

Edina's Vision 20/20 ... A Strategic Plan

Final Report
September 5, 2000



“The mission of the City of Edina is to provide effective and valued public services, maintain a sound public infrastructure, offer premier public facilities and guide the development and redevelopment of lands within the City all in a manner which sustains and improves the uncommonly high quality of life enjoyed by our residents and businesses.”

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INTRODUCTION

Edina has always been a community that has recognized the importance of its past while preparing itself for the future. From its incorporation in 1888 as a milling area on the banks of Minnehaha Creek, Edina has evolved to be a model among municipalities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. It has been an innovator and leader in many ways as evidenced by:

- Being the first Minnesota Village to adopt a comprehensive zoning ordinance in 1929.
- Approval and construction of the Country Club neighborhood in 1924 featuring contoured streets, parks, trees, an eighteen-hole golf course and housing with private covenants governing unit placement, architectural style and property maintenance.
- Establishing and upgrading the 50th and France commercial neighborhood starting in the 1930s.
- The opening of Southdale Center in 1956 as the nation's first fully enclosed, climate-controlled regional shopping mall -- a model that has been subsequently used throughout the country.
- The development of Centennial Lakes and Edinborough, which have become contemporary models for the integration of commercial and residential land uses.

Edina has achieved these and other successes as a community in a number of ways. One of the key attributes of the community's success has been an interest in proactively preparing itself for the future. The Centennial Lakes/Edinborough project referenced above is evidence of this fact. Further evidence includes The Second Century, a report prepared by the Edina Futures Commission in 1990 that analyzed potential community changes.

This effort, **Edina's Vision 20/20**, continues this pattern. The name Vision 20/20 was derived from the both the obvious reference to vision quality as well as an eagerness to begin defining and addressing the opportunities and challenges that will present themselves to Edina between now and the year 2020.

Edina's Vision 20/20 is both a long-term vision for the City as well as a short-term strategic plan of three to five years. The process and this document serve as a map for Edina's journey for the years ahead. From a visioning perspective, it examines where the community has been, where it wants to go and how it will get there. From a strategic planning perspective, it examines the challenges and opportunities that have been identified as having the highest priority within the community during the next 3 to 5 years. Once the highest priority items are addressed, other items will move into positions of more prominence. As an on-going dynamic process, Vision 20/20 will be amended in the future to address these issues.

MISSION/VISION

Edina's Vision 20/20 is intended to guide decisions that will impact Edina's future. A community cannot plan for the future unless it thinks about what it wants to be and where it wants to go. To set a course for a desired future, Edina's strategic planning process started with the establishment of mission and vision statements.

A mission statement articulates an organization's purpose and values. The City Council and staff conducted a critique of the City's existing mission statement. Based on that review, which considered community comments from both public meetings and from the resident survey, the mission statement was modified to read as follows:

"Our mission is to provide effective and valued public services, maintain a sound public infrastructure, offer premier public facilities and guide the development and redevelopment of lands, all in a manner which sustains and improves the uncommonly high quality of life enjoyed by our residents and businesses."

A vision statement captures the elements, conditions and objectives for the future. The vision statement serves as a frame of reference for decision making. It establishes a vehicle for assessment. Does a decision move the community closer to the vision for the future? Does an action get us closer to where we want to be?

After refining the City's mission, the City Council and staff crafted a "vision" for 2020. In creating a vision for Edina's Vision 20/20, careful consideration was given to incorporating the thoughts, values and desires of the community. If the vision is to be implemented, it must reflect the values and views of Edina. The foundation of the vision is information that was collected during a community meeting and from the resident survey that was conducted. This information was reviewed and refined by the City Council and put into draft form. A copy of the draft mission and vision statements was sent to all community meeting attendees. Additionally, the information was posted on Edina's website. After review of the public comments, the vision statement was refined to read:

EDINA'S VISION 20/20

Edina will be the preeminent place for living, learning, raising families and doing business distinguished by:

A Livable Environment

Our residents regard their quality of life in Edina as very high. Many factors contribute to this opinion, including premier schools, exceptional neighborhoods, an advantageous location in the metropolitan area, excellent public facilities and services, safe streets, a clean and adequate water supply, access to new technology and communications systems and a strong sense of community identity.

Effective and Valued City Services

Our customers (we view our residents and businesses as customers as well as taxpayers) have an extraordinarily high regard for city services. They associate an outstanding value with these services. They also distinguish Edina from other places by the quality of our services. These services change as the needs of our customers change, but their effectiveness and value will be the benchmarks of our success.

A Sound Public Infrastructure

Edina streets, utilities, parks and public buildings are the essential components of the foundation of our city. A sound public infrastructure encourages the development of a stable private infrastructure, leading to an enhancement of the sense of quality that Edina has and will enjoy.

A Balance of Land Uses

Edina is a model of urban development: a diversity of land uses, housing choices for all stages of a person's life, outstanding neighborhoods and an extensive network of parks

and open spaces all arranged in a manner of development that is pedestrian- and transit-friendly. It also includes the employment of reinvestment and redevelopment strategies to address changing housing and business needs and prudent policies that sustain Edina's enormous investment in its housing stock and neighborhoods.

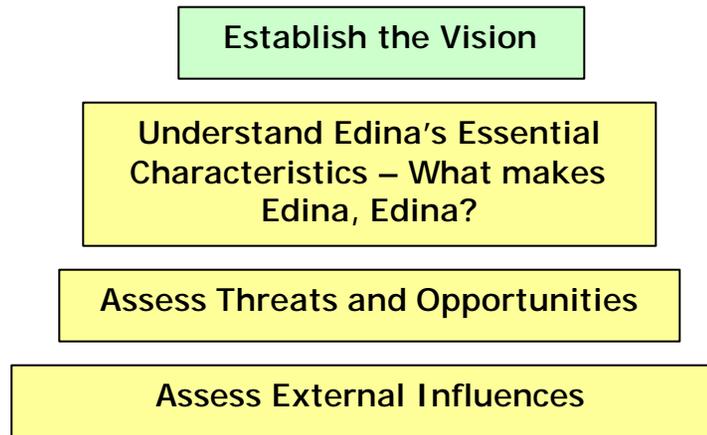
Innovation

"Innovation" means matching our technological resources with the needs and desires of our residents. "Innovation" means creating value in what we do to serve our citizens. "Innovation" means operating local government in a business-like manner even though we are not a business. "Innovation" means forging partnerships with our schools, community organizations and volunteers to serve our customers. "Innovation" can also mean risk-taking." Although our residents are highly satisfied with their community, we always seek innovative ways to improve their lives.

Achieving Edina's vision for the future is not the sole responsibility of any group or organization. Collectively, with this strategic plan as a guide, the Edina community can achieve the ideals outlined in the mission and vision statements.

TRANSLATING VISION INTO ACTIONS

With a vision established, the next step in the strategic planning process was finding a method of translating vision into actions. The first step in that process was the identification of issues that the city is either facing today or will likely face in the years ahead. Identifying issues started with a four-step process focusing on a universe of possibilities. The process included:



Characteristics

Characteristics of the Edina as a community include neighborhoods, commerce, location, schools, parks and city services. Residents and businesspersons indicated that:

Neighborhoods are an important element of the community fabric. Residential neighborhoods are attractive, well-maintained environments that offer a variety of housing types.

