

# Edition: Edina

Volume 3, Issue 1

## 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

## Speak Up, Edina!

The City's next online discussion is now available at [SpeakUpEdina.org](http://SpeakUpEdina.org). The discussion, which focuses on volunteerism, is available until March 7.

In addition to those who volunteer on Edina's boards and commissions, the City often relies on community volunteers for a variety of needs to augment staff. Many service and volunteer clubs and organizations exist throughout the community, offering residents ways to get involved.

In the discussion, the City asks whether residents volunteer any of their time and why, in what capacity they volunteer, what volunteer opportunities they'd like to participate in that don't currently exist in Edina, and if they would volunteer for the City once a formal volunteer program is in place. Feedback from this discussion will be compiled and presented to the City Council March 15.

This month, the City has been gathering feedback on outdoor ice rinks. Questions asked include whether residents use the seasonal outdoor ice rinks in Edina's parks, what they think about the quality of rink setup and maintenance, what their favorite ice activity is and whether more structured programming should be considered for the rinks. The discussion is open until Feb. 8. Feedback from this discussion will be compiled and presented to the City Council Feb. 16.

To weigh in on a discussion, visit [SpeakUpEdina.org](http://SpeakUpEdina.org).

## Mild Weather Saves City Money

According to Meteorologist Paul Douglas, December 2015 was the third warmest December on record for the Twin Cities with an average temperature of 30 degrees. While this delayed the opening of many neighborhood skating rinks, the City has been able to save more than \$400,000 so far this season in snow removal and maintenance costs because of the warmer-than-normal weather.

"\$80,000 of that \$400,000 is a savings in fuel costs alone," said Public Works Director Brian Olson, who also said Public Works crews were able to sweep streets into the third week of December, a big change from last year. "We had about two weeks last year when the leaves fell to when the first snow followed. It wasn't enough time to get our streets properly cleaned and cleared for winter, but we had more than enough time this year."

The \$400,000 also included savings on salt usage and overtime staff costs.

When the Public Works Department wasn't sweeping the streets, they were trimming trees on City property, clearing buckthorn in parks, doing some interior remodeling work at Braemar Arena and working to get ahead on sign fabrication.

"Not that our guys haven't enjoyed getting ahead on projects – they would just rather be out plowing snow," said Olson. "It's their bread and butter. They take a lot of pride in the job they do and enjoy the interaction with the community."

By Jan. 2, the weather finally cooperated enough for the City to open all 12 of its outdoor rinks. Rinks typically open the middle of December. However, staff wasn't able to open Centennial Lakes Park for skating until mid-January, which resulted in a loss of \$34,148 in operating revenue for the Park in December compared to previous Decembers. Despite the setback, the Park still managed to come out ahead by more than \$60,000 last year in operating revenue, because of the nice weather throughout the rest of the year.

"The loss was mostly from lack of skate rental and concession revenues," said Assistant Parks & Recreation Director Susan Faus. "But with the Park and neighborhood rinks finally open, we're going to keep them open as long as we can this season, weather permitting."

For more information about the outdoor skating rinks, visit [EdinaParks.com](http://EdinaParks.com).



Photo by Mia Vacanti

## Wild About Hockey

Minnesota Wild defenseman Matt Dumba stops to take a selfie with fans after the team's outdoor practice Dec. 29 at Braemar Arena's Backyard Rink. Hundreds of spectators gathered to watch the hour-long practice that ended with a four-on-four game, followed by a shoot-out. After the practice, players stuck around to sign autographs and take pictures with the fans. The 20-degree weather made perfect practicing conditions as the Wild prepare to head outdoors for the upcoming 2016 Coors Light NHL Stadium Series at TCF Stadium against the Chicago Blackhawks on Feb. 21.

## CenturyLink to Enter the Edina Cable Market

This year, Edina residents may have a choice when it comes to cable television.

On Dec. 15, the City Council unanimously approved a franchise agreement with CenturyLink that will give Edina residents an alternative to Comcast, which has been Edina's only cable provider for years.

