

Edition:Edina



2016-2017
PRIORITIES

Focused
Redevelopment

Planning for
the Future

Intergovernmental
Relations

Transportation &
Infrastructure

Enterprise
Facilities

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New Utility Bill Pay System Now Live

InvoiceCloud Improves Convenience and Functionality

The City of Edina last month implemented a new utility billing online payment system called InvoiceCloud that allows residents to view and pay their utility bills at any time. The new system has increased functionality and reliability and accepts payments online, by phone or by text with a credit or debit card or bank account.

"We're trying to improve the customer experience. This is a safe, easy and convenient. InvoiceCloud provides a portal that residents can access to manage their own billing," said Finance Director Don Uram. "We really want to empower residents so that they can manage the entire utility billing process and set up their payments and notifications to their own personal preferences."

The old system was managed by the Local Government Information Systems (LOGIS) consortium and had been used for the past several years. The tool had issues with browser and operating system compatibility and left room for improvement. That's where InvoiceCloud came in.

Information from the old platform could not be migrated to InvoiceCloud. Residents who used the previous online utility billing are required to set up a new account on the InvoiceCloud portal to ensure payment and notification preferences are set up appropriately.

InvoiceCloud features include:

- Email notifications when a bill is ready, just before the due date and when a scheduled payment is pending.
- Option to pay by phone at any time. The phone number to make payments is 844-476-3107.
- Ability to register online to receive notifications by text message and/or pay by text.
- Option to make a one-time payment or create an account to gain access to all features.
- Ability to schedule payments or enroll in AutoPay.

To learn more or to sign up visit EdinaMN.gov/Finance.

Additionally, customers can securely store payment information for future use and still be able to schedule automatic payments.

"A new feature will be paying more than one account, which will be helpful for landlords and their tenants or residents who own more than one house," said Utility Billing Supervisor Lori Lohmann.

To learn more or sign up, visit EdinaMN.gov/Finance. For more information, contact the Utility Billing Division at 952-826-0373.



Photo by Kaylin Eidsness

Flowers on the Fourth

Zayna Kaba walks in this year's Fourth of July parade with the Haute Flower Boutique float. Haute Boutique was one of almost 90 parade entries. The day was sunny, hot and full of excitement and the streets were lined with families and children eager to see the floats and catch some candy.

Passenger Rail Community Engagement Study is Under Way

Transportation Commission Seeks Answers to Two Questions

The City is talking to residents and businesses about the possibility of studying passenger rail service through Edina, specifically in the Dan Patch Corridor.

The Dan Patch Corridor is a railway that connects Minneapolis and Northfield, running north-south through Edina just west of Minnesota Highway 100. Although transit interest in this corridor was renewed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, it is currently under a "gag rule" that prohibits the Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Transportation and regional railroad authorities from further study of commuter rail in this corridor.

The Transportation Commission is overseeing a study to answer two specific questions:

- Should the City of Edina request elimination of the gag rule?
- Should the City dedicate resources to developing a plan to encourage the development of passenger rail service in Edina?

This study will answer these two questions based on community input and analysis of existing conditions and policies. Eliminating the gag rule would not mean that passenger rail would be a sure thing – only that it could be studied further.

The Transportation Commission is expected to make a recommendation to the City Council in September.

For more information or to fill out a survey, visit EdinaMN.gov/passenger-rail-report.

EdinaMN.gov To Get New, Improved Look

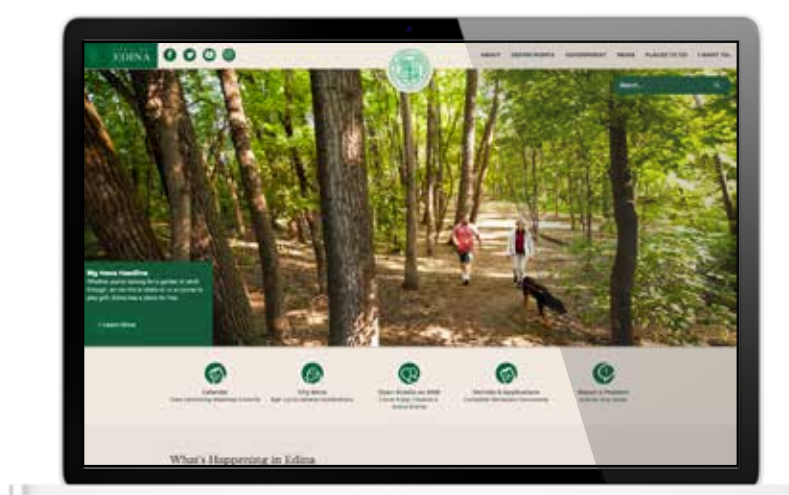
New Site Designed for Mobile Users

The City's website is getting a new look to better serve residents, businesses and visitors.

The updated site will be mobile-friendly. Other goals of the redesign project were to streamline navigation and reduce the number of "dead" pages – those rarely accessed by visitors of the site.

Visit the new EdinaMN.gov to find:

- A cleaner, clearer design.
- An "I Want To" menu with direct links to sought-after City services such as paying your utility bill, finding the recycling schedule or applying for a dog license.
- Buttons that connect users to the current information most in demand, whether that's permits and applications or the signup form for City emails.
- A more robust calendar that lets users see the items they want instead of every item from every department and facility.



Another goal of the project was to create a stronger online presence for the City's enterprise facilities: Braemar Arena, Braemar Field, Braemar Golf Course,

Centennial Lakes Park, Edina Aquatic Center, Edina Art Center, Edina Liquor and Edinborough Park, as well as the Edina Senior Center. All got new looks and unique navigation.

To ensure the new website best serves the community, the Communications & Technology Services staff watched actual users go through the old site last fall during usability testing. The issues they had, mostly around finding items, were addressed in the redesign. Feedback from residents and from a usability study also were incorporated into the changes.

"The City's new website will be more modern in look and functionality," said Communications & Technology Services Director Jennifer Bennerotte, who worked closely with consultant CivicPlus on the project. "With the majority of our users now accessing the site from a smartphone or tablet, I'm hopeful they will be able to find information much more quickly and enjoy a better experience while browsing."



Check out EdinaMN.gov to see all the changes, with more to come. Please email any feedback to jbennerotte@EdinaMN.gov or call the Communications & Technology Services Department, 952-826-0359.

BY THE NUMBERS

Edina Promenade

Thirteen sculpture sites highlight the Edina Promenade. The Public Art Edina Working Group of the Edina Arts & Culture Commission sends an annual Call for Sculpture to local and regional artists each year and selects artwork to be shown on some of those sites.

Of the 13 sculpture sites, seven hold artwork in the permanent collection of the City of Edina, and six are sites that rotate with new work.



Edina Promenade covers **17** acres

It took

7

years to build the Edina Promenade



Approximately **60,000**

people visit the Edina Promenade each year for activities such as walking, jogging, biking and sightseeing



It is a **80**-foot wide

greenway that connects the region's various retail, residential and recreational amenities



– Compiled by Brooke Sheehy

Quality of Life is 'Excellent' in Edina

National Research Center Completes Study

Edina residents enjoy a high quality of life in 2017, as in previous years. That's the verdict from a recent survey of residents by an independent research company.

In the survey conducted this spring by the National Research Center (NRC), nearly all residents awarded "excellent" or "good" ratings to the quality of life in Edina; no respondents ranked it "poor."

Other highlights of the survey include:

- Edina residents enjoy a strong sense of safety and consider safety a factor in why they call Edina home. Roughly 98 percent of respondents felt "very" or "somewhat" safe in their neighborhood.
- While sense of community, neighborliness and acceptance of others is similar to peer communities, Edina residents feel expanding programs to advance cultural awareness and acceptance of diversity is a priority.
- Development, affordable housing and cost of living continue to be important issues for residents. When residents were asked to write in their own words what they felt was the most serious issue facing Edina, about 32 percent of comments were related to housing concerns (teardowns, overdevelopment, affordability, etc.) Traffic and infrastructure was mentioned by 17 percent of respondents.
- Residents think highly of services in Edina and their interactions with City employees. When evaluating the value of services for the taxes they pay to Edina, about 8 in 10 residents gave "excellent" or "good" ratings in 2017. Ratings were similar to 2015 and higher than those of peer cities.

The City of Edina conducts a quality of life survey in odd-numbered years to monitor trends in resident opinion; measure government performance; inform budget, land use and strategic planning decisions; and benchmark service ratings.

"The key takeaway from the survey is that it's clear to us is that people love living in Edina. City staff are positively impacting the quality of life of our residents every day by providing high-quality public services," City Manager Scott Neal said. "I'm proud of our team and the results speak for themselves. We are happy with the results, but we'll always work on getting better."

NRC mailed surveys to 1,500 randomly selected resident households in March and April. A total of 477 surveys were completed, yielding a response rate of 34 percent. Based on the completion rate, the results are accurate to plus or minus 4 percent.

You can find the final report online at EdinaMN.gov. For more information, call the City's Communications & Technology Services Department at 952-826-0359. 📞

City Hires New Recreation Supervisor

Hoffmann Brings Passion for Healthy Communities to New Role

Recreation Supervisor Tiffany Hoffmann started with the City in June, bringing to Edina's recreation programs a passion for joining fitness and community.

"Impacting people's lives in a fun and healthy way and providing resources for people to be active while also having fun is really important to me," said Hoffman. "Being able to give people that while they're in their own community is great."

Hoffmann went to the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities and got a bachelor's degree in Kinesiology and a master's degree in Kinesiology with an emphasis in Sports Management. She previously worked for the Hopkins school district as the Lindbergh Center Manager where she oversaw the facility and the district athletic scheduling. She worked there for a year and a half before taking a role with the University of Minnesota Recreation and Wellness Department. Her position as Facility Manager of Events and Operations gave her the chance to work with the general student population, as well as external leagues and summer camps.

Hoffmann lives in St. Louis Park and serves on the St. Louis Park Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission.

"I've been involved with special projects happening there and that really sparked my interest in city recreation," explained Hoffmann. "I think I'm excited about this role because it's quite a variety. I get to work with the adults in adult leagues and I get to work with the youth in youth sporting camps and the athletic associations."

Parks & Recreation Director Ann Kattreh is excited about the energy and ideas that Hoffmann will bring to the Department and the City.

"Tiffany quickly rose to the top of an incredibly talented and deep candidate pool. She has an engaging personality; is very dedicated, confident, hardworking and detail oriented; and has a proven track record of professional success," said Kattreh. "Serving on the City of St. Louis Park's Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission also gives her a unique perspective on accountability and service to our residents. We are thrilled to have Tiffany on our team."

While Hoffmann is still very new to the role, she's already looking for places for the City to grow.

"I think we could expand our adult offerings. There are a lot of sports that people grew up playing that we're not offering at the adult level," she said. "Also, I want to be sure that we're being fair and accurate with our athletic associations. We want to ensure there is enough and there are equal opportunities for all groups of people."

For more information on the Parks & Recreation Department, call 952-826-0367 or visit EdinaParks.com.

"I want to be sure that we're being fair and accurate with our athletic associations. We want to ensure there is enough and there are equal opportunities for all groups of people."

Upcoming Events

Thursday, Aug. 3, sunset

Movie in the Park, "The Secret Life of Pets," Centennial Lakes Park

Tuesday, Aug. 8, 7 p.m.

Parks & Recreation Commission, Edina City Hall

Tuesday, Aug. 8, 7 p.m.

Heritage Preservation Commission, Edina City Hall

Thursday, Aug. 10, 3 p.m.

Farmers Market, Centennial Lakes Park

Thursday, Aug. 10, sunset

Movie in the Park, "Inside Out," Centennial Lakes Park

Monday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.

Community Health Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall

Monday, Aug. 14, 7 p.m.

"Contributions of Refugees & Immigrants," Human Rights Series, Centennial Lakes Park Hughes Pavilion

Tuesday, Aug. 15, 7 p.m.

City Council Meeting, Edina City Hall

Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2017

Planning Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall

Thursday, Aug. 17, 3 p.m.

Farmers Market, Centennial Lakes Park

Thursday, Aug. 17, 6 p.m.

Transportation Commission Meeting, Edina City Hall

Thursday, Aug. 17, 6:30 p.m.

Walk with the Mayor, Rosland Park