Commerce is a characteristic of Edina because of the retail, office and service businesses that are located in the community. Edina is an important regional health center.

Location plays a key role in the success of the community. Edina is accessible because of the regional roadway network that passes through and around its borders.

Schools have always been one of the community's strong points. One of the most frequently cited reasons for living in Edina is the reputation of the school district.

Parks are held in high regard by Edina residents. The city has developed an excellent system of neighborhood and community parks as well as cutting-edge, special use facilities such as Centennial Lakes and Edinborough parks.

City Services consistently score high in resident satisfaction surveys.

Internal and External Trends

Edina is constantly subjected to external influences that lie outside of its direct control but have a significant impact on local conditions. Social change, national and regional economics, regional policies, state policies, and people's perception of government will impact Edina.

Social Change – Minnesota's population is changing -- it is growing older and it is slowly becoming more diverse. These changes are mirrored in Edina. An aging population as well as a population that is becoming more ethnically diverse will result in changing social needs. Program offerings and services will need to match future needs.

Economics – Edina's economy is tied to the economies of the state and nation. The economy has been vibrant in recent years. People have money to invest in homes and interest rates are attractive for public projects. In leaner times that may lie ahead, the financial atmosphere may be significantly different, creating new challenges to originating and funding needed private and public improvements.

Regional Policies – Regional policies, particularly those of the Metropolitan Council, have a significant impact on Edina. At the present time, there is a regional emphasis on smart growth, sustainable development and light rail and commuter rail transit. Between now and 2020, 330,000 new households are expected in the Twin Cities region. Regional policies are attempting to channel portions of this growth into higher density redevelopment areas that are within the central cities and first ring suburbs. Accordingly, Edina is likely to see additional pressure in the future to accommodate a portion of projected regional housing growth and is also likely to see financial incentives to promote specific redevelopment activities.

State Policies – State policies directly impact all Minnesota communities. Property tax change is a frequent topic of legislative discussion. Future changes in property tax formulas, tax increment financing, etc. may significantly impact Edina.

Perception of Government – People’s perception of government as a whole is often impacted by events at specific governmental levels. Controversy involving federal government officials impacts the level of trust at the local level. State funding windfalls or shortfalls may influence people’s willingness to support local finance initiatives.

Threats and Opportunities

The City will face a variety of threats and opportunities that may impact the character of Edina. Major threats and opportunities include:

Transportation - Increased traffic on both regional and local roadways is an increasing irritation to Edina residents. Congestion will affect the viability of businesses. Transit services including light rail and commuter rail may help alleviate some of the existing problems but transportation is likely to remain as a frequent topic of discussion.

Changing Demographics - As the population continues to age and the City becomes more ethnically diverse, new services and programs may be necessary to meet

residents' needs. The aging population will also become more interested in housing types other than the traditional single-family detached home.

Public Safety - Although crime statistics and recent trends do not support any major concerns, people continue to perceive that their lives are not as secure as they once were. The growing number of alarm system installations and the quantity of calls for police services are evidence of this trait.

Changing Technology - The information age has impacted the way in which people communicate and will continue to impact the way in which the City provides information and services. One of the challenges in the years ahead is keeping abreast of ongoing technology advances and determining their impact on the community.

Infrastructure - As a developed community, the city's infrastructure generally including roads, utilities, and public buildings is aging and is in need of ongoing maintenance and replacement. Maintaining and replacing infrastructure represents a formidable challenge in the years ahead because of the potential magnitude and cost of probable improvements.

Redevelopment - Because the community is fully developed, redevelopment will continue to be an important opportunity. Edina has been a leader in redevelopment with projects like 50th and France and Centennial Lakes.

Finance – Financial management will be increasingly important. Capital to accomplish improvements and projects will need to come from both traditional and non-traditional sources.

OBJECTIVES, ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Edina's 20/20 Vision is an action-oriented strategic plan. It is intended to guide planning and resource allocation over the next three to five years. The plan:

- Provides common direction consistent with the Edina community's goals and values;
- Assists the City in building on strengths and overcoming barriers; and
- Serves as a dynamic planning tool, subject to periodic and regular review and revision.

The process used in the assembly of the plan is equal in importance to this document, the end product. The opportunities for participation by the entire Edina community in the Vision 20/20 process instilled ownership in the effort. Ownership enhances implementation efforts.

The plan recommendations are presented in three parts. They address: 1) Where do we want to go? (**Objectives**), 2) What are we likely to encounter along the way? (**Issues**) and 3) How do we get there? (**Strategies**). City staff will be responsible for crafting action plans based upon the adopted strategies.

The Edina community was the primary source of the strategic objectives. Information that was collected via community meetings and telephone surveys was shaped into a series of strategic objective statements. These statements address where Edina intends to go over the next three to five year period.

Issues represent a broad range of observations and findings that have become evident during the planning process. They provide the basis for strategies.

Strategies provide the road map for implementing the objectives of the City Council. They prescribe a number of courses of action that need to be taken by the City of Edina. In most cases, actions are the responsibility of City staff.

Objective #1: Maintain strong residential neighborhoods.

Issues:

- Residential neighborhoods are a defining characteristic of Edina. Many Edina neighborhoods have a unique character defined by architectural housing styles, street patterns and extensive landscaping.
- Edina faces increasing competition from other communities that can offer “Edina-like” residential neighborhoods.
- City services (street maintenance, police, fire and parks) play an important role in the quality of neighborhoods.
- Neighborhoods are adversely affected by traffic leaving the regional highway system.

Strategies:

- Enhance neighborhood identity through improved neighborhood communications and entry monumentation.
- Maintain and improve the condition of the City's housing stock through housing maintenance and rehabilitation programs.
- Encourage affordable, life-cycle housing opportunities where possible.
- Reduce non-local, cut-through traffic in cooperation with County and State efforts.

Objective #2: Provide a level of City services that sets Edina apart from other communities.

Issues:

- City services are perceived as high quality. This perception influences how residents view the community.
- The demographics of the City influence the demand for City services and the mechanisms with which they are provided.
- Services make up the majority of the City's operating budget.
- A key ingredient in providing quality services is an experienced staff with proper skills and knowledge of the community. Attracting and maintaining staff shapes the City's ability to deliver services.

Strategies:

- Develop an ongoing method to monitor resident satisfaction with City services.
- Attract and retain competent employees who are key to delivering exceptional services.
- Adapt services to meet the constantly changing demographics of the City.

Objective #3: Provide capital investments that balance need and affordability.

Issues:

- Public facilities are important elements of both community development and municipal services.
- Edina faces several significant public facilities projects. The proposed Grandview redevelopment includes a new library and senior center. The relocation of the Edina Community Library allows for the expansion and enhancement of core city facilities including City Hall and the police department. New recreational facilities may be needed. A referendum might be considered.
- The age of the City's infrastructure will result in significant capital expenditures in the coming years. Meeting infrastructure needs requires balancing available revenues – utility user charges, special assessments and property taxes.
- The investment in facilities and infrastructure will require additional debt. The source(s) of revenues used to support debt is more important than the total amount of debt. Revenues used to support debt determine who pays and the degree of affordability. Maintaining the best possible bond rating helps achieve the lowest interest expense for City debt.
- Legislative actions influence the ability of Edina to provide capital investment. The ability of the City to borrow money comes from state law. The ability to use tax increment financing for social, cultural and recreational facilities such as the library and senior center has been eliminated. This approach will not work in the future for these types of projects. Lease revenue bonds face the risk of future legislative restrictions or elimination. Levy limits constrain the ability to finance both services and capital investment through the General Fund. While levy limits

have been removed for fiscal year 2001, new limitations will be discussed in the next legislative session.

Strategies:

- Complete agreements for further redevelopment of the Grandview area that facilitate the relocation of the library and the construction of the senior center.
- Complete and implement plans for the relocation of the police department and the expansion of City Hall.
- Evaluate funding opportunities created by the removal of levy limits for fiscal year 2001.
- Prepare analysis of revenue and debt implications of financing the five-year Capital Improvement Plan.
- Review policies for use of special assessments needed to support capital improvement plans.
- Participate in the legislative process to prevent limitations on property taxes and local government finance capabilities that impair the ability to meet these strategic objectives.
- Educate bond rating agencies on the strategic plan (Edina's Vision 20/20).

Objective #4: Accommodate the efficient movement of people and goods in and around Edina.

Issues:

- The shrinking capacity of regional roadway systems forces traffic onto local streets.
- Congestion on the highway system will increase in the years ahead.
- The reconstruction of I-494 will significantly impact transportation for an extended period of time.

Strategies:

- Incorporate transit oriented design (TOD) principles where appropriate.
- Participate in commuter rail studies to assure fair consideration of its positive and negative effects on the City.
- Implement transportation demand management (TDM) policies of the I-494 Corridor Commission.
- Implement intra-area transit in southeast Edina.
- Protect Edina's interests during the reconstruction of I-494.
- Improve transit opportunities for senior citizens.
- Develop a local traffic transportation plan to mitigate the effects of cut-through traffic.

Objective #5: Take an active role in future redevelopment strategies.

Issues:

- Edina's past redevelopment actions addressed specific challenges and enhanced the City's image.
- Tax increment financing cannot be used in the same manner as on previous redevelopment successes (50th/France, Centennial Lakes and Edinborough) due to changes in enabling legislation.
- Tax abatement offers another development finance tool. However, the total use of abatement by the City is capped by state law.
- Redevelopment continues to rely on leadership from the City.
- Regional and state policies that seek to limit sprawl emphasize redevelopment in communities like Edina. This regional and state effort creates local opportunities and possible supporting funding.
- Local retail centers are potential future redevelopment areas including Wooddale/Valley View, Grandview, 44th/France and 70th/Cahill.

Strategies:

- Amend the Edina Comprehensive Plan to add a redevelopment component.
- Complete the Grandview redevelopment project.
- Establish guidelines for further intensification of land uses at 50th and France.

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- Pursue redevelopment opportunities for the Wooddale/Valley View neighborhood commercial area.
 - Advocate legislation creating new development tools.

Objective #6: Facilitate the evolution of Southdale and environs into a premier shopping, business and health care center.

Issues:

- The growth of commerce over the Internet will alter retail businesses.
- Southdale Center is the oldest fully enclosed, climate-controlled shopping mall in the country.
- The reconstruction of Interstate 494 creates a barrier for accessing existing businesses and the formation of new businesses in the Southdale area and along the France Avenue corridor.
- The expansion of mixed-use developments (Centennial Lakes) brings more resident customers into the Southdale area.
- Growing health care facilities are defining elements of the northern Southdale area.

Strategies:

- Commission a study of the Southdale area for the purpose of identifying redevelopment opportunities and evolving land uses and outlining the City's role in guiding and participating in enhancing the Southdale area.

Objective #7: Develop a stronger working relationship with Edina Public Schools.

Issues:

- The quality of the community is tied to the quality of its school system. Edina schools greatly influence the City's ability to attract and retain residents.
- Development plans and demographic changes in the City have a direct impact on the School District.
- Both entities have a common "customer" and rely on funding from nearly the same group of taxpayers.

Strategies:

- Participate in the school district's asset building initiative.
- Investigate joint technology improvements.
- Enhance recreational opportunities in school and City facilities.
- Explore opportunities for cross utilization of personnel and equipment.
- Explore opportunities for relocation of the existing bus garage to allow continued redevelopment in the Grandview area.

Objective #8: Match the City's technological capabilities with the needs and desires of residents and business people.

Issues:

- Computer technology and the World Wide Web have added new means of communications.
- The City periodically receives requests for the placement of new communications technologies within public rights-of-way.
- Cities must continually examine communications tools in order to reach the broadest portion of the constituent audience.

Strategies:

- Continue development of the City's website to include expanded informational offerings, interactivity and e-commerce applications.
- Update the City's technology plan.
- In conjunction with an overall renovation of City Hall, accommodate the televising of Council and major commission meetings.

Objective #9: Continually update and refine Vision 20/20.

Issues:

- Strategic planning is an ongoing process.
- Assembly of Edina's strategic plan Vision 20/20 is only a first step in a series of steps to attain the City's vision and prepare itself for the future.
- Edina is a community of leaders.
- An environment that encourages innovation enables staff to seek better solutions.
- Continued innovation will be an essential part of providing quality and affordable services.
- An innovative culture creates a more positive work environment and promotes the retention of staff.
- The demographic makeup of Edina is changing. The characteristics of the community influence the demand for City services and the mechanisms within which they are provided.

Strategies:

- Convene an annual "futures summit" to identify and discuss trends affecting the City.
- Leverage the talents of Edina residents.

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- Conduct an annual goal setting, brain storming retreat.
 - Monitor City offered services and programs to ensure that they continue to meet the requirements and expectations of Edina's residents.

FRAMEWORK

- *Define a process*
- *Analyze internal and external influences*
- *Seek public input*

Define a Process

Establishing a vision and strategic plan for Edina can provide the community and City Council with an important tool to address future challenges and opportunities. Before a strategic plan could be assembled, a process had to be identified to guide the effort. From the beginning, the process was looked at as a partnership between the community-at-large, the City Council and city staff. The community including Edina's residents, businesspersons, and public agencies were looked to for their insights on existing community conditions and their dreams for the future. The City Council was looked at as having responsibility for setting policy and determining priorities. Staff was looked upon for their working knowledge of the community, their ideas and ultimately, their responsibility for implementing the direction given by the City Council.

The process involved the establishment of nine major steps as illustrated on the following diagram. The first two tasks, framing the process and conducting the environmental scan are considered part of the framework for the planning effort. In order to identify and analyze issues that are or will be important to the community in the next few years, it was important to examine a number of trends and characteristics that will have an impact on the community. Some of these trends were internal in that they originate within and largely impact only the city of Edina. Many trends were external in that they originate outside of the community but impact Edina. In many cases, these external trends impact other communities as well. The external trends are of more concern because they are usually outside of the city's direct control. As a result, Edina has to formulate strategies to address the impacts of these trends rather than having the ability to directly impact the source of these trends.