Along with telephone and high-speed internet, CenturyLink will soon be adding its cable service, PRISM TV, to its list of offerings. CenturyLink's goal is to reach 15 percent of the city with PRISM TV within the next two years.

CenturyLink will provide public and education channels in a mosaic format on channel 26. Edina residents will find the channels grouped together on one menu-style channel along with other metro area public and education channels. The City's government channel will have its own channel number – 236 – that will be grouped along with other news providers such as CNN.

"The mosaic channel works like a selectable menu that shows several channels on one screen. This will allow residents to easily find the public and education channel content that they would be most interested in," said City of Edina Video Production Coordinator Scott Denfeld.

At the end of Edina's five-year franchise agreement with CenturyLink, the City can assess the progress

of CenturyLink's system buildout to ensure that CenturyLink has met the requirements of the State Cable Act, which requires the company to have its cable system substantially complete within a five-year period. The City can also revisit its agreement with CenturyLink at the end of its term and extend it another five years if CenturyLink has satisfied the build-out requirements.

The CenturyLink franchise is written to closely match the Comcast franchise, so the City can regulate them both in a similar manner. The City will receive 5 percent of CenturyLink's revenue from its cable services as a franchise fee to allow the company to use the City's right-of-ways. The City will also receive 60 cents per living unit or subscriber.

"I believe the Council expects that with the approval of CenturyLink to be a cable franchise operator in our community, we will see, over time, market conditions that create lower pricing and improved quality from the cable operators as they compete with each other for the cable business of Edina residents," said Mayor James Hovland.

At press time, CenturyLink had not announced a target date for offering PRISM TV in Edina.

For more information on the new franchise agreement, contact the Communications & Technology Department at 952-826-0359.

## Parks & Recreation To Host Second-Annual Winter Warm-Up Weekend

Due to the successful turnout at last year's event, the City of Edina's Parks & Recreation Department will host its second-annual Winter Warm-Up Weekend.

The activity-packed weekend begins Friday, Feb. 5 and goes through Sunday, Feb. 7, with events held at various facilities throughout Edina.

"We have a lot of events in the summer and fall months, but not a lot of events in the winter," said Recreation Supervisor Amanda Clarke. "We wanted to provide an event we could have each winter so that families can get out of the house and participate in different fun activities."

Beginning at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 5, Edinborough Park will host Family Movie Night with a screening of "Enchanted." General admission fees to the park apply. From 8 to 9:30 p.m., Braemar Arena will host free open skating at the Backyard Rink.

The activities continue on Saturday, Feb. 6, with events occurring all day throughout the city. From 10 a.m. to noon, Pamela Park will have free open skating, hot chocolate and s'mores around the fire pit. The Edina Art Center will host a "create a snow sculpture" event from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the Braemar Golf Dome will have a drive, chip and putt competition from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For those interested in indoor fun, Edinborough Park has planned its "Trot Around the Track" event for kids, with prizes awarded to participants. General admission fees to the park apply.

The night of Saturday, Feb. 6, features two events at Braemar Field, including free family night from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Families can play with provided sporting equipment, walk the track or use the batting cages. Night games for teens will be held 8:30 to 10 p.m. at Braemar Field.

Two final events will be held the evening of Sunday, Feb. 7. The first is a free Nordic walking pole



demonstration at 3 p.m. at the Edina Senior Center. Following that, from 5 to 8 p.m., there will be free open skating, glow gear and popcorn at Centennial Lakes Park. Skate rental fees apply.

"This event is a great way to showcase the facilities that we have here in Edina," said Parks & Recreation Director Ann Kattreh.

"We made sure to spread out the events so that people can attend multiple if they want to," said Clarke. "We hope to have even more participants this year than we did the last."

The Parks & Recreation Department will collect new or gently used children's books at all Winter Warm-Up locations throughout the weekend. The books will be used to replenish the lending libraries located in City facilities, such as Edinborough Park.

For more information on Winter Warm-Up Weekend, contact Clarke at 952-826-0433 or [aclarke@EdinaMN.gov](mailto:aclarke@EdinaMN.gov).

