

Edition: Edina

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The City of Edina



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Legend of 2016-2017 Priorities:

- Focused Redevelopment
- Transportation & Infrastructure
- Planning for the Future
- Enterprise Facilities
- Intergovernmental Relations

Volunteer Opportunities Available on Edina Boards and Commissions

A new year is a time for new ambitions, new goals and renewed energy. That is also the case for the City's boards and commissions. The City is now accepting applications from Edina residents to fill open seats on the City's advisory groups.

"Edina is lucky to have so many people interested in supporting and improving the City. If you're one of those people who has that drive or interest to get involved, then being on a Board or a Commission is an excellent way to serve Edina and your neighbors," said Project Coordinator MJ Lamon. "Our boards and commissions benefit from varied perspectives and new energy. I encourage anyone interested to apply; there's something that's a good fit for nearly everyone."

There are a number of seats open on the 10 different boards and commissions, including the Arts & Culture Commission, Board of Appeal & Equalization, Community Health Commission, Construction Board of Appeals, Energy & Environment Commission, Heritage Preservation Board, Human Rights & Relations Commission, Park Board, Planning Commission and Transportation Commission.

Greg Good has served on the Park Board for two years and has appreciated having an opportunity to be more involved in the City's parks, an amenity he's always used and admired.

"I believe that our park system in Edina is one of our best assets. As a graduate of Edina schools and now a longtime resident, I have spent many hours playing, coaching and enjoying many of Edina's parks and recreational facilities," said Good. "Participating on the Park Board is a way for me to both stay aware of our plans for these assets, as well as to do my part to help maintain a great aspect of living in Edina."

"Serving on a board or commission is a good way to get involved in our community," said Lamon. "Many people might not know that this volunteer opportunity exists and that it's a good way to serve. And it's not your normal 'go in and give a couple hours,' it definitely has some more weight to make a difference than other volunteer opportunities."

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age and live in Edina to participate. Most appointments are three years in length and begin in March 2017. Applications must be received by Jan. 31, 2017; interviews and orientation will be held in February. To learn more or to apply, visit EdinaMN.gov/apply_bc.

Applications for student board and commission seats will open in April.

For more information about City of Edina boards and commissions, contact Lamon at 952-826-0360 or MLamon@EdinaMN.gov.

Swenson Retires After Three Terms on City Council

Ann Swenson recently attended her final City Council meeting as a Council Member.

Swenson has formally served the City of Edina for more than 23 years. She was appointed as Council Member in January 2005 and has held the role of Mayor Pro Tem since January 2011. Prior to serving on the City Council, Swenson served on the City's Planning Commission for four consecutive terms – a total of 12 years – beginning in 1993.

"You couldn't ask for a better person to serve on the City Council with than Ann Swenson. Ann was always right there to lead a conversation and she felt comfortable in a leadership role," said Mayor James Hovland. "We are celebrating the 20-plus years of service that we received from Ann Swenson. She cares so much about Edina and she did a fabulous job for all of those years with her wisdom, her insight, her brain power and always having a good time doing what she did."

While on the Council, Swenson championed a number of issues, including women and youth in government and affordable housing. Swenson also makes time to teach city government to third-graders at area elementary schools and encourages students to get involved in their student councils.

"I'm proud that whether it's students or adult women, they take serving the City very seriously," said Swenson. "We have a community that's equally represented by men and women and some of that is because of the ability for the youth to serve on our boards and commissions."

Outside of her role on the City Council, Swenson has been a champion for public art in Edina. She led fundraising efforts to make Edina a permanent home for two sculptures. "Spaulding," a 3-foot high bronze sculpture of

a playful dog, is located at 50th & France, and "Slapshot," a 4-foot, 300-pound steel sculpture depicting a hockey player with a hockey stick, is located at Braemar Arena.

"Working with Ann Swenson for the last six years with my involvement with arts and culture in Edina has been so much fun. Ann is a real champion for the arts," said Public Art Edina Working Group Chair Barbara La Valleur. "The leadership that she brings has helped us bring in pieces like 'Spaulding' by artist Heidi Hoy. She's been a woman of integrity and I've been proud to call her my Council Member."

"Ann has this really interesting character combination of grace and tenacity. It's typically a difficult combination of attributes to pull off, but she's been doing it for decades for the benefit of her fellow residents of Edina," said City Manager

Scott Neal. "I have really enjoyed working for her; I'm going to miss her."

"I feel very blessed to have had all the different City employees that we've had over the years that I've been on Planning and Council. I truly believe our employees are proud to work for our City and to serve the residents," said Swenson. "I've always been so proud of our City employees."