Analysis of Internal and External Influences

For the purpose of this planning effort, a number of trend categories were identified. These trends were identified through research of local and national information and from an assembly of “futurist” views. Only those that were deemed to be applicable to Edina were addressed as part of the plan. They included:

- Government/Public Participation
- Public Finance/Taxes
- Social Change
- Crime
- Quality of Life
- Youth
- Technology/Information
- Development

The following is a brief overview of each of these categories.

Government/Public Participation

In October of 1999, Jim Miller, executive director of the League of Minnesota Cities wrote, “It is not just that the business of government is becoming more difficult, although that is certainly true as problems become more complex and resources become more scarce. In a growing number of communities, it is the very relationship between government and citizen that is at the root of concern. Very simply, citizens seem increasingly unwilling to sacrifice for the good of their neighbors or, by extension, to have their local officials do so.”

Although issues of government and public participation impact Edina today, they are not generally felt to be as pervasive as Mr. Miller’s comments reference. Despite this fact, government and public participation is a trend that may become more dominant in Edina in the future. Characteristics of this trend include:

- Eroding trust in public officials/government

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- Growing populism, a desire for more participatory democracy
 - Increasing complexity in decision making and issues
 - Growing NIMBYism/self interest blocks/no desire to compromise
 - Declining sense of civic responsibility
 - Growing conflict in values
 - People don't understand or know how to get involved in government processes

These trends and characteristics may have the following effects on the city of Edina:

- Levy limits
- Truth in Taxation process
- Complicated property tax system
- Interest group demands – for example recreation associations, seniors, etc.
- Fewer volunteers
- More contentious public hearings
- More legislation to “protect” taxpayers from local government

Public Finance/Taxes

Taxpayers have always been concerned about the cost of government but in recent years, this concern seems to have intensified. Campaign promises for State offices in Minnesota during the last election echoed a theme of reducing taxes, rebating excess revenues to taxpayers, and returning government to the people. Some of the external trends that seem to be associated with heightened public interest in finance and tax issues include:

- Public perception that taxes are too high
- Growing fiscal conservatism
- Public confusion about government processes, roles, services, taxes and issues
- Growing demand and expectation for services (seniors, recreation, emergency services, etc.)
- “Do more with less or do it yourself” attitude
- Federal devolution

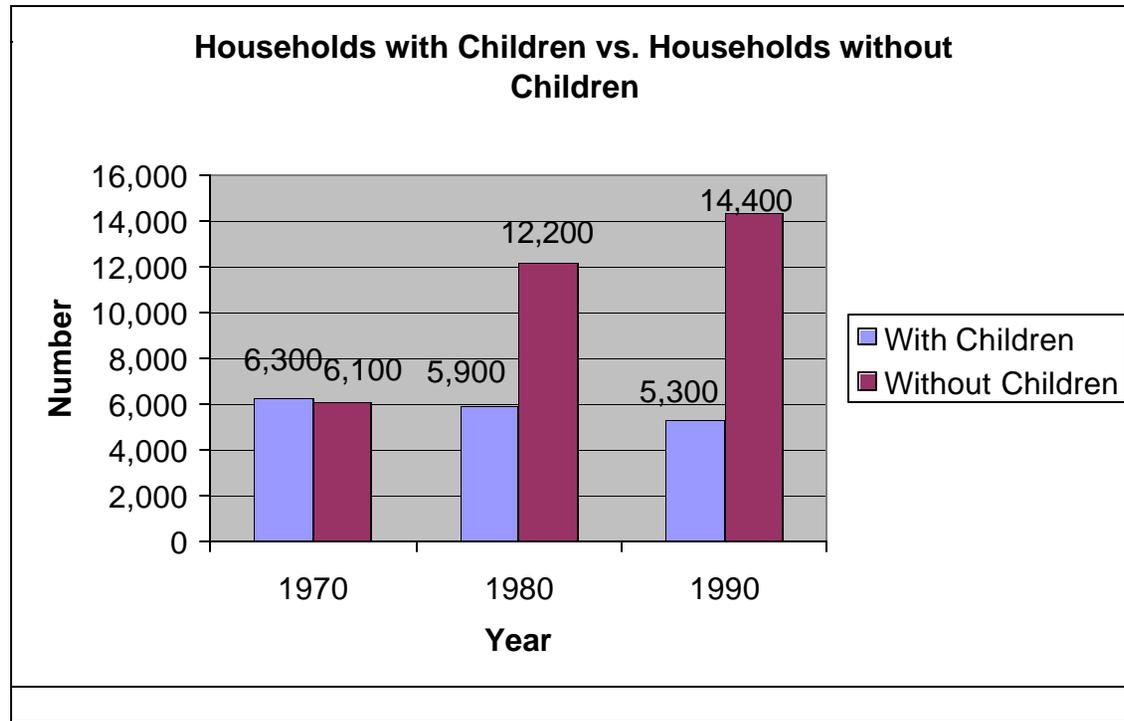
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- The cost of government continues to rise due to mandates, inflation, etc.

These trends and characteristics may have the following effects on the city of Edina:

- Levy limits
- Truth in Taxation process
- Tax base sharing (fiscal disparities)
- Increased demands for services/greater demands on employees
- Limited dollars to maintain infrastructure
- Unfunded mandates
- Loss of perspective – the average value home pays \$40 per month for City services

Social Change

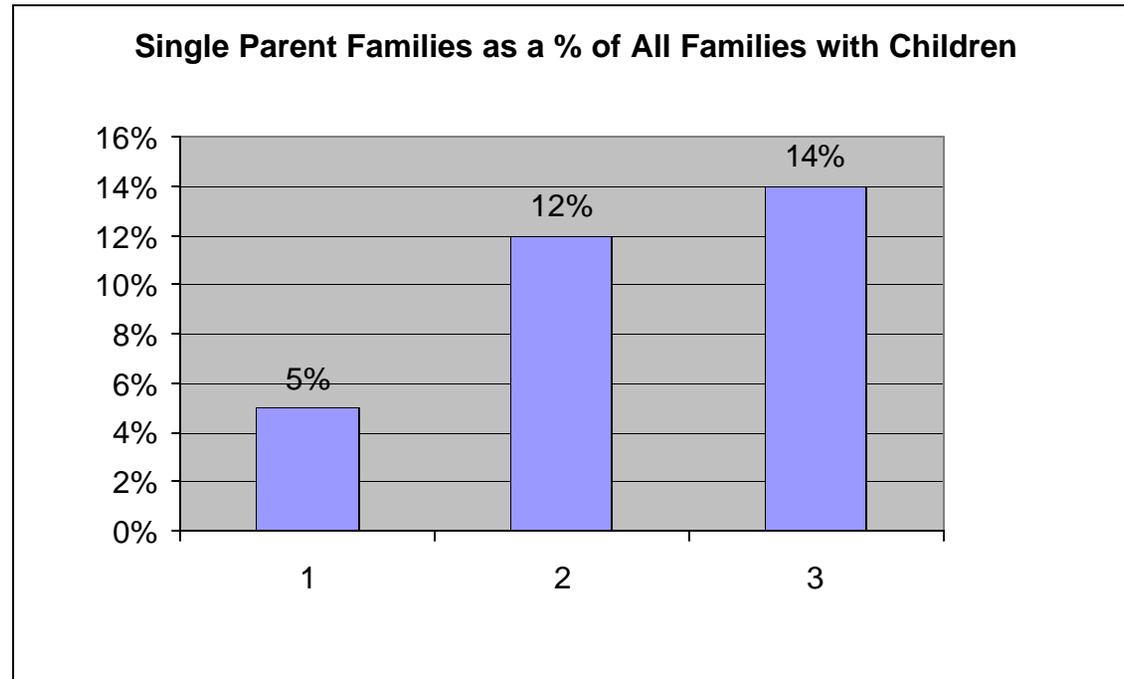
Since it's founding in 1888, Edina has continued to evolve and change. During its peak growth years in the 50s, 60s and 70s, the community became the home of many young families. During the 80s and 90s and now in the 2000s, the community has reached a more mature status. The population is older, households have fewer children and family composition is changing.



