

# Edition:Edina



**AUGUST 2019**

Volume 6, Issue 8

**CITY GOALS:**



Strong Foundation



Reliable Service



Livable City



Better Together



## CENTENNIAL LAKES PARK TO HOST TORCHLIGHT CONCERT

The First John Philip Sousa Memorial Band, pictured here, will play at 8:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 11, at the annual Torchlight Concert at Centennial Lakes Park, 7499 France Ave. S.

The event begins at 6 p.m. with an antique car show, vintage piano-playing and a “mechanical man” movement performance. The Edina Model Yacht Club will join in the festivities with dozens of remote-controlled boats plying the water as part of its annual Lighthouse Night event. At approximately 7:45 p.m., the Sousa Fifes & Drums will progress to the Maetzold Amphitheater in preparation for the performance of the First John Philip Sousa Memorial Band. Drinks and popcorn will be available for purchase, as well as balloons for a nickel and ice cream for a quarter (while supplies last). The night will conclude with fireworks. Learn more at [CentennialLakesPark.com](http://CentennialLakesPark.com).

Photo by Suzanne M. Wortham-Ressemann

## Voters to Elect Three to School Board in November

### Absentee Voting Begins Sept. 20

Three positions on the Edina School Board are up for election this year. The candidate filing window for the 2019 election is July 30 to Aug. 13.

The Edina School Board is made up of seven citizens who are elected at large by voters of the district. Members are elected to four-year overlapping terms, with elections held every two years. At the end of a four-year term, members may run for re-election to successive terms. Terms begin the first Monday in January after the election. The terms of Amir Gharbi, Sarah Patzloff and Leny Wallen-Friedman expire this year.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 5.

### Campaign Signs

Minnesota State Statutes and the Edina City Code regulate the placement of campaign signs.

Edina City Code allows campaign signs to be posted 60 days before the election until 10 days following the election.

- Don't place signs in the right-of-way without the permission of the property owner.
- Signs cannot interfere with regulatory signs and traffic control devices.
- Signs cannot impede the view at intersections.
- Signs cannot be attached to trees, rocks or power poles.
- No sign shall be placed on parkland or other publicly owned property or bridges/overpasses.

### Voting

Anyone who wishes to vote may do so by absentee ballot beginning 46 days before Election Day. Absentee voting for the School

Board election opens Sept. 20 and closes Nov. 4. Minnesota voters can request an absentee ballot online or at Edina City Hall, 4801 W. 50th St.

Edina will have 16 precincts on Election Day. Note that several precincts (Precinct 13 Centennial Lakes Hughes Pavilion, Precinct 16 Cornelia Elementary School, Precinct 17 Southdale Hennepin Library, and Precinct 18 Edinborough Park Great Hall) have been combined and all voters within the combined precincts will vote at 7000 Cornelia Drive. Find your polling place and precinct online at <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>.

*For information about candidate filing and the school board election, visit [EdinaSchools.org/2019Election](http://EdinaSchools.org/2019Election). For more information about voting, visit [EdinaMN.gov/vote](http://EdinaMN.gov/vote) or call 952-826-0363.*

– COMPILED BY MARY WOITTE AND JENNIFER BENNEROTTE

# Construction to Begin at Fred Richards Park

## Phase I to Include Playground, Picnic Shelter and Landscaping



Minnesota/Wisconsin Playground will install play equipment by GameTime and a safety surface at Fred Richards Park. The playground will include a variety of inclusive play elements, including adaptive swing, music feature, sensory dome and seesaw. Submitted Rendering

Work could begin as early as next month on the first phase of Fred Richards Park, 7640 Parklawn Ave.

At its meeting last month, the City Council approved installation of a playground, open-air gathering shelter, walkways, pond vegetation restoration, landscaping and site amenities.

The City Council approved a master plan for the park, formerly an executive golf course, in 2017. In the first phase, park improvements will be made at the east entrance into the park. JL Theis, Inc. was awarded the contract for the site work, Minnesota/Wisconsin Playground will install the playground for children of all ages and abilities and Cedar Fires Products will build the open-air shelter.

The new shelter and playground amenities are expected to be open to park users by late fall.

In other business last month, the Council:

- Approved a site plan and setback variances for a redevelopment of 6950 France Ave. Working toward the City's vision of an energized France Avenue, Luigi Bernardi plans to raze a multi-story office building there and replace it with a high-end single-story retail building called "The Shoppes at Estelle." The building design features extra-large showroom windows for tenants on all four sides. The proposed building would have three entrances to the retail space that face France Avenue and the parking lot to the west.

- Approved a 30-foot vegetated buffer with woodchip trail around part of Lake Cornelia to improve water quality. Existing parkland will be converted from conventional turf and buckthorn to a vegetated buffer along the west side of the south basin of Lake Cornelia, adjacent to West Shore Drive and Laguna Drive.

