

Edition: Edina



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CITY GOALS:



Strong Foundation



Reliable Service



Livable City



Better Together

City Hall's Grand Oak Tree Begins Next Chapter

Dying Tree Transformed Into Work of Art

BY DANIELLE BOSCHÉE

Heads turned, cars slowed on Eden Avenue and a number of residents made inquiries in 2019. What was going on with the old white oak tree on the south side of City Hall?

The buzz and intrigue built up considerably, but that burning question can now be answered: The once diminished stump that remained of the grand tree has been transformed into an impressive wooden animal sculpture that simultaneously represents Edina and the indigenous fauna of Minnesota.

The stately sentinel of Eden Avenue observed historic events, life and a city develop all around it for at least a century to 150 years before its eventual demise. Most thought the iconic tree would simply be cut down, the formerly commanding presence captured forevermore only in pictures and its fate all but decided. But City Forester Luther Overholt came up with a brilliant plan: Why not keep it and make it a symbolic piece of natural art for the city?

Such an undertaking is not easily transferred from the germination of a concept to execution, but Overholt doggedly pursued the idea for a year, eventually procuring a green light from the Arts & Culture Commission to bring his vision for the oak tree to fruition.

"Given the location and the size of the tree, I thought it would be really cool to do something different with it," Overholt said. "I started thinking outside the box and trying to showcase what could be done with the tree instead of just cutting it down. White oak happens to be one of the best tree types for carving."

As he considered commissioning this substantial project, Overholt researched several chainsaw artists and eventually settled on Curtis Ingvolstad as the obvious choice, given his extensive experience and accolades garnered for his wooden sculptures. A Minnesota

native who has participated in international chainsaw-carving contests, Ingvolstad sketched his creative interpretation for the tree. Overholt obtained City Manager Scott Neal's approval as well as that of the Arts & Culture Commission to proceed with the \$8,500 project in October 2019.



Ingvolstad's unique approach and perspective sets him apart. "You take the studio outside, and people get interested in the process and become invested," he said. "I'm always looking to make someone's life inspired with my work."

Work began in earnest on the project the first week of November. The tree was cut to 15 feet and took Ingvolstad two weeks to carve.

The distinctive sculpture boasts a 360-degree design that can be viewed from all angles and features a veritable parade of animals native to Minnesota in gradual ascension, with aquatic animals at the bottom, terrestrial critters in the middle and flying creatures at the top, completed by a familiar symbol as the crowning pièce de résistance: a hornet, of course, specifically requested as the City's signature.



A lifeless stump no longer, City Hall's white oak tree now majestically represents Edina and the wildlife unique to Minnesota as a wooden animal mural art piece, ushering in a new era for the tree. Photos by Kaylin Eidsness

"If you grow up here in Minnesota, you see these iconic animals like blue herons, turtles, eagles, owls Incorporating all of that in this carving gives it a sense of home."

For a detailed sketch identifying all the animal wildlife featured on the carving, visit bit.ly/WildlifeCarving. Stop by City Hall and admire the handiwork firsthand!

New EMS Chief, Paramedic/Firefighters Improve Emergency Service

Staffing Change Boosts Available Ambulances and Cutting-Edge Treatment

BY DEBBIE TOWNSEND

A new Assistant Fire Chief position devoted to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and a few additional Paramedic/Firefighters are helping boost emergency readiness and efficiency while keeping Edina on the cutting edge of patient treatment.

federal grant will add two more Paramedic/Firefighters per shift starting this year to help meet the increasing call demand for Fire Department help.

Calls involving patient care rose 44 percent in the last decade. When multiple calls happened at the same time, Edina regularly had to ask for mutual aid from nearby cities for ambulances. By having three staffed ambulances, and sometimes four, Edina Fire can better provide residents quick response and its very high standard of care.

With 75 to 80 percent of calls for Fire Department service being medically related, it made sense to have an assistant chief focused entirely on EMS. Previously, two assistant chiefs oversaw operations and training, with both having a piece of EMS, but not sole focus on it.


"We run a very busy ambulance business in the Fire Department, and with that comes a lot of responsibility, oversight and leadership," said Fire Chief Tom Schmitz. "It was getting harder

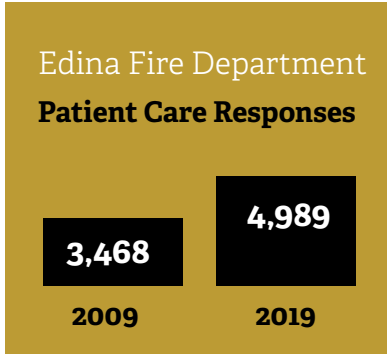
and harder for the Fire Department to provide the high level of service we needed in those areas because we are busy in many areas."

Quinn focuses on quality assurance, patient care, insurance reimbursements, specific medical-related training, ambulances, medical supplies, privacy law compliance and more. Schmitz noted Quinn's work already has paid off with better ensuring the City is properly paid or reimbursed for services. Quinn also was instrumental in the process of acquiring new ambulances that arrive this year.

One of Quinn's favorite parts of the job is staying abreast of the latest EMS research and trends worldwide.