In 1960, 6 percent of Edina’s population was over the age of 65. By 1990, 20 percent of the population was over 65. This dramatic increase in the percentage of the population over the age of 65 will have a direct impact on city services. Increasing numbers of seniors translates directly into increasing needs for senior services.

In 1970, 51 percent of Edina’s households had children. By 1980, the percentage of households with children had dropped to 33 percent and by 1990; the number had fallen further to 27%.

Family composition is also changing. In 1970, the number of single parent families as a percentage of all families with children was 5%. By 1990, the number of single parent families had increased to 14%.

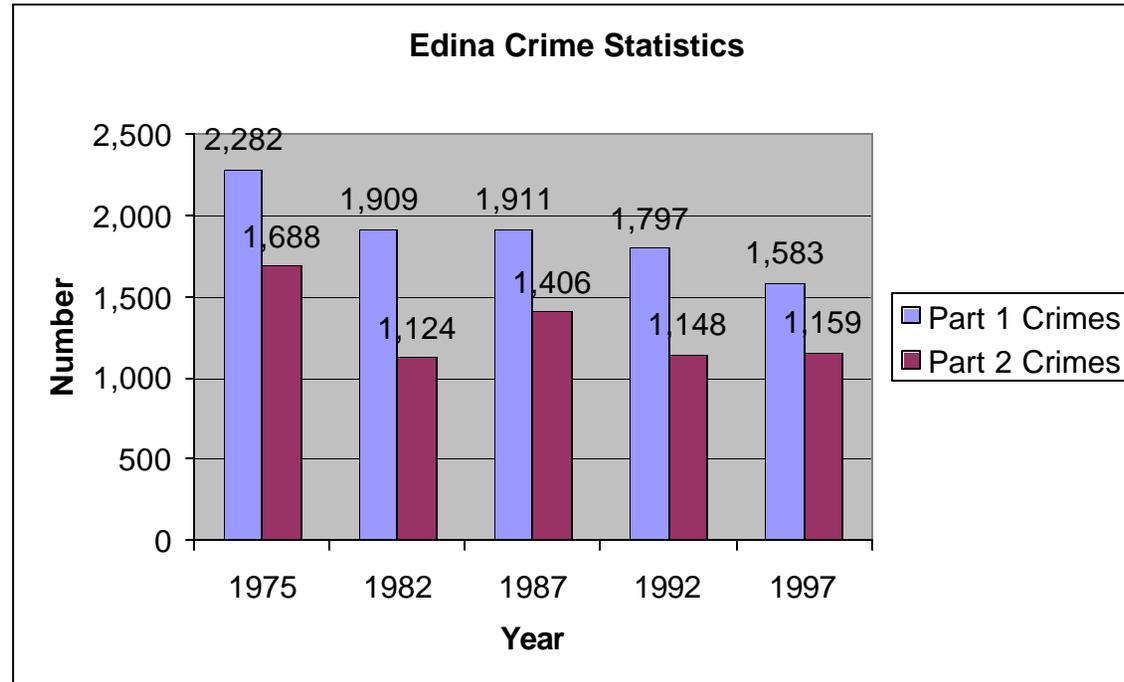


Some of the trends associated with social change include:

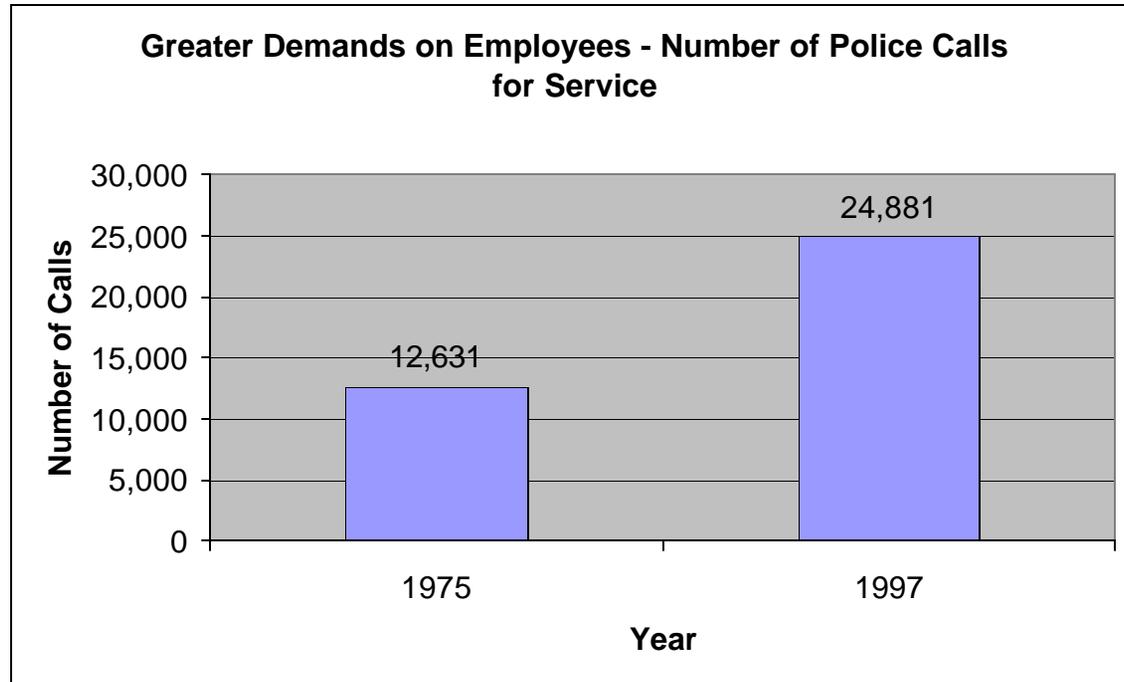
- Increased social diversity and multiculturalism
- Aging Population
- Interpersonal relationships becoming more stable

The predominate effect of these social changes is a change in the needs of the population including the type and delivery of human service programs.

Crime



Many people have the perception that crime is on the increase in their community. In Edina, Part 1 and Part 2 crimes (severity classifications) have been generally decreasing since 1975. During this period, however, increasing demands have been placed on Edina police officers due to a substantial increase in calls for service, increasing number of calls handled by each officer and higher number of false alarms, generally attributable to an increase in home alarm systems.



Generally, external crime trends include:

- Perceived growth in crime
- Growth in personal protections/self defense (i.e. alarm systems)

These trends have the following effects on the City:

- Police calls for service are increasing
- Alarm system usage and corresponding false alarms is increasing

Quality of Life

Communities are placing an increasing importance and value on establishing and maintaining a high quality of life. The new urbanism movement that has gained momentum as a community development model in recent years is built upon a premise of recapturing the qualities of traditional communities. Some of these qualities include a downtown area, pedestrian friendly neighborhoods, and a sense of scale that is derived from traditional building materials and forms.

