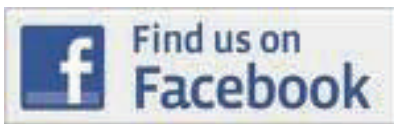
Fax: 507-964-5973

E-mail: [cityhall@arlingtonmn.com](mailto:cityhall@arlingtonmn.com)

Website: [www.arlingtonmn.com](http://www.arlingtonmn.com)



*A Beautiful City Growing in Unity*



## 14 REASONS PROPERTY TAXES VARY EVERY YEAR

Many of you have recently received your proposed property tax statement for 2012. For the majority of taxpayers, the amount of taxes you will pay next year has increased. I'm sure most of you are wondering why. Well, there may be one or more of at least fourteen possible reasons for the increase. The reasons are as follows:

- 1) *The market value of a property may change.* Each property is assessed at least once every 5 years and a sales ratio study is done to determine if the property is assessed properly. Additions and improvements made to ones home can increase its market value also.
- 2) *The market value of other properties in your taxing district may change, shifting taxes from one property to another.* New construction in a taxing district increases the tax base and will affect the district's tax rate. (most likely a reason for Arlington residents)
- 3) *The State general property tax may change.*
- 4) *The City budget and levy may change* (most likely a reason for Arlington residents).
- 5) *The Township budget and levy may change.*
- 6) *The County budget and levy may change* (most likely a reason for Arlington residents).
- 7) *The School District's budget and levy may change* (most likely a reason for Arlington residents).
- 8) *A special district's (Watershed district, etc.) budget and levy may change.*
- 9) *Voters may have approved a school, city, township, county, or special district referendum.*
- 10) *Special assessments may be added to your property tax bill.* Special assessments include things like water/sewer lines, curb and gutter, and new streets.
- 11) *Federal and State mandates may have changed.* Both the State and Federal governments require local governments to provide certain services and follow certain rules. These unfunded mandates often require an increase in the cost and level of service delivery.
- 12) *Aid and revenue from the State and Federal governments may have changed.* Each year the state legislature reviews and adjusts the level of funding for a variety of aids provided to local governments including Local Government Aid and County Program Aid. Formulas for aid may have changed.

13) *The State Legislature may have changed the portion of the tax base paid by different types of properties.* A change in class rates will require a change in the tax rate to raise the same amount of money.

14) *Other State law changes may adjust the tax base.* Fiscal disparities, personal property taxes on utility properties, limited market value, and tax increment financing are examples of laws that affect property taxes.

(Source: *League of MN Cities -- www.lmc.org*)

## PROPERTY TAXATION 101

For those of us that pay property taxes, we know that the property tax system is quite complicated. In fact, Minnesota may have the most complicated property tax system in the nation, with more than 20 classifications of residential, commercial, agricultural and recreational properties. Minnesota's property tax system will collect nearly \$7 billion in 2011 to help fund the services of schools, counties, cities, townships, special districts, and the state general fund. In an effort to try to make things easier (hopefully), here is a quick rundown to help you understand the intricacies of the property tax system.

Many communities over the past several years have experienced situations where individual property taxes rise much faster than the increase in the levies that are certified by local units of government. The most common factor that results in an increase in an individual parcel's tax is the change in the parcel's estimated market value. Without any change in local levies, a property owner can experience a tax increase due almost exclusively to any valuation increase. The Legislature frequently changes the classification system. Changes to the classification system can shift property tax burdens from one type of property to another. A 1997 legislative change to commercial, industrial, and apartment properties resulted in a significant reduction in their class rates. This shifts tax burden to other classes of property that did not receive class rate reductions. Economic factors that may affect broad classes of property can also influence the overall tax changes for individual parcels of property. For example, in the early 1990s the metropolitan area experienced major declines in the valuation for commercial and industrial properties. These valuation declines shifted taxes from property classified as commercial and industrial to all other types of property. Valuation declines also may have accentuated the levy changes by local units of government. A 2002 law change exempted agricultural and cabin property from voter-approved referendum levies. In

some jurisdictions where these types of property are a significant part of the tax base, this change shifted taxes onto other classes of property. Legislative changes in state aid programs can also affect the revenue needed to be raised from the property tax. In 2002 the legislature eliminated *HACA* and increased the other major aid program, LGA, by \$140 million. In 2003, the Legislature reduced 2003 LGA by about \$120 million and 2004 LGA by about \$150 million. In 2005, however, the Legislature added about \$48 million to the LGA program for 2006 and beyond, \$4 million of which is directed to cities under 5000 via a per capita aid base. In December 2008, the governor used the unallotment authority to reduce cities' LGA and MVHC payments. Actual aid and credit payments for 2009 and 2010 were also reduced by \$64.2 million and \$128.3 million, respectively, through the power of unallotment. The legislature cut MVHC reimbursement by \$45 million and LGA by \$7.8 million during the 2010 session - these cuts were in addition to the ratified unallotments. The 2011 special session budget agreement cut LGA by \$102 million, leaving roughly \$425.3 for 2011 and 2012. Levy limits also impact local levy decisions. During the 2003 session, cities that had been previously covered by levy limits lost any unused levy authority. There were no levy limits in place for 2008 but the Legislature did pass new levy limits for cities over 2500 for taxes payable in 2009, 2010, and 2011. This discussion is only a general overview of the current Minnesota property tax system. Over time, the system has become more complex and difficult for taxpayers to understand. Unfortunately, local officials are frequently questioned about how the system works and take the blame for the complicated features of the system. Local officials, however, can only control local levy decisions. They have no direct ability to modify the overall structure of the tax system and are at the mercy of the Minnesota Legislature. (Source: *LMC*)