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CITY GOALS:



Strong Foundation



Reliable Service



Livable City



Better Together

Four New Fire Engines Roll into Stations

New Fleet Features Advanced Technology, Fuel Efficiency and Reduces Training Time

BY KAYLIN EIDSNES

The Edina Fire Department welcomed a new fleet of fire engines in December, bringing with it an eventual cost savings and efficiencies for staff.

When a fire engine due to be replaced in 2018 was totaled in a crash by a distracted driver, and with the ladder truck coming due for replacement in 2019, Fire Chief Tom Schmitz and Assistant Fire Chief Jeff Siems thought the time was right to rethink the whole fleet.

Schmitz said there were two motivating factors – operations and finances – when it came to deciding to purchase all new engines at once.

Previously, the Fire Department would drive the fire engines until they had very little trade-in value – about 20 or 25 years. The technology became outdated, fuel costs grew higher and purchasing engines at separate times meant there were three different types of firetrucks in operation.

“We had three very distinct fire engines, along with the tower truck, because they got replaced every 20 years. The technology was very different in all. The design and the layout was different, too. So, there’s all these challenges that go with that type of situation from an operational standpoint,” Schmitz said. “The time we’re going to save in training will be significant, because staff only need to train on one platform instead of three.”

When at a fire and seconds matter, paramedic/firefighters rely on muscle memory to guide them through the stressful scene. Schmitz said that all of the new engines are equipped with the same equipment in the same location, so “from an operational standpoint, it’s vastly more efficient and effective.”




It also made sense financially, Schmitz said. Engine 81 and the tower truck would have cost \$2 million alone.

“Once we started putting together the numbers, the stretch to replace all the trucks at once wasn’t that far,” said Schmitz of the \$3.1 million purchase. By purchasing the trucks together, the Department saved on engineering and production fees, and will continue to save those fees as they purchase new trucks every 10 years instead of 20. Schmitz said the improvements in fuel efficiencies and technology also make it worth it.

For example, when at a fire scene, the engines in the new firetrucks will shut off when idling and instead use a backup power source, saving

The Edina Fire Department’s four new fire engines arrived at the stations in December. Photo by Scott Denfeld

fuel. The engine will turn back on only when the power source needs to be recharged. Previously, the engines ran the entire time while at a scene to power lights and other equipment on the truck.

“I think the paramedic/firefighters are really excited about the idea of training on one truck instead of trying to understand three different trucks with different equipment,” said Fire Capt. Pat Sandon “On a fire scene, this will increase efficiency, and that to me is the biggest benefit in moving in this direction.” 

Get Rewarded for Shopping at Edina Liquor

Earn Discounts Without Carrying a Card or Saving Receipts

BY DEBBIE TOWNSEND

Edina Liquor shoppers now can earn free rewards for themselves while still giving back to the community.

Edina Liquor Rewards allows shoppers to earn points for their purchases, then redeem them when they choose. Profits from Edina Liquor still get poured back into the community, supporting facilities including the Edina Art Center, Braemar Arena and Centennial Lakes Park.

"The simplicity of Edina Liquor Rewards is really great. There is no card or anything to carry," said Mike McBride, Assistant General Manager of Liquor Operations. "All you need to know is your phone number. We do the rest for you."

How do I enroll?

You can enroll for free at any one of the three Edina Liquor locations: 3943 W. 50th St., 5013 Vernon Ave. or 6755 York Ave. All you need to provide is your name and phone number. You will receive a text with a link to verify your account. There is no annual fee or charge to

be a Rewards member. If you don't have a smartphone, staff can enroll you manually.

Do I have to carry a card?

No. Edina Liquor Rewards doesn't use a card, make you do math or require you to show receipts.

How do I earn points?

You earn 1 point for each \$1 spent (taxes are exempt from point accrual or rewards). You can redeem them at the following levels:

- 100 Reward points = \$5 off total purchase
- 250 Reward points = \$15 off total purchase
- 400 Reward points = \$25 off total purchase
- 1,000 Reward points = \$100 off total purchase

Online/delivery purchases and buying gift cards do not accrue points at this time. Purchases paid for with a gift card are eligible for points. Points do not expire.



How are points tracked?

Each time you make a purchase in an Edina Liquor store and use your rewards account, points will be automatically calculated and added. It's recommended you bookmark the account page link at enrollment so you can easily check your rewards at any time.

How do I redeem my rewards?

Edina Liquor team members should ask you at checkout if you'd like to redeem rewards you've earned. You can redeem them right away or save your points for a higher reward level.

How can I learn more?

Ask an Edina Liquor team member or visit EdinaLiquor.com.

BY THE NUMBERS

Come Home 2 Edina and Make it Your Hometown!

Come Home 2 Edina is a second mortgage program created by the Edina Housing Foundation (EHF) to attract new families to the city by offering financial assistance to homebuyers purchasing homes up to \$425,000. For more information, contact Affordable Housing Development Manager Stephanie Hawkinson at 952-833-9578 or shawkinson@EdinaMN.gov.



\$425,000

The new purchase price cap set by the Edina Housing Foundation for Come Home 2 Edina's mortgage program.



100+

Number of second mortgages that have been given to homeowners in Edina.



\$100,000

Income limit for a 1-2 member household

\$60,000

The maximum amount a homebuyer may borrow through the program to help purchase a home in Edina.



COMPETE IN A POTTERY THROWDOWN

Are you feeling creative and competitive? If so, the 21st-annual Potters' Games at the Edina Art Center is the perfect place to test your skills 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25. Try throwing on the wheel in new ways (like with your feet), improve your skills and compete to make the tallest vase. All pots will be sold by the Edina Art Center at the Fall Into the Arts Festival in September 2020. Pre-register at EdinaArtCenter.com. [File Photo](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Recurring Events:

Community Concerts, Edinborough Park
7 p.m. Sundays and Tuesdays

Children's Programs, Edinborough Park
Noon Thursdays

Wednesday, Jan. 1

New Year's Day; City Hall Closed

Tuesday, Jan. 7, 7 p.m.

City Council meeting, Edina City Hall

Thursday, Jan. 9, 5 – 8 p.m.

Opening Reception, "Tablewear" by Jacob Meer, Edina Art Center



Friday, Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m.

Friday Family Movie Night, "Dora and the Lost City of Gold," Edinborough Park

Saturday, Jan. 11, 10-11 a.m.

The Author's Studio: *Om Sweet Om: A Corporate Junkie's Search for Enlightenment* by Nicole Lovald, Edina Art Center

Sunday, Jan. 12, 1-5 p.m.

Winter Ice Festival, Centennial Lakes Park



Saturday, Jan. 18, 10 a.m.

Walk With the Mayor, Galleria Edina

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.

City Council meeting, Edina City Hall

Sunday, Jan. 26, 1:45 – 3:15 p.m.

Skate with the Hornets, Braemar Arena
Join the Edina High School girls and boys hockey teams on the ice for open skating, autographs and photos. Skate rental available for \$3.

For a complete listing of meetings and events, visit EdinaMN.gov. [File Photo](#)

City Council Approves 2020-2021 Budget

Public Safety, Building Maintenance Emphasized in Budget

Public safety and building maintenance top the list of priorities in the City's 2020-2021 budget.

The City Council approved a budget last month of \$46.9 million for 2020, an increase of less than 10 percent over 2019. On the median-valued home in Edina, the effect will be a monthly increase of about \$7.

The new budget increases the level of dedicated revenue available for capital reinvestment into infrastructure, adds public safety positions and staff to manage maintenance of the City's 80 buildings and facilities, and continues funding for work on the City's Racial Equity Plan and other equity initiatives.

The budget also includes funding for new fire vehicles, body-worn cameras for police officers and two new services: organics recycling, and inspection and licensing of residential rental property.

The City received significant federal grants to offset part of the budget, including one to add six new paramedic/firefighters and another for body-worn cameras. Fees will offset the costs of the new organics recycling and rental inspection programs.

Because the Council approved a two-year budget, the City will work on its Capital Improvement Plan in 2020.

In other business last month, the Council:

- Approved an updated Comprehensive Plan put together by more than 100 residents as part of a two-year planning effort.

A Comprehensive Plan is a vision of what a city wants to be. It is also a framework for shaping growth and change, protecting what a community values, enhancing what the community wants to improve, and creating what the community feels is lacking. It also helps clarify the relationships between the community, its neighboring municipalities and the region.

Minnesota State law requires that Comprehensive Plans must be reviewed and updated at least once every 10 years. Now that the City Council has approved the plan, it will be reviewed and must ultimately be approved by the Metropolitan Council. The process is expected to take several months before it comes back to the Edina City Council for adoption.

- Established the Amundson Avenue Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) District to support the redevelopment of a property at 7075-7079 Amundson Ave. that would include the creation of approximately 62 units of affordable housing.

The plan for the existing Southdale 2 TIF District was also modified to recognize the new TIF District and amend the TIF plan to allow pooled funds to be used for the acquisition of the Amundson Avenue property and another on West 70th Street.

The City Council will next meet 7 p.m. Jan. 7 and 22 at Edina City Hall. For more information, visit EdinaMN.gov.





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Snow Forts Built in Wrong Places Can Be Dangerous

Kids Can Play Safely Away from Street in Forts With No Roofs

BY DEBBIE TOWNSEND

Building a snow fort or a tunnel in that huge pile of snow created by the snowplows seems like a lot of fun, but it could be deadly.

Every year across the country young children to teenagers are killed when a snow fort collapses and traps them. Others are inadvertently struck by snowplows when the drivers are unable to see them. In some cases, the snow from the plow has buried a child playing nearby.

It's a fear of every snowplow driver.

"I always caution drivers to look carefully at the sides of the road and report any possible snow forts," said Streets Supervisor John Scheerer. Typically, kids build them at the corner of driveways, where the cleared driveway gives them easy access to a deep bank of snow.

That's probably the worst place to build a fort. Snowplow drivers likely can't see it, and anyone inside won't hear a snowplow or other traffic. A snowplow could collapse it or a car driver could lose control nearby, causing the vehicle to slide into it. Also, as the snow builds

up next to the roadside, it gets heavier. A snow tunnel could collapse and bury anyone inside, suffocating them.

Scheerer and Public Works Administrative Assistant Susan Waack visit a few kindergarten and first-grade classes each year, where they emphasize some important safety points:

- Play in the snow in the backyard, a park or at least a safe distance from the street.
- Never play near where the snowplow goes by. Snowplows operate at all hours, so no time is perfectly safe.
- If you're sledding or sliding, slide heading away from the road.
- Don't build tunnels or forts that could trap anyone if they collapse.

"It's fine to a build a fort," Scheerer said. "Just don't put a roof on it."

For more information about snow plowing and safety, visit bit.ly/EdinaPublicWorks.



Keep winter fun safe by building a snow fort – without a roof – in the backyard. File Photo