Characteristics of this quality of life trend include:

- A growing desire for a sense of place and identity
- A growing demand for a clean environment

These trends may have the following effects on Edina:

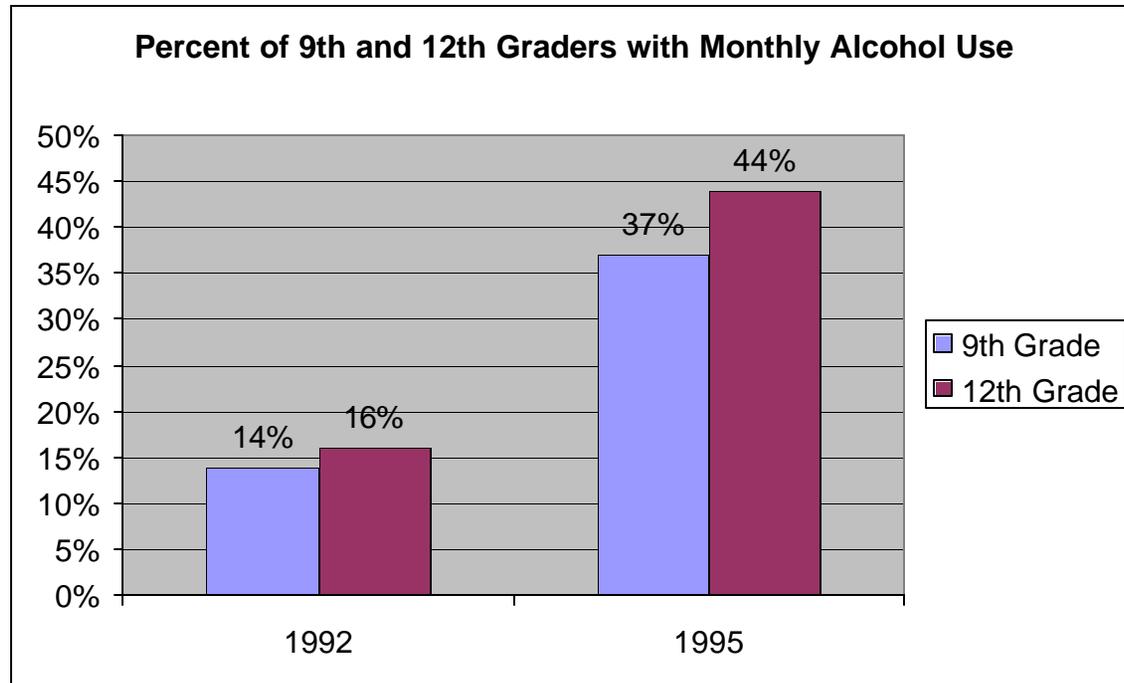
- Growing interest in community facilities
- Competition among communities
- Increased neighborhood traffic issues
- Greater emphasis on clean air and water
- Chemical free turf management

Youth

Although the elderly portion of Edina's population continues to grow and therefore, may take on a more prominent role in the future, the youth segment of the population cannot be overlooked. Edina is not immune from the trends that have been affecting youth for the last two decades. Statistics and trends about drinking, drug use and other behavioral characteristics have prompted parents, educators and students to actively address these issues. One of the means of addressing this issue is the Asset Building Initiative sponsored by the Edina School District. A survey completed in March of 2000 as part of that process found:

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- On average, Edina students live in a more positive, healthy, caring environment and have greater commitments, values and expectations than the norm group.
 - The good influences that Edina students experience are a high level of family love and support, positive peer influence, constructive youth programs and the religious community.
 - Edina students feel that they need better family communication, more empowerment within the community and positive reinforcement from teachers.
 - Edina students possess strong academic competence. They have strong motivational achievement, work hard at school and on homework, possess high levels of integrity and honesty and have a positive view of their personal future.
 - Edina students need more social competence, such as planning and decision-making.
 - Survey results showed that, in general, assets decrease as students get older which is identical to the norm group.

(Source: Results from the Survey – Development Assets: A Profile of Your Youth, Edina Public Schools, March, 2000)



Youth trends include:

- The perception by young people that there is no place to go, nothing to do socially
- Increasing numbers of youth at risk due to lack of adult presence, drug and alcohol use, etc.
- An affluent society that provides young people with the means to pursue their interests

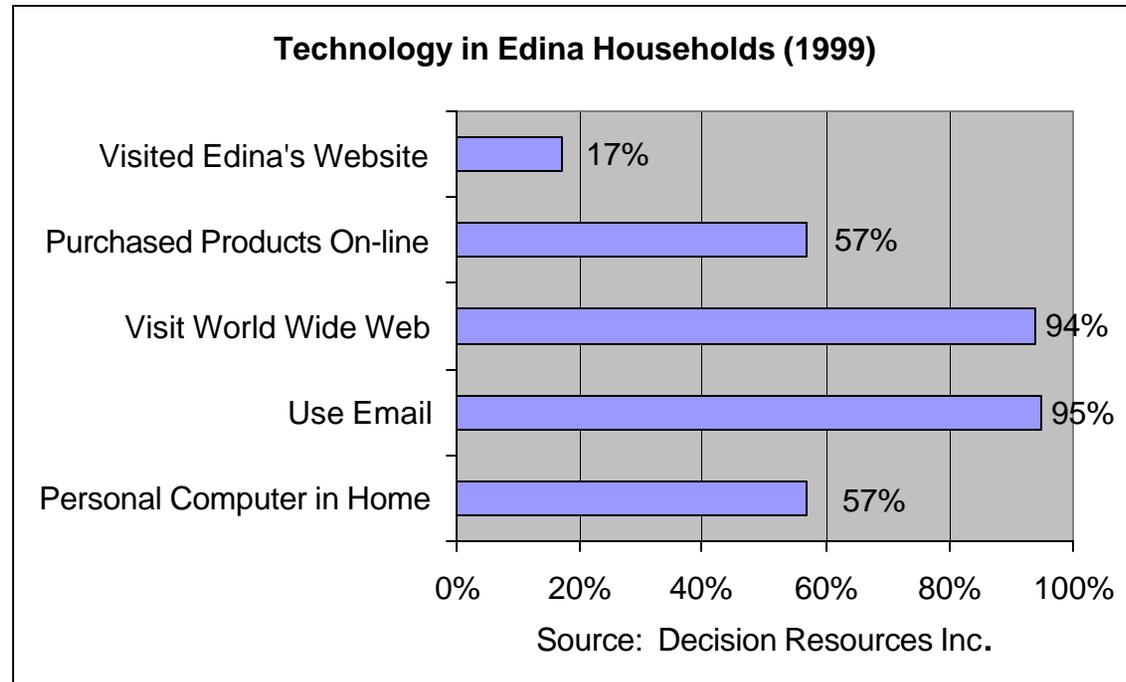
These trends may have the following effects on the city of Edina:

- Opportunities for cooperation with the School District

- Opportunities to cooperate with other public and private agencies such as the YMCA in supporting youth programs
- Opportunities to provide non-traditional recreational programs and activities

Technology/Information

Technology trends have had a substantial impact on individuals, businesses, and communities in recent years. The availability and use of personal computers is revolutionizing the way in which information is acquired and shared. It has paved the way for establishing new ways of doing business. Edina residents have embraced new technologies as evidenced by the information shown on the following chart.



Technology and information trends include:

- Accelerating technology and telecommunications
- Abundance of information
- Information becoming increasingly available and manageable
- Growing accessibility of government information via Internet (laws, regulations, programs, budgets, meeting agendas, etc.)
- Skills and knowledge becoming obsolete faster
- Infomedia tends to desocialize people
- Growing surveillance technology available

These trends may have the following effects on the city of Edina:

- Greater demand for City information via the internet
- Greater demand to communicate with staff via email, voice mail, etc.
- Cellular communications has created greater demand for antenna locations.
- Evolution of software has crated increased need to keep staff trained and upgrade systems more frequently.

Development

Development in Edina has always been impacted by both internal and external influences. Regional growth policies impact local governments. The major transportation systems that serve Edina are managed and maintained by regional and state jurisdictions.

The following development trends will continue to influence the community.

- Edina is one of the most prominent addresses in Minnesota
- Edina is fully developed
- Regional efforts are emphasizing the control of sprawl
- The regional economy is strong

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- Edina has a strong sense of community
 - Edina is an aging community (infrastructure)

These trends may affect Edina in the following ways:

- Growth is largely dependent on redevelopment
- The city may need to take a greater role in redevelopment projects
- Additional investment will be required in order to rebuild aging infrastructure
- Promotion of regional polices may create regional incentives and opportunities

Trend Conclusions

The applicability of the trends identified herein is difficult to assess. Some, such as youth and technology trends, are directly applicable to the City today. Others may never be germane. Collectively, however, they do represent a set of ideas worth examining and revisiting. The continuation of these trends may result in the following:

- The public may have a growing influence on decision-making and public officials.
- The public may have access to a wealth of information (through technology) about specific issues and ideas.
- The public may become increasingly sophisticated in presenting ideas and understanding issues.
- The public may grow increasingly adept at activism and frustrated with established procedures for decision-making.
- Activists may disagree with one another and with government about how and which decisions are made (differing values).
- Government may find it increasingly difficult, even impossible, to make any decision that shows responsiveness to all parties.
- There may be a growing conflict between decision makers and the public.
- There may be a sense that government isn't working very well and efforts may be made to change the form of government to make it more "accountable" to the public.

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- The paradigm may shift from government as a service provider to government as a tax.
 - There may be a growing emphasis on outsourcing services to stimulate competition and reduce costs.
 - Services may need to be reduced or funded in other ways to keep property taxes as low as possible.
 - Government may have a greater ability to obtain and manage information, provide quick turnaround, and make better decisions.
 - Technology may make it possible for staff to gain experience and keep up to date with what others are doing.
 - There may be a growing demand for recreation and other special interest projects, perhaps, with no funding support.

Public Input

Examining Edina and thinking about its future only on the basis of facts and figures would paint an incomplete picture of the community. Various demographic statistics provide one means of understanding Edina and looking at its future. Another important approach involves seeking the thoughts and ideas of Edina residents and businesspeople. The Vision 20/20 process used a number of techniques to gather public input and to vest the stakeholders in the assembly of this plan. Key public involvement occurred through community meetings and a survey of Edina households that was conducted as part of the planning process.

Community Meeting

How do the people of Edina view the community and what changes would they like to see by 2010 or 2020? These questions formed the central theme of a community meeting that was held as part of the planning process. On April 15, 1999, approximately 150 people participated in a town meeting held in the Braemar Golf Course Clubhouse. During the course of the event, small and large groups were asked to discuss and report on a series of questions. The response produced valuable insights about the attendees' perceptions about their community.

The following is an overview of the questions and responses.

1. *What is this place? What characteristics define Edina? What makes Edina, "Edina"?*

- Volunteers
- Safe
- Clean
- Great schools
- Downtown
- Multi-generational involvement
- Beautiful gardens
- Parks
- Friendly neighbors
- Location
- Tradition
- Excellent public services
- Care about kids – kids friendly
- Community pride
- Excellent recycling participation – environmental consciousness
- Excellent historical society
- Established infrastructure
- Responsible business community
- Well-managed - it works
- Close to Minneapolis
- Small town feel
- Good senior programs
- Active garden club
- Lots of strong churches
- Active arts center
- Fast drivers - but courteous
- No vacant land
- Parental involvement in schools

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- Excellent home values
 - Public support for referendum
 - A lot of seniors
 - Good public facilities (library, school, golf)
 - Outstanding mix of land uses
 - Traffic congestion
 - Lack of public transportation
 - Good police and fire
 - Reduction in youth chemical use
 - Convenient healthcare
 - Prominent business address but not technical cutting edge
 - Medical delivery
 - Close to airport
 - Center for public and private leadership
 - Relatively low property taxes
 - Excellent philanthropy - giving
 - Strong business community

2. *What does this place want to be? What characteristics do you want Edina to have in 2010 or 2020? What will it look like, feel like, and sound like? How will people relate to one another? What activities will Edina accommodate?*

Multi-use community center

- Comprehensive community center, theatre, senior center, pool for multi-general use
- Expand and improve community facilities - teen center - senior center – recreational center
- Community center
- Improved athletic facility (basketball, swimming, etc.)

Quality public infrastructure

- Maintain our present high quality public services
- Replace/maintain aging infrastructure
- State of the art utilities - gas, electric
- State of the public buildings (city hall, etc.)
- Continued commitment to infrastructure renewal

Strong/lifecycle housing stock

- Do not let it become a community of condos
- Affordable housing
- Continue to have diverse, progressive housing blend
- Variety range housing
- Maintain housing stock
- Support to keep neighborhoods inter-generational
- Transitional housing for all life stages
- Variety and flexibility in housing
- Reduce land use restrictions/affordable housing
- Varied housing choices - (e.g. retired)
- Good elderly housing and senior center

Green and open spaces

- Maintain lakes and parks
- Maintain green spaces
- Beautification of City
- Preserve parks, trees and open spaces
- Maintain strong infrastructure and park system (all ages)
- Green space enhancement/management
- Enhance and maintain green space
- Retain and maintain park system

Multi-generational diverse community

- Better age balance
- Changed demographics
- Respect for: townspeople, outside community, visitors
- Smarter generational planning
- Multi-generational interaction
- Receptive to diverse community population
- World class senior community
- Enhanced diversity

Safe and convenient transportation system

- Public transportation
- Control of noise pollution (airport, highway)
- Public transportation and urban planning for traffic control
- Pedestrian friendly/control traffic patterns
- Pedestrian friendly (sidewalks, bikes)
- Sidewalks and alternative use paths
- Access to public transportation
- Metro area transportation system
- Expand transportation - bus, bikeways, sidewalks
- Part of regional transportation system
- Mass transportation
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Public transportation
- Transportation (traffic) issues solved
- Better public transit
- Improved local transportation public services

Small town feel

- Update zoning laws
- Community of fine homes in a “small” town atmosphere
- Strengthen neighbors’ quality of life/environment for positive change
- Corner store
- Grow more friendly neighborhoods

Positive community involvement

- Leadership
- Volunteers

Strong business environment

- Strengthen and maintain business community
- Prosperous business community

Excellent education system

- Excellent public schools
- Educational excellence across the lifespan
- Maintain and improve our schools
- Cutting-edge public schools
- Maintain our present high quality public school system
- Maintain quality educational system
- Education #1
- Pre-eminent school district
- Smaller class sizes in all grade levels at school
- High quality schools
- Improved city-school relations

State of the art technology integrated

- Technologically – best tools for our families, kids, businesses
- Technology infrastructure in place
- Leadership in technological infrastructure

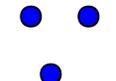
Childcare

- Childcare

Maintain low taxes

3. *What characteristics will be the most important in realizing our collective vision for Edina?*

Responses are tabulated below.