"We were able to spend some more time for staying on the cutting edge in areas like cardiac arrest treatment," Quinn said. "We want the best for the people we serve."

For more information about EMS service, contact Quinn at rquinn@EdinaMN.gov or call 952-826-0330. 




EMS Chief Ryan Quinn was promoted to his newly created position at the start of 2019, and one extra Paramedic/Firefighter was hired for each of the three shifts.

"The addition of that one extra person allows us to have a third ambulance staffed and ready to respond," Quinn said, noting two staffed ambulances is the minimum at all times. A

BY THE NUMBERS

Get smart about salting this winter!

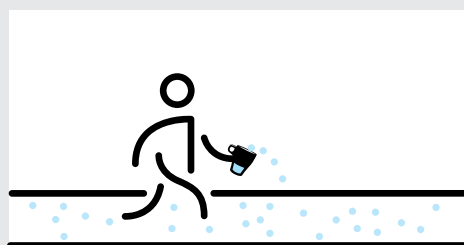
It only takes one teaspoon of salt to permanently pollute five gallons of water. With no good way to treat the excess chloride in Minnesota lakes and streams, the best thing residents can do is control ice without using excessive salt. For 10 tips on smart salting this winter, visit bit.ly/smartsalting. 



About 78 percent of salt applied in the Twin Cities for winter maintenance is either transported to groundwater or remains in the local lakes and wetlands.



78



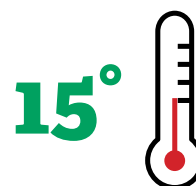
← 20 ft. →

1/3

About one-third of a 12-ounce coffee mug of salt is enough for 20 feet of a typical path or sidewalk.



100

 percent of Edina Public Works plow operators receive training on smart salting.


Rock salt stops working below 15 degrees. Consider using sand for traction instead.

Task Force Explores Flood Causes, Solutions for Reducing Risk

Work Critical as 2019 Set Precipitation Record with Worse Years Likely to Come

BY DEBBIE TOWNSEND

Flooded yards, creeks cresting their banks, trails and roads buried underwater were more common sights as 2019 unleashed the wettest year on record in Edina.

The National Weather Service recorded 43.17 inches of precipitation in 2019, easily topping the previous record of 40.32 inches set in 2016. In a normal year, just over 30.5 inches fall.

Eight people who live in Edina form the Flood Risk Reduction Strategy Task Force, which has been searching for causes and possible remedies for City leaders to consider. The task force explored two common theories among residents:

- City crews aren't doing as much work as in years past to prevent flooding
- Increased development/redevelopment is causing the flooding

Public Works has been spending more time, not less, devoted to flood-related issues. The problem is most of the City's infrastructure for handling stormwater dates back to the 1950s and '60s, when conditions were far different than today.

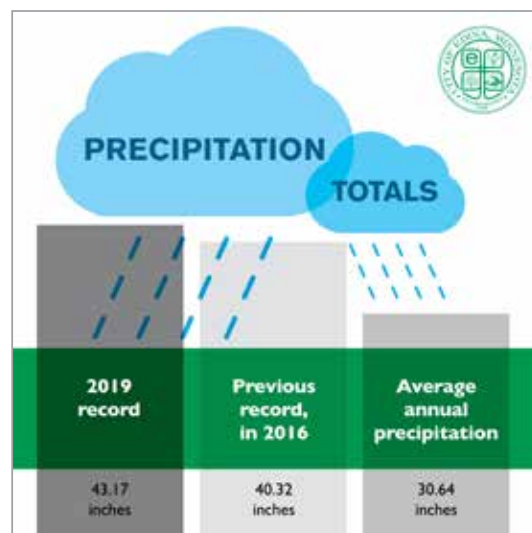
As for development being the culprit, even staff wondered how much impervious surfaces – concrete, asphalt, foundations, driveways and other hard surfaces – contributed to flooding. The task force involved consultant Barr Engineering, which ran extreme scenarios, adding or subtracting vast amounts of impervious surfaces.

"Those options barely moved the needle," said Engineering Services Manager Ross Bintner, a staff liaison to the task force.

The big factor? "Climate change is really affecting the game here," Bintner said.

Much of the problem isn't the individual storms, but the overall precipitation. The ground can only absorb so much. It's a problem cities across the nation are dealing with, especially as climate models call for more frequent and more intense storms.

"The water simply has no place to go," said Water Resources Coordinator Jessica Wilson, who is also working with the task force.



To demonstrate, they held up signs for flood levels from a huge storm that has a 26 percent chance of occurring during a typical 30-year mortgage period. Today, the water from that storm would reach roughly doorway level in one particularly flood-affected Edina neighborhood. By 2050, the water could be halfway up the living room.

"The word 'Big' immediately comes to mind when I think about what I've learned about flood risk," said Task Force Member Roxane Lehmann. "Edina's flood problems are big. To address these problems, the City is envisioning transformative change, which means selected strategies must be big enough to matter. And we must consider the big picture when decisions are made about which projects will get priority, who will fund these projects, and how nearby and downstream properties are protected in the process."

Other members of the task force are Kathy Amlaw, Nora Davis, Greg Lincoln, Richard Manser, Michael Platterer, Louise Segreto and Richard Strong. