New Houses Provide Slow, Steady Growth for Schools

New houses from residential redevelopment are fueling a “neutralization of Edina” that is helping stabilize Edina Public Schools’ enrollment.

That may fly in the face of what many people think, but data analyzed by the state’s premier demographic show people moving into those new homes are more likely to have school-age children than those in any other new housing in Edina.

“There is a relationship between school enrollment and housing, but it is not a very complex relationship. And it is not the relationship that many people assume it to be,” said demographer Hazel Reinhardt said March 6 as she made a presentation to the Edina City Council and Edina School Board.

She pointed out that 88 percent of Edina Public Schools students live in single-family homes. The higher the market value of the house, the more likely it is to have school-age children. For example, houses valued at $750,000 or more yield about 0.7 students per house. Those valued at less than $300,000 yield just 0.23 students.

New houses have the most kids. Of the 191 houses built from Jan. 1, 2016, to June 30, 2018, they average 0.75 students per house.

Homes that sold during that time also brought students, at 0.62 per house. Houses that stayed under the same ownership produced about 1 child in Edina schools per every 2 houses, a much lower rate.

About 10 percent of public school students in Edina live in apartments, primarily in older units in the Parklawn Neighborhood, Reinhardt said. Hundreds of units in the City’s newest apartment buildings have produced only a handful of schoolchildren, she added.

She called the concept of new apartments producing a crush of students “a myth,” and not only in Edina.

“People get very excited about townhomes and apartments, and let me tell you that in every district we’ve ever worked in, it is single-family detached (house) that yield school-age children,” she said.

With women delaying having children and families having fewer children overall, many school districts are facing decreasing enrollment. That reduces funding, programs and affects the overall health of schools.

In Edina, the new houses and the families that come with them are helping drive a modest, manageable growth in school enrollment projections.

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Lewis succeeds the City’s first Residential Redevelopment Coordinator, Cindy Laronz, who left the City earlier this year for a position in the private sector.

The role of Edina’s Residential Redevelopment Coordinator is to ensure compliance with the City’s ordinances and procedures, while also responding to questions and concerns from the public. The Residential Redevelopment Coordinator typically addresses issues stemming from construction of a new home such as parking, dust, noise, stormwater runoff and tree protection. The position does not mitigate architectural design issues.

“This City deals with complaints on residential construction for two-doors and buildings, so Addison will be responsible for managing these concerns,” said Chief Building Official David Fisher. “The role is also going to evolve into dealing with commercial properties as well when we have complaints about parking or noise issues, for example.”

Lewis has spent his career working in the area of community development. In addition to his time in Jordan, he also worked for over five years with WSB & Associates, Inc., as a Community Planner. Before that, he held a Community Development & Planning internship with the City of Apple Valley. Lewis is currently working to earn a master’s degree at Hamline University.

“I want to spend my career in local government and the Hamline Public Administration program really sets you up for leadership positions and management positions in local government, which will be a good fit for this role,” said Lewis.

This role is unique, but Lewis brought a diverse skillset and experience that made him a great fit. “Addition was a project manager for a street project on France Avenue when he worked at WSB. I thought he would be a good hire since he already understands customer service and resolution and this role checks off all of those items,” said Lewis. "I view this as a customer service role, so my goal is to provide the best customer service to Edina residents that I can.”

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For more information, contact Lewis at AMLewis@EdinaMN.gov or 952-833-9521.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation is improving the France Avenue Bridge over Minnesota Highway 62. As a part of the project, drivers will notice improved pavement, a new traffic signal, accessible sidewalks and a lengthened ramp to eastbound Highway 62. Construction is expected to be complete in mid-July.

City Hires New Residential Redevelopment Coordinator

Customer Service is Priority for Lewis

The City of Edina’s new Residential Redevelopment Coordinator, Addison Lewis, began on March 18, after working as the Planner/Economic Development Specialist for the City of Jordan.

“This is a unique position. I think Edina is the only city in the state that has a job like this. I was looking for something with planning, code enforcement and conflict resolution and this role checks off all of those items,” said Lewis. “I view this as a customer service role, so my goal is to provide the best customer service to Edina residents that I can.”

Edina’s Residential Redevelopment Coordinator Addison Lewis, began work March 18.

Southdale Library Location Decision Expected this Summer

Two Locations Currently Being Explored

Hennepin County is exploring two possible locations for the new Southdale Library. These include rebuilding on the current site, 7001 York Ave. S., or building at Southdale Center.

“The new library we are committed to excellence in library service, and will continue to service our community members and collaborate with them,” said Janet Melk, interim Library Director for Hennepin County. “With the modernization and refresh that comes with a new space, we’ll take the opportunity to offer flexible seating responsive to the mobile technology that more people are bringing with them, improved spaces for quiet time and collaboration, and create a really welcoming space.”

The County sent out an update in February saying public comments and priorities from past community meetings are a part of the discussion to decide which site to pursue. They are also considering the financial impacts, operating costs and access to other services, including public transportation.

They said “no matter the physical location, the new library will offer spaces for both focused and collaborative work, technology to bridge the digital divide, a variety of seating options with access to power sources, ample library materials and early learning spaces for school readiness.”

With a decision reached this summer, the new library should open by 2022.

Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

Children’s Entertainment at Edinborough Park

Noon Thursdays

Family Night at Braemar Field

6:30-7:30 p.m. Saturdays through April 27

Friday, April 5, 6:30 p.m.

Family Movie Night, "Christopher Robin,” Edina Park

April 18, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 16, 7 p.m.

Creating Your Resilient Yard Workshop, Public Works & Park Maintenance Facility

Tuesday, April 9, 6-8:30 p.m.

June Energy Efficiency Benchmarking Meeting for Business Owners and Managers, Edina City Hall

Thursday, April 11, 6-7:30 p.m.

Installing Turf Alternatives Workshop, Public Works & Park Maintenance Facility

Thursday, April 11, 7-8:30 p.m.

The Author’s Studio: Seize your Life: How to Carpe Diem Every Day with Jaminie Stringer, Edina Art Center

Monday, April 15, 5-7 p.m.

Community Volunteer Recognition Reception, Braemar Golf Course

Wednesday, April 17, 7 p.m.

City Council Meeting, Edina City Hall

Friday, April 19, 7-8:30 p.m.

Edina’s first Refugees: The Irish at Calh Settlement, Minnehaha Grange Hall

Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m.

Walk With The Mayor, 50th & France, Edina Landmark Theater

Tuesday, April 23, 4:30 p.m.

Edina Master Water Steward Coffee Klatch, Edina City Hall

Thursday, April 25, 7:30 a.m.

Housing & Redevelopment Authority Meeting, Edina City Hall

Monday, April 22, 7:30 a.m.

Family Movie Night, "Christopher Robin,” Edina Park

April 18, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 17, 7:30 p.m.

April Energy Efficiency Benchmarking Meeting for Business Owners and Managers, Edina City Hall

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Creating Your Resilient Yard Workshop, Public Works & Park Maintenance Facility

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6:30-7:30 p.m. Saturdays through April 27

Friday, April 5, 6:30 p.m.

Family Movie Night, "Christopher Robin,” Edina Park

Saturday, April 6, 10 a.m.-noon

Tuesday, April 9, 6-8:30 p.m.

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