



Where Pride and Prosperity Meet

# Cottage Grove Reports

## Economic Development in the Grove; Growth and Success Continues at Rapid Pace Despite COVID-19 Challenges

### CGFD and Washington Co. Offering COVID Tests



Members of the Cottage Grove Fire Department spent the month of October facilitating targeted COVID-19 testing throughout Washington County. Beginning this month, they've opened it up to everyone in the community. There are limited testing spots available for the following testing events held at the County's Environmental Center (4039 Cottage Grove Dr. in Woodbury):

**November 16**

**November 23**

**November 30**

All events run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and are free of charge, however pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information, and to register, visit

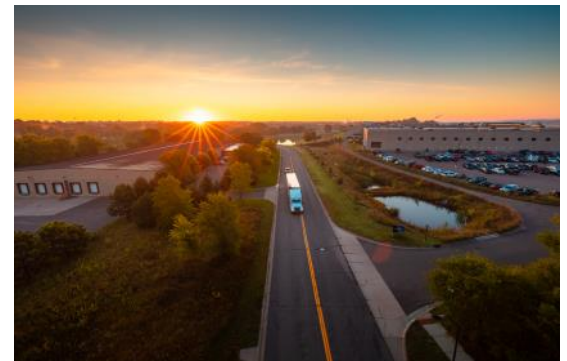
[www.co.washington.mn.us/Covid19Testing](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/Covid19Testing)



COVID-19 didn't effect steady economic growth in Cottage Grove this year but it did effect an economic development town hall hosted by Mayor Myron Bailey and Council Member Steve Dennis. They hosted a virtual presentation, allowing the public to ask questions, on October 14. The forum provided City leaders an opportunity to focus on several key, positive numbers surrounding growth in the City's residential, commercial and industrial sectors. Economic development, as explained by Mayor Bailey, focuses on creating investment in the form of new jobs and homes, attracting businesses from outside the community, retaining existing businesses and expanding the City's tax base. Council Member Dennis was quick to point out Cottage Grove's residential, commercial and industrial momentum has increased the City's tax capacity by 49% in six years. You can find the presentation on the City's YouTube and Facebook pages; the following numbers were presented to give taxpayers a look at how the City's growth equates to lower taxes and better service.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Single-family home permits increased from 60 in 2015 to 246 in 2019, a 410% increase
- In 2015, the City's total valuation for single family homes equaled \$20 million; by 2019 the valuation totaled \$70.8 million
- In the past six years, Cottage Grove's total commercial valuation has grown by more than \$62 million
- Since 2017, the City's overall vacancy rate dropped from 11.4% to 5.7% and the retail vacancy rate is almost 3 points below the metro area average
- The Business Park is booming, adding nearly 450 jobs in 2 years, including \$110 million in investment from five employers
- The Economic Development Authority (EDA) provided \$181,800 in emergency grants (not loans) to 19 small businesses effected by COVID-19. Funding was provided through the Federal CARES Act



## Now Accepting Pictures for the 2020 Photo Contest



We all know Cottage Grove is a beautiful place to live. The City wants to showcase that beauty, once again, by hosting its annual Photo Contest. This year's top photos will earn our winners \$75, instead of the usual \$50 prizes, so bring your "A" game! All photos submitted must be snapped within the Cottage Grove city limits. This year's categories are celebrations and events, nature and landscape, people, city parks and youth (photographer must be 15 or younger). You'll find the rules and links to submit your photos at [cottagegrovemn.gov/photocontest](http://cottagegrovemn.gov/photocontest). The deadline to submit your photos is December 31. Best of luck to all of our photographers!



## HERO Center Range Now Open to the Public on Weekends

There's nothing like the thrill of the deer hunt, and there's nothing quite like a nice, climate-controlled indoor range to sight your rifle. The HERO Center Range (10125 85th St) is open to the public on weekends, between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Saturdays and 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Sundays. The best news for you? Cottage Grove residents receive discounted rates so be sure to take advantage of it!

Hourly rates are \$18/hour for 1 person or \$29/hour for 2 people on one lane. Pistols and rifles are allowed but shotguns are not. It's easy to reserve a lane online by visiting [herocentermn.org](http://herocentermn.org) or calling **651-458-2811**. On the website you'll also find waiver forms, rules and protocols, COVID-19 guidelines and information on ammunition (including ammo for sale). Reserve your lane today!



## CGFD Wants You to Put the Freeze on Winter Fires



Home fires occur more in the winter than in any other season. As you stay cozy and warm this winter season, be fire smart!

- Plug only one heat-producing appliance (such as a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time
- Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents every year
- Space heaters are a good alternative heat source as long as they are in good repair and at least three feet from combustibles. Never heat your home or apartment with the stove or oven
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters
- Make sure you have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and also be sure to test them monthly
- Half of all home heating fires occur in the months of December, January and February
- Heating equipment is involved in one in every seven reported home fires and one in every five home fire deaths

## Holiday Train Event Will be Virtual This Year; You Can Still Donate to Friends in Need!



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Canadian Pacific (CP) Holiday Train will not be making its annual stop in Cottage Grove this year. CP will be hosting a virtual concert instead and will still donate to food banks along its rail network. But folks at Friends In Need

Food Shelf (FIN) still need your help as the annual Holiday Train Fundraiser represents 25% of their annual budget. This year the goal is to raise more than \$70,000 to help families in Cottage Grove, Grey Cloud Island, Newport and St. Paul Park. To donate, please send a check to the Friends in Need Food Shelf, P.O. Box 6, Cottage Grove, MN 55016. Just note "Holiday Train" in the memo line, or donate via credit card/Paypal at [finfood.org/donate](https://finfood.org/donate). All cash and paper product item donations go directly to our local Friends in Need Food Shelf.

### Other Ways to Support the FIN Food Shelf

- Donate items or a basket for a Virtual Silent Auction; please drop off items at FIN by November 20
- Bid on Silent Auction items on the FIN website from Nov. 30 to Dec. 7
- Attend the "Fill Up a Fire Truck" event on Saturday, December 12 from 10 a.m. to noon at Hamlet Park. Volunteers will accept toilet paper, paper towels and cash (no food items please). Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there to spread some cheer!

## Tis' the Season to Light It Up! City Holiday Lights Tour is Back

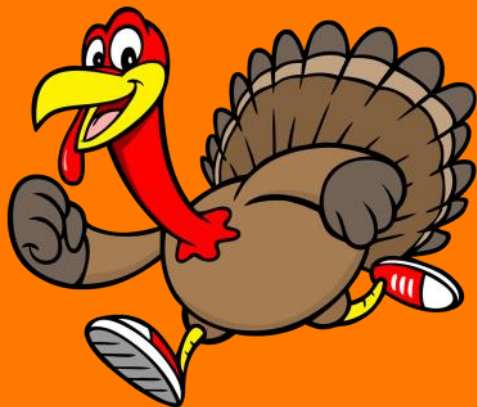


Although Santa isn't coming to town for the River Oaks Santa Brunch or the Tree Lighting at City Hall, we do have some fun things planned to get you into the holiday spirit this year, social-distance style! The Annual Holiday Lights Tour

Map will be created and available on the City's website starting November 25. So, if you're planning a big display, let us know! Head to [cottagegrovemn.gov/lights](https://cottagegrovemn.gov/lights) to register your home as a tour stop or to find the addresses listed for displays throughout the City! You might want to start your journey at City Hall (12800 Ravine Parkway). We'll be placing a very large Adirondack Chair in front of our Cottage Grove City Christmas Tree, offering a nice photo opportunity for you and your family.

## Santa Letter Drop Off Site

If children have letters for Santa, the City has a red mailbox in front of City Hall. We can't promise a reply but we can make sure he gets them.



## "Hale to the Bird" 5K Goes Virtual; Register Today!

So, the organizers of Cottage Grove's annual Hale to the Bird 5K can't host a crowd of runners and walkers this Turkey Day, but nothing is going to stop them from raising money to support the Friends in Need Food Shelf. You can register at [active.com](https://active.com); just enter Hale to the Bird in the search tab. Registration is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under and all money raised will help families in the Cottage Grove area. This year marks the 11th running of the race and that popular Turkey Day T-shirt is still available to those who register. Shirts can be picked up on **November 25 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.** at Hamlet Park. Masks will be required for pick-up. Gobble, gobble!



## City Hall

12800 Ravine Parkway South

Cottage Grove, MN 55016

(651) 458-2800

[cottagegrovemn.gov](http://cottagegrovemn.gov)

Mayor Myron Bailey and Council Members Steve

Dennis, La Rae Mills, Justin Olsen and Dave Thiede

## Cottage Grove Parks and Recreation

**(651) 458-3400**

### Warming Houses at Outdoor Skating Rinks Open the Day After Christmas

Cottage Grove has seven outdoor skating rinks and six of them have warming house facilities (face coverings will be required) set to open on December 26. They'll be open Monday through Friday from 3 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. and on weekends from 11:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. The Weather Hotline **(651) 458-6060** will be updated if the Warming Houses are closed. They're located at Hamlet, Hearthside, Highlands, Peter Thompson, Pine Tree Valley and Woodridge Parks. The City is also hiring Warming House Supervisors to work from December 26 until sometime in March. Go to [cottagegrovemn.gov](http://cottagegrovemn.gov) for details.

### Winter Break Bash

Bring your winter gear (including skates and sleds) to play outside. We'll be playing games, making crafts, watching movies and having lots of fun. Don't forget to bring your lunch. Pre-registration is required and more information can be found online at [cottagegrovemn.gov](http://cottagegrovemn.gov). Make sure you sign up today!

#### Details

- Ages 5 and older
- December 28, 29 and 30 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Peter Thompson Park (6327 Highland Hills Lane South)
- Cost is \$22 per day, per child

### Cottage Grove Ice Arena

8020 80th Street South . **(651) 458-3400**

### Skating Season is Here and the Ice Arena Has You Covered

The Cottage Grove Ice Arena offers skate sessions for all skaters! Stick and Puck, Open Skate, Cosmic Skate or Figure Skater's Practice sessions all require pre-registration so be sure to check out the City's website for dates, times and fees.

### River Oaks Golf Course & Event Center

11099 South Highway 61 . **(651) 438-2121**

**Gift Cards Available:** Even if you've carefully placed your golf clubs in storage, it's never too early to start thinking about next season. We can assure you, the golfer in your life is! Gift Cards will put a smile on any golfer's face this holiday season. They're available online.

**Booking Weddings and Events:** Staff members really spruced up the facility throughout 2020, making River Oaks Golf Course & Event Center the perfect place for your wedding or event next year. To book a tour, or more importantly, a date, contact Jaime Mann at **(651) 438-2121 extension #2** or email her at [jmann@cottagegrovemn.gov](mailto:jmann@cottagegrovemn.gov).