Edina’s 20/20 Vision - A Strategic Plan				
<i>“What Does this Place Want to Be?”</i>				
Characteristics of the Future Community A Community that has:	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Forget It
Safe and convenient transportation system				

Small town feel				
Positive community involvement				
Strong business environment				
Excellent education system				
State of the art integrated technology				
Multi-generational diverse community				
Green, parks and open space				
Strong lifecycle housing stock				
Quality public infrastructure				
Multi-use community center				
Childcare				

At the conclusion of the public meeting, an open forum was held to allow the random expression of ideas that had not been stated as part of the first three questions. Ideas or issues that were expressed included:

- Is crime/safety an issue?
- Visual/land use codes – need to look at
- Nice/safe extension of today
- Need to push edge of envelope more
- Can't stay the same
- What would you add/change
- Sustainability
- Serious about more mass transit
- Don't look just inward – influenced by what is around
- Leadership/political process
- Consider WMEP/public facilities in context of this process
- Maintain the Edina tradition – leadership in community sense
- General standard of excellence
- Need focus on young people
- Asset building – key is youth - (community involvement)
- How to get youth into this process
- Ability for more inter-community - sharing - connections

Residential Survey

The community meeting provided input from approximately 150 Edina residents and businesspersons. In order to gather additional input from a broader segment of the population, Decision Resources, Ltd conducted a residential survey. The telephone survey, which included 400 randomly selected city residents, was completed in July and August of 1999. The results are projectable to the universe of adult Edina residents within ± 5.0 percent in 95 out of 100 cases.

The following is a demographic profile of the survey respondents:

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- Median adult age - 52.0 years
 - 14% under 35 years old
 - 34% over 64 years old
 - Median adult longevity in the community – 17.1 years
 - 19% arrived in the past 5 years
 - 24% resided in the city for at least 30 years
 - 82% have no plans to move in the next 10 years
 - 5% intend to leave during the next 2 years
 - 11% plan to move during the next 5 years
 - 73% of non-retirees intend to continue to live in Edina after retirement
 - 42% of the households were headed by upscale white collar job holders
 - 34% of the households were headed by retirees
 - 6% of the households were headed by blue collar job holders
 - Typical pre-tax household yearly income was \$67,250
 - 30% identified incomes under \$50,000 annually
 - 23% reported incomes over \$100,000 annually
 - 31% of the households contained school-aged children or pre-schoolers
 - 40% of the households contained senior citizens
 - 5% of the households were headed by single adults
 - 9% had formal education training through high school
 - 66% were college graduates
 - 75% were homeowners
 - 61% lived in single-family homes
 - 14% resided in townhouses or condominiums
 - 23% lived in apartments

The full survey included 114 questions. The following is a general summary of the responses that were received.

1. Overall, residents were very positive about their quality of life. The actual “excellent” rating was the highest recorded by Decision Resources in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Good schools, attractive homes, high quality city services and a prime location in the Twin Cities Area were key virtues of the community.

The number of “community boosters” almost quadrupled the Metropolitan Area norm. Neighborhoods were regarded as strong, cohesive and attractive.

2. The tax climate was generally benign. A majority would support a property tax increase to maintain city services at their current levels; similarly, an overwhelming majority would oppose a reduction in city services to reduce their property taxes. Edina residents awarded their city services the highest value per tax dollar rating among Metropolitan Area suburbs. There were limits to the tax increases they would support; only 35% would support a property tax increase for the construction of a multi-purpose Activities Center.
3. City service ratings were among the highest in the Metropolitan Area. Police protection, fire protection, emergency medical services, park maintenance, recycling programs and snow removal were at the top of comparative ratings across Twin City suburban communities. Only two city services registered noteworthy amounts of dissatisfaction: the quality and taste of drinking water and public transportation.
4. Ninety-four percent felt things in Edina were heading in the “right direction.” This rating surpassed every other suburban community surveyed by Decision Resources in the past five years. Residential empowerment was also among the highest in the metropolitan Area. The Mayor and City Council as well as City Staff were given high approval ratings. Contacts with City Hall proved to be generally satisfying, with the staff receiving very high quality customer service ratings, and almost four out of five residents content with the resolution of their issues or request.
5. The parks and recreation system was rated very highly by residents, also at the top of the Metropolitan Area suburban rankings. Among users, only one component – gymnasiums – received a negative evaluation in excess of 10 percent. Larger community playfields, Edinborough and Centennial Lakes Parks, the Arts Center, Municipal Golf Courses, and the Performing Arts Center received extraordinarily solid rankings.

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6. Communications between the City and its residents were very effective. One source of information dominated all others: the "Edina Sun" newspaper. "About Town" had a reach of 80% and a regular readership of 68% of the households in the community. Currently, computer-based communications would reach just under 60% of the city's households; but, at ten percent, the number of households visiting the City of Edina's web site was among the highest in the suburbs.
 7. One issue appeared to dominate all other concerns at the present time: traffic. Traffic congestion, in particular on major arteries, was a key concern for 20% of the respondents. But, speeding and traffic congestion on residential streets proved to be an even greater problem for almost 40% of the sample. In fact, many residents saw the problem on major arteries directly contributing to the problem on residential streets.
 8. About one-third of the community's residents were disturbed with the taste of the city's drinking water. Similarly, about one-quarter expressed dismay with the lack of public transportation in their area of the city.
 9. In viewing the City today and indicating where they would like to see it in the future, moderate numbers of residents expressed several clear directions. Just shy of a majority would like to see more racial diversity in the city. And, over one-third would like to see more sidewalks; this need was closely related to the perceived increase in residential area traffic. Between 25% and 35% indicated that they would support more entertainment and dining establishments in Edina, greater income diversity, and more trails and bikeways. But it should be remembered that in every case, except support for more racial diversity, majorities of residents felt the city had already struck the right balance.
 10. Predicted residential mobility proved to be very low. Seventy-three percent of the non-retired residents felt that it was at least "somewhat likely", if not "very likely," they will continue to live in Edina after retirement. Retirees for the most part also have not plans to leave during the next ten years.

As a community, Edina residents were exceptionally satisfied with the operations of the City. With the exception of traffic congestion, no major issues surfaced as troubling to a broad cross-section of the populace. The major challenge facing the City will be maintaining the current quality of life as population demographics, particularly with respect to aging, change. The results of the survey indicate a general consensus that future challenges will be met just as effectively as in the past.