Despite her retirement from Council, Swenson still plans to stay connected and work for the causes she has championed for so many years. She will continue to work with the City on the Comprehensive Plan alongside incoming Council Member Mike Fischer. In addition, Swenson plans to continue to work on the issue of affordable housing.

City Council Member Mike Fischer will take the oath of office at the Jan. 4 Council meeting.



Photo by Michael Braun

Ann Swenson retired this month after serving three terms on the Edina City Council. Swenson's seat on City Council will be filled by Mike Fischer.

Edina Liquor To Add Home Delivery, Online Ordering



Photo by Debbie Townsend

Profits from sales at Edina Liquor go directly to help pay for recreational facilities, including Braemar Arena, Edina Art Center, Braemar Golf Course, Centennial Lakes Park and others. They are also used to pay for capital expenses such as park improvements or public buildings, reducing the impact on taxpayers.

"I think if more people understood that connection, I think more Edina residents would shop in our stores," Edina City Manager Scott Neal said.

Promoting that connection is just one step a City task force developed to increase revenue from the three City-run liquor stores. Increased competition has cut liquor profits in half over the last several years, and Neal wants to get those back to help pay for City services.

Among the other changes customers can expect:

- Online ordering and home delivery – Customers will be able to place orders online and either pick them up at

the store or have them delivered to their Edina homes. Details are being worked out, but the programs are expected to launch in 2017.

- Customer loyalty program – Participants will get specials, discounts and information on the best deals and latest products.
- Expansion of specialty products – Edina Liquor already stocks many specialty liquors not found in most other liquor stores. The City wants to make sure the best products and hard-to-find items are on shelves.
- Transparency – The community will be invited to an Annual General Meeting, just like stakeholders in any company, to learn more about liquor operations and results.

Another point of emphasis will be customer service far above the competition. On a recent afternoon, a Grandview store customer was looking for a particular wine. Not only did Store Manager Woody Keehr take her right to it, he told her about the wine in detail and offered tips on other products. Keehr, who is also Assistant Director of Liquor Operations, has 30 years of knowledge at Edina Liquor stores and can talk wine, beer or liquor with ease.

He also pointed out the signs around the store noting all profits go back into the community that he loves.

"It's not well enough understood the value Edina Liquor has in the community," Neal said.

HRA Explores New Chapter for 50th & France

An ambitious proposal could convert West 49 1/2 Street from a lane of concrete parking structures into a showcase of new retail shops, apartments and public plazas more befitting 50th & France.

The proposal from Buhl Investors/Saturday Properties also includes 305 additional parking spaces. It was selected in December by the Edina Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) as the preferred choice among four submissions for developing a vacant lot at 3930 W. 49 1/2 and portions of the surrounding commercial area.

The selection of a "preferred development partner" is the first step in a lengthy process, and there is no guarantee the concept will come to fruition. Among the issues to be tackled are the scope and scale of the project, parking ownership, pedestrian easements, financing and purchase price. As with all new redevelopment, the process would include a neighborhood meeting and a thorough review by the Planning Commission and City Council.

The potential, however, has HRA officials excited.

Buhl Investors/Saturday Properties proposes to add a floor to the North Ramp parking structure and expand it onto the vacant lot and a lot to the west. On both new sections, new commercial space would be on the first floor, with parking behind and on the above floors. A vertical wall of plants would help beautify the North Ramp.

Directly across the street, the development team suggests complete redevelopment of the Center Ramp parking structure and the adjacent surface parking lot, turning that into a six-story mixed-use building, with retail space and extensive public plazas on the ground floor and 131 apartments above. Parking for residents plus replacement public parking would be below ground.



Submitted rendering

"The proposal has the potential to enhance the pedestrian experience, improve parking conditions, eliminate an aging and unsightly parking structure, create new business opportunities and return properties to the tax rolls," Economic Development Manager Bill Neuendorf wrote in a Dec. 20 staff report. "Collectively, this concept could transform the 3900 block of West 49 1/2 Street into an integral part of the 50th & France business district and expand the desirability of 50th & France for the next generation."

Learn more about the proposal and get updates at EdinaMN.gov/HRA.

New Recreation Supervisor Sees Possibilities

Nicole Gorman planned to be a veterinarian until she volunteered at an assisted living center and found her calling.

The Minnesota native started Dec. 5 as the City of Edina's new Recreation Supervisor, replacing the recently retired Donna Tilsner. Gorman now oversees the Senior Center plus she'll be developing health and wellness programs along with environmental education opportunities for adults in the community.