## City Appoints Five to Liquor Task Force

Five members have been appointed to a task force that will take a look at and make recommendations to improve Edina's municipal liquor operation, Edina Liquor.

"Everyone has a stake in this – not just the liquor store and City staff," said City Manager Scott Neal. "The better the stores do, the less residents pay in taxes and the more the City can do."

Following a call for task force volunteers in late 2015, Neal said a large number of residents showed interest in serving. "It's very exciting and uplifting to get that sort of response," Neal said.

David Burley, Ed Cracraft, Mike Lynch, Nick Pahl and Birdy Rand were selected for their vast and varying experience in hospitality, retail or marketing. The volunteer task force will look at all aspects of Edina Liquor, from the customer experience, pricing structure, and services and products offered, to operating costs, marketing plans and store management.

"Edina Liquor is still profitable; however, we want to get back to a higher level of profitability seen in recent years," Neal said. "With the task force, we'll get a fresh perspective on operations and on what we can do differently to continue to make Edina Liquor succeed."

While still profitable, Edina Liquor's profitability has decreased due to increased competition in the marketplace. In response to this change and decreased profit, the City has taken measures to entice customers and increase sales, such as growing marketing efforts, remodeling stores, providing customer service training for staff and decreasing profit margins on products.

Neal will ask the task force to study and resolve the following questions:

- How can the City increase the profits of its municipal liquor operations without compromising its commitment to restricting access to non-adults?
- What operational practices can the City adopt to control its operating costs, while not diminishing its profitability and quality of the customer experience?
- What operational practices can the City adopt to improve the overall retail experience to our consumers without decreasing profits or increasing net operating costs?
- What marketing strategies can the City adopt that will increase sales and market share?
- What management practices and structures can the City adopt that will better inform city management and elected officials of the municipal liquor system's operating performance?

The task force will begin meeting in February and is anticipated to continue its work through July, when it will prepare a report with recommendations. During the process, the task force may engage with residents and lead community outreach efforts. Neal will review the recommendations and tentatively plans to share the report with the City Council in August.

Those who wish to express an idea or comment about the process can contact Assistant City Manager Lisa Schaefer at [lschaefer@EdinaMN.gov](mailto:lschaefer@EdinaMN.gov). For more information, contact the Administration Department at 952-826-0364.

## Upcoming Events

**Tuesday, Feb. 2, 7 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Friday, Feb. 5, 6:30 p.m.**  
Family Movie Night, "Enchanted," Edinborough Park.

**Friday, Feb. 5, 8-9:30 p.m.**  
Winter Warm-Up, free open skating, Braemar Arena's Backyard Rink.

**Saturday, Feb. 6, 10 a.m.-noon**  
Winter Warm-Up, open skating, Pamela Park.

**Saturday, Feb. 6, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.**  
Winter Warm-Up, snow sculpture making, Edina Art Center.

**Sunday, Feb. 7, 3 p.m.**  
Winter Warm-Up, Nordic walking, Edina Senior Center.

**Sunday, Feb. 7, 5-8 p.m.**  
Winter Warm-Up, open skating, Centennial Lakes Park.

**Monday, Feb. 8, 6:30 p.m.**  
Community Health Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Tuesday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.**  
Heritage Preservation Board Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Tuesday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.**  
Park Board Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Wednesday, Feb. 10, 4-6 p.m.**  
MnDOT public open house regarding Highway 169, Hopkins High School.

**Wednesday, Feb. 10, 7 p.m.**  
Planning Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Thursday, Feb. 11, 7 p.m.**  
Energy & Environment Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Monday, Feb. 15**  
Presidents Day, City Hall Closed.

**Wednesday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m.**  
City Council Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Thursday, Feb. 18, 6 p.m.**  
Transportation Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Saturday, Feb. 20, 9 a.m.**  
Walk With The Mayor, Galleria Edina.