Besides clean water benefits, the project promotes native plants to support wildlife, including pollinators and management of invasive buckthorn. It also supports sustainability goals as native landscapes require less mowing, which means savings in labor and equipment, fewer carbon emissions and a more resilient landscape in a changing climate.

The project will be paid for through the City's stormwater utility fund and a grant from the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District. It will be included in a City-wide natural areas maintenance contract to be bid next winter.

The City Council next meets 7 p.m. Aug. 7 and 20 in the Council Chambers of Edina City Hall, 4801 W. 50th St. For more information, visit [EdinaMN.gov](http://EdinaMN.gov).

— COMPILED BY JENNIFER BENNEROTTE

### BY THE NUMBERS

## South Metro Public Safety Training Facility

Located in Edina, the South Metro Public Safety Training Facility, 7525 Braemar Blvd, is a public safety training center operated by four police departments and three fire departments. Police officers and firefighters continually receive high-level training to meet the demands of the changing world and expectations of our communities. Instructors are brought in from across the country to teach the latest skills and techniques.



**2** buildings on the 3.5-acre site.



**2004**

Year the training facility opened.



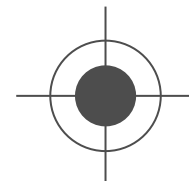
**9,091**

Total number of hours in use in 2018.

**7**

floors in the fire department training tower.

**6.5**



Tons of lead harvested and recycled every nine months from the backstop of the firing ranges, on average.

# Using TIF Benefits Residents in Many Ways

## Financing Tool Can Fund New Plazas, Sidewalks and Other Public Amenities



Tax-increment financing helped pay for cleaning up industrial contamination and building the infrastructure on a site that became the condominiums, offices, library and Edina Senior Center surrounding Grandview Square Park. Photo by Dietrich Nissen

BY DEBBIE TOWNSEND

*This is the second of a three-part series on tax-increment financing (TIF). Part one, "TIF: What Is It and How Does It Work?" appeared in the June 2019 Edition: Edina available online at [EdinaMN.gov/news](http://EdinaMN.gov/news).*

Tax-increment financing (TIF) is a tool Edina has used sparingly over the past several decades to deliver long-term outcomes that benefit the general public. The public benefit from Edina's use of TIF usually falls into four categories:

- Blight mitigation or elimination
- Infrastructure improvements
- Public amenities
- Affordable housing

"The City has intervened to prevent blighted, obsolete buildings from becoming a true nuisance to the neighbors and a hazard to the public," said Economic Development Manager Bill Neuendorf.

An example would be the old Edina Cleaners & Launderers building at West 45th Street and France Avenue. The former single-screen movie theater and auto garage had been converted to a laundry operation by knocking holes in walls and filling in the sloped floor to accommodate equipment. This arrangement left few options for reuse. Combined with little parking, the buildings were obsolete and could have sat empty for years while a developer waited for a financially feasible project that maximized profit. Instead, the use of TIF has spurred a more modest four-story apartment building that includes retail space, public parking, public outdoor space and the removal of overhead power lines, all of which better fit the popular area.

Infrastructure doesn't sound exciting, but it includes those systems people rely on every day: roads, sidewalks, utilities and more. Take a walk along France Avenue south of Fairview Southdale Hospital and you'll actually be standing on what TIF funds helped build. While France Avenue is a county road, Hennepin County didn't have money designated to add sidewalks, crosswalks and lighting. A few years ago, it was common to see workers and residents run across France, dodging cars like the video game Frogger, to get to a lunch spot or Centennial Lakes Park. In 2013-2014, the City used TIF money from the Centennial Lakes TIF District to make France safer and more convenient.

People love plazas and open spaces, but it costs money for the land and to build them. In Edina, TIF funds are used to create new public amenities by having a developer build them as part of a redevelopment project. TIF helped turn a site of industrial contamination into the Grandview Square project that includes condominiums, an office building, the Edina Senior Center and Edina Community Library, all connected to a public park.

"While the City and Hennepin County used bond revenue to build the Edina Community Library and Senior Center there, the City used TIF to assemble the land, clean up the contamination and install the infrastructure that made it all possible," Neuendorf said.

The City needs affordable housing so its businesses and organizations have workers, but it can be a challenge to build when the lower rents or purchase prices won't pay for the cost of construction.

"TIF helps fill the gap between what the project needs to borrow and the costs to construct it," said Affordable Housing Development Manager Stephanie Hawkinson. TIF funding will help secure 62 units of affordable housing for 25 years as part of the 7200-7250 France Ave. project.

While not every single Edina resident experiences a direct benefit from the use of TIF, they share in the overall outcome. "Every taxpayer will have a better place to call home when improvements are constructed that deliver long-term public benefit," Neuendorf said.