"We're really excited to have someone with her enthusiasm and experience joining our team," said Edina Parks & Recreation Assistant Director Susan Faus.

That experience includes more than a decade working with seniors and organizing recreation, with stints at



Photo by Dietrich Nissen

Nicole Gorman began work as Recreation Supervisor Dec. 5.

the City of Minnetonka and City of Farmington. Gorman earned a master's degree in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies from the University of Minnesota and a related bachelor's degree from Minnesota State University, Mankato.

She is spending her first few weeks in Edina meeting people, learning about the current operations of the Senior Center and studying the history of Edina's programs.

"Edina has a ton of potential and possibilities," she said.

Exactly what she'll bring to Edina is still a mystery, but based on her track record, expect some fun, some valuable learning opportunities and a buzz of excitement.

Gorman can be reached at 952-833-9571 or ngorman@EdinaMN.gov. Her office is at the Edina Senior Center, 5280 Grandview Square.

U.S. Highway 169 Closures Begin Jan. 10

Lane closures along U.S. Highway 169 and a complete closure of the highway in both directions over Nine Mile Creek start Jan. 10, 2017.

The closures are part of a nine-month, \$64 million Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) project to make road improvements and replace a bridge.

- All lanes in both directions between Bren Road and 7th Street in Edina will close Jan. 10 to late September 2017.
- Southbound from Excelsior Boulevard to 7th Street and northbound from Highway 62 to Bren Road will be reduced to one lane Jan. 10 to October 2017.
- The ramp from westbound Interstate 394 to southbound Highway 169 will close Jan. 10 to early September 2017.
- Each direction of Highway 169 will be reduced to one lane from Minnesota Highway 55 to Minnesota Highway 62

from April 1 to early September 2017. Various on- and off-ramps in that section also will be closed at times.

- Southbound ramps to and from 16th Street in St. Louis Park will be closed permanently in summer 2017.

The bridge over Nine Mile Creek will be replaced with a causeway, which is a raised road built on fill. New pavement will be put along sections of Highway 169, while other areas will be patched. Other work during the project includes extending the merger lane onto northbound 169 at Cedar Lake Road, repairing noise walls, and adding ramps to sidewalks along the entrances and exits to make them accessible for people using walkers or wheelchairs or riding bicycles.

Get updates on the MnDOT project web page: dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/hwy169hopkins/.

Free Radon Testing Kits Available in January

In recognition of National Radon Action Month, the Edina Health Division will offer residents free radon test kits in January.

Radon is an odorless, colorless and tasteless radioactive gas that occurs naturally in Minnesota soils. Radon levels can accumulate indoors. The soil around a home is porous, so radon gas is able to move through the dirt and rocks and into the basement through pathways, like cracks in the concrete slab, and accumulate in the house. Homes that are next door to each other can have different indoor radon levels, making a neighbor's test result a poor predictor of radon risk. The only way to know if your home has high radon levels is to complete your own test.

Radon is the leading environmental cause of cancer deaths in the United States and the leading cause of

lung cancer among non-smokers. According to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) website, more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths are attributed to radon each year in the United States. When breathed in, the radioactive particles from radon gas can damage the cells that line the lung, increasing a person's risk of developing lung cancer.

Testing is easy and only takes three to five days. The best time to test is during the heating season, but testing can be done any time of year. Radon test kits are available at the Edina Police Department for free while supplies last.

"If we get a real good response for the test kit, we are happy to order more," said Lee Renneke, Edina Environmental Health Specialist.



Photo by Dawn Willis

The radon test should be hung in the lowest level of the home that is frequently occupied for three to five days.

Renneke said tests should be done in the lowest level of the home that is frequently occupied.

If your home's level is at or above 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L), you should consider verification testing and having a radon mitigation system installed. Anyone interested in mitigating his or her home for radon should consult MDH's list of certified radon mitigation contractors at <http://bit.ly/2h6VXTa>.

For more information, contact Renneke at 952-826-0464 or LRenneke@EdinaMN.gov.

Speak Up, Edina!

The City's next online discussion is now available at SpeakUpEdina.org. The discussion, which focuses on neighborhood parks, is available until Feb. 3.

That City has nearly 40 neighborhood parks, each with unique amenities, programming and users. These parks cover 1,560 acres of land in Edina.

In this discussion, the City asks residents how often they visit their neighborhood park and what they spend time doing when they are there; how they feel about the Parks & Recreation programming in the parks, both for children and adults; what additional programming they would like to see and what amenities are missing in the City's park system. The feedback from this discussion will be compiled and presented to the City Council Feb. 22.