**Saturday, Feb. 20, 5:30 p.m.**  
Dinner & A Movie, "Cinderella," Braemar Golf Course.

**Tuesday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m.**  
Human Rights & Relations Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Wednesday, Feb. 24, 11:30 a.m.**  
State of the Community, Interlachen Country Club.

**Wednesday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.**  
Planning Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall.

**Thursday, Feb. 25, 4:30 p.m.**  
Arts & Culture Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall.

## MnDOT to Host Highway 169 Open House

Following the completion of construction projects on Minnesota Highway 100 through Edina and St. Louis Park in late 2016, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) plans to begin work on U.S. Highway 169 between Highways 62 and 55.

All are invited to attend an open house from 4 to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, at Hopkins High School, 2400 Lindbergh Drive, Minnetonka, to learn more about the project and planned improvements. Once complete, safety and accessibility will be improved and drivers will enjoy a smoother road surface and a longer-lasting, safer bridge that spans Nine Mile Creek.

As part of the project, the southbound entrance and exit ramps to West 16th Street will close, ramps at Cedar Lake Road will be lengthened to increase safety, and the bridge over Nine Mile Creek (between Bren Road and Lincoln Drive) will be replaced and pavement will be repaired. The project includes other repairs and improvements as well.



Photo by Jordan Gilgenbach

The public is invited to an informational open house Feb. 10 to learn about construction planned for Highway 169. As part of the project, a portion of the highway will close for a year.

MnDOT expects the project to cause major impacts to traffic as the highway will be closed for one year at the bridge replacement location to allow for removal and replacement of the existing bridge. Additional lane closures are expected throughout the project's duration.

The existing bridge is 3,000 feet long. Its current condition, which has deteriorated due to drainage problems and age, requires the bridge be replaced by 2020. The bridge will also be

constructed to accommodate any future expansion of Highway 169.

According to MnDOT, consolidating all planned projects on Highway 169 during a full closure reduces the construction impacts from three years to one year. The project's timeline will also ensure that alternate routes are not affected by construction.

For more information on this project, visit [mndot.gov/metro/projects/hwy169hopkins](http://mndot.gov/metro/projects/hwy169hopkins).

## Council Rejects Bank Plans

The City Council rejected proposed plans in November for a new Bank of America at 6868 France Ave. As part of the proposal, the existing 3,098-square-foot former Think Bank building would be razed.

Developers have proposed a one-story, 7,190-square-foot, LEED-certified building with a drive-up ATM. Merrill Lynch would also be a tenant in the building, but each business would have a separate, dedicated entrance.

The 21.8-acre site is zoned as a Planned Office District and currently includes an eight-story office building and attached restaurant. The new building would use existing shared site access and parking. Storm water ponding areas are also included in the proposal.

At its Nov. 4 meeting, the City Council voted to deny the project as proposed. The City Council expressed concerns over the development's site layout, building materials and location of the drive-up ATM. Bank of America representatives asked the City Council at its Nov. 10 meeting to not take final action on the denial of the project so they can address the Council's concerns.

"The developers are taking the City Council's comments and concerns seriously and want to make this project in Edina work for this flagship location," said Community Development Director Cary Teague. "They have hired local architecture firm DJR Architecture to redesign and rework the building and site layout."

Bank of America expects to be back before the City Council at its Feb. 2 meeting.

For more information, contact the Planning Division at 952-826-0369.



Submitted Rendering

The City Council denied this plan of a new Bank of America building. A new plan will be proposed next month.

## HR Leads Recruitments

The City of Edina's Human Resources Department was especially busy in 2015. Here are some stats for the year:



Photo by Mia Vacanti

Dick Johns, center, retired from Edinborough Park in November after working at the indoor park for 28 years.

**11** Retirements

**342**

Part-time or seasonal positions filled

**36** Full-time positions filled

Kay McAloney was hired as Human Resources Director and began work in October.

File Photo



**389** Interviews scheduled for full-time jobs

During the interview process, candidates are asked questions related to the City's organizational values of integrity, quality and service.

**2,918** Applicants

For more information on the City's Human Resources Department, call 952-826-0364.