**Up next:** TIF-involved projects that vastly improved Edina, coming in the September issue of Edition: Edina.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Recurring Events:

Concerts in the Park, Centennial Lakes Park  
**7 p.m. Sundays-Wednesdays**

Children's Entertainment, Centennial Lakes Park  
**Noon Tuesdays and Thursdays**

Farmers Market, Centennial Lakes Park  
**3 p.m. Thursdays**

Movie in the Park, Centennial Lakes Park  
**Sunset Thursdays**

### Tuesday, Aug. 6, evening

Night to Unite 2019

*The Edina Police and Fire departments encourage residents to lock their doors, turn on outside lights and spend a summer evening outside with neighbors on Aug. 6 for Night to Unite. The annual neighborhood get-together held the first Tuesday evening in August was created to promote neighborhood spirit, increase awareness in crime prevention and build a stronger partnership between residents of the community and first responders.*

### Wednesday, Aug. 7, 7 p.m.

City Council meeting, Edina City Hall

### Sunday, Aug. 11, 6 p.m.

Torchlight Concert and Lighthouse Night featuring First John Philip Sousa Memorial Band, Centennial Lakes Park

### Monday, Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.

Fitness in the Parks - Orangetheory Fitness, Braemar Golf Course Courtyard

### Thursday, Aug. 15, 7:30 a.m.

Housing & Redevelopment Authority meeting, Edina City Hall

### Sunday, Aug. 18, 8 p.m.

Aquatic Center closes for season

### Monday, Aug. 19, 6:30 p.m.

Fitness in the Parks - Family Fitness, Rosland Park

### Tuesday, Aug. 20, 7 p.m.

City Council meeting, Edina City Hall

### Wednesday, Aug. 21, 6:30 p.m.

Walk With the Mayor, Centennial Lakes Park

### Thursday, Aug. 22, 6:30 p.m.

Fitness in the Parks - The Bar Method, Arneson Acres Park

### Thursday, Aug. 29, 7:30 a.m.

Housing & Redevelopment Authority meeting, Edina City Hall

*For a complete listing of meetings and events, visit [EdinaMN.gov](http://EdinaMN.gov).*

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## To Increase Affordability, Nonprofit Purchases Rental Property in Edina

### Edina Housing & Redevelopment Authority Approves Grant to Help

BY KAYLIN EIDSNESS

Aeon, a Minnesota nonprofit affordable housing operator and developer, recently closed on the purchase of an 11-unit naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) property at 7008 Sandell Ave. The nonprofit purchased the property with the help of a grant from the City to support Aeon's acquisition and rehabilitation of the building and keep it affordable for 30 years.

"Without stabilized affordable housing, it's really challenging to have all of the other pieces to make things work," said Blake Hopkins, Vice President of Housing Development for Aeon. "Affordable housing is a really important part of a community."

The Edina Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) approved the \$350,000 grant at its April 25 meeting.

According to low-income housing tax credit limits and tax-increment financing (TIF) guidelines, households with incomes less than 60 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) commonly qualify for affordable housing. Currently, none of the 11 units have rents that are at or below the limit. In exchange for financing from the Edina HRA, Aeon has agreed to reduce the rents on five of the units to the 60 percent AMI limit, which will be effective upon tenant turnover. They also agreed to enter into a Declaration of Restriction Covenants to keep them at 60 percent AMI with the remaining six priced at or below 80 percent AMI for at least 30 years.

"The only way that nonprofits like Aeon can pay the fair market value for these properties that sellers demand and still keep rents affordable is through public financial participation," said Stephanie Hawkinson, the City of Edina's Affordable Housing Development Manager. "Since they are competing with value-add investors who make purchase offers assuming large rent increases, nonprofit developers frequently require public resources to achieve a sustainable net operating income."

Hopkins said that Aeon has taken an active role over the last few years to compete for NOAH properties and stabilize rents. "It's a way for us to have a deeper impact in the community and address an issue that was not being addressed through new construction alone," he said.

"The preservation of existing affordable units is an important part of the City's strategy to make sure Edina offers high-quality housing opportunities at a variety of income levels," added Hawkinson.

For the grant, the City used pooled TIF funds from the Southdale 2 TIF District. This district was created in 2012 to jumpstart new employment and investment in and around the aging Southdale Center after the recession. In 2014, the State Legislature granted the City authority to pool a limited amount of new incremental property taxes from within the Southdale 2 TIF District to support affordable housing. Recently approved legislation extends



A City grant used by a nonprofit housing operator and developer will help keep 7008 Sandell Ave. affordable for the next three decades. Photo by Kaylin Eidsness

the authority to use TIF monies to coincide with the expiration of the TIF district in December 2021, and allow the use of a greater percent of the incremental property taxes for affordable housing, including the preservation of NOAH properties.

For more information, contact Hawkinson, 952-833-9578, or [shawkinson@EdinaMN.gov](mailto:shawkinson@EdinaMN.gov). 