This month, the City has been gathering feedback on the Southdale Library site redevelopment. Questions asked include what building types/uses residents think would be complementary to the new library and appropriate for this site; changes they would make to enhance neighborhood connections and make the site friendlier to patrons who drive, bicycle or walk; and what would make them attracted to and use the new library and site amenities. Feedback from this discussion will be compiled and presented to the City Council Jan. 18.

To weigh in on a discussion, visit SpeakUpEdina.org.

January 2017 Events

- Saturday, Dec. 31, 5-8 p.m.**
Family New Year's Eve Party, Edinborough Park
 - Monday, Jan. 2**
City Hall Closed
 - Wednesday, Jan. 4, 7 p.m.**
City Council Meeting, Edina City Hall
 - Sunday, Jan. 8, 1-5 p.m.**
Winter Ice Festival, Centennial Lakes Park
 - Sunday, Jan. 8, 7 p.m.**
Gypsy Mania Hot Club Quartet swing jazz, Edinborough Park
 - Monday, Jan. 9, 6:30 p.m.**
Community Health Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall
 - Tuesday, Jan. 10, 7 p.m.**
Heritage Preservation Board Meeting, Edina City Hall
 - Tuesday, Jan. 10, 7 p.m.**
Park Board Meeting, Edina City Hall
 - Wednesday, Jan. 11, 7 p.m.**
Planning Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall
 - Thursday, Jan. 12, 7 p.m.**
Energy & Environment Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall
 - Friday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m.**
Family Movie Night, Edinborough Park
Family Movie Night will feature 'The Secret Life of Pets'
 - Monday, Jan. 16**
Martin Luther King Jr. Day, City Hall Closed
 - Wednesday, Jan. 18, 7 p.m.**
City Council Meeting, Edina City Hall
 - Thursday, Jan. 19, 4:30 p.m.**
K-9 Blade's Retirement Party, Edina City Hall
- See more January events at EdinaMN.gov

January Edina TV Broadcast Schedule

Edina TV is available to Comcast subscribers on Channels 813 (high definition) and 16 (standard definition). Edina TV is available to CenturyLink Prism subscribers on Channels 1236 (high definition) and 236 (standard definition).

- Edina City Council**
(shown until the next scheduled meeting)
- Sundays – 3 a.m., 11 a.m.
 - Tuesdays – 7 p.m. (live broadcast on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month)
 - Wednesdays – 3 a.m., 11 a.m.
 - Saturdays – 7 p.m.

- Planning Commission**
(shown until the next scheduled meeting)
- Wednesdays – 7 p.m. (live broadcast on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month)
 - Thursdays – 3 a.m., 11 a.m.
 - Fridays – 7 p.m.
 - Saturdays – 3 a.m., 11 a.m.

- Human Rights & Relations Commission**
(shown through Jan. 11)
- Mondays – 10 p.m.
 - Tuesdays – 6 a.m., 2 p.m.
 - Thursdays – 7 p.m.
 - Fridays – 3 a.m., 11 a.m.

- Transportation Commission**
(shown from Jan. 19 through Feb. 15)
- Sundays – 7 p.m.
 - Monday – 3 a.m., 11 a.m.
 - Wednesdays – 10 p.m.
 - Thursday – 6 a.m., 2 p.m.

"Agenda: Edina"
(new episode on the 1st and 15th of each month)

- Daily at 2:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:30 p.m.

"Beyond the Badge"
(new episode on the 1st of each month)

- Daily at 2 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m.

"Enterprise Edina"
(new episode produced periodically)

- Daily at 2:15 a.m., 10:15 a.m., 6:15 p.m.

"On The Job"
(new episode on the 15th of each month)

- Daily at 1:45 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 5:45 p.m.

How serious a problem is radon in Minnesota?

High radon levels exist in every state in the US. In Minnesota, **two in five homes have radon levels that pose a significant health risk**, and nearly 80% of counties are rated **High Radon zones**.

- ZONE 1: >4pCi/L**
Some factors that further contribute to Minnesota's high radon levels include:
 - Minnesota's geology produces an ongoing supply of radon.
 - Minnesota's climate affects how our homes are built and operate.
- ZONE 2: >2 <4pCi/L**

Radon MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH www.health.state.mn.us/radon

By the Numbers: Edinborough Park

Edinborough Park is always 70 degrees and sunny, but what else is unique about this park?



1,178
Birthday parties held to date at the park in 2016.

97,000
Gallons of water in the indoor pool.



16 Number of laps around the track for 1 mile



1,200
Plants throughout the park.



80,003

Playpark daily admissions sold to date in 2016.

For information on the Edinborough Park, visit EdinboroughPark.com.