

# Council Connection



#### Upcoming meetings:

- Human Rights & Relations Commission, 7 p.m. May 22
- Planning Commission, 7 p.m. May 23
- Art Center Board, 4:30 p.m. May 24
- City Council, 7 p.m. June 5
- Public Art Committee, 4 p.m. June 7

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#### We'd like to hear from you ...

If you have any comments, call Communications & Technology Services Director Jennifer Bennerotte at 952-833-9520. The text of this publication will be available online at [www.EdinaMN.gov](http://www.EdinaMN.gov).



## A summary of the May 15 Edina City Council meeting

### **Council approves 'Edina Open' WiFi project**

The City Council approved the development of a wireless network for free use by the public and City staff.

The wireless network will initially be available at Edina City Hall, Edina Art Center, Braemar Arena, Braemar Golf Course, Centennial Lakes Park, Edinborough Park and the Edina Senior Center. The coverage will encompass office areas, public space and general meeting areas in each facility.

Work on the wireless network will begin in early June and is scheduled to be complete later this summer. Cost of the project is estimated to be \$95,261.42.

To simplify things, the public network will be known as "Edina Open" -- the same name used by Edina Public Schools to describe their wireless network.

### **Council approves bike boulevard project**

The Council approved a bike boulevard project to make it easier for bicyclists to ride through Edina and connect to other regional routes.

Several years ago, the 54th Street, Wooddale Avenue and Valley View Road corridors were identified as primary bicycle routes in Edina. Since the corridors connect to the greater region, the City was awarded a \$250,000 federal grant to implement an on-street bicycling facility along them.

The goal is to encourage more cycling and make it safer for cyclists to travel through and around Edina. The project will include "Share the Road" markers, dedicated bike lanes, advi-

sory bike lanes and shared lane markings. Some on-street parking will be removed to allow for the bicycling facility.

The project is set to begin later this year.

### **Council OKs improvements on Gallagher Drive**

The Council approved improvements on Gallagher Drive from Parklawn Avenue to France Avenue.

Two years ago, property owners in the area submitted a petition to the City requesting a resurfacing of Gallagher Drive. The project includes a mill and overlay that would reduce the pavement width from 43 feet to 28 feet and the addition of a nine-foot boulevard and a 10-foot regional trail. The City would complete the project in partnership with Three Rivers Park District.

A variance from Minnesota State Aid (MSA) Standards will be required for the curve located just west of France Avenue. The next variance committee meeting will be held in late June. If the variance request is granted in June, City staff will work with Three Rivers Park District to draft an agreement to fund the trail segment, which would be presented to the City Council for approval in July. The remaining portion of the project will be paid for with MSA funds and money from the City's utility funds.

### **Council opposes use of 'conflict materials'**

The City Council showed their awareness and concern for the use of "conflict materials" and approved a resolution showing that the City will do its best not to purchase products made

with them.

Earlier this year, Edina High School students representing the organization "STAND" presented a proposal to the Human Rights & Relations Commission to oppose the use of metals and other materials mined and produced in certain African countries. For example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo employs armed groups to force labor to extract such minerals and raw materials. Thousands of deaths have been reported to occur from violence inflicted in order to maintain control of the mines and resources utilizing forced labor.

A national initiative seeks support of efforts to call attention to these practices and seek multiple means of discouraging so-called "conflict minerals" to be extracted using these inhumane means. Numerous colleges, universities and human rights organizations have adopted such statements of support, as well as the cities of Pittsburgh, Penn., and St. Petersburg, Fla. The statements range from general support and recognition of the issue to encouraging changes in purchasing policies of computers and electronics through government unit procurement programs and shareholder initiatives. The Human Rights & Relations Commission recommended the City adopt a similar statement because the City makes a significant investment in computers and electronics, most of which are purchased from the State Contract.

The statement recognizes that the City is aware and concerned about the crisis taking place where conflict minerals are obtained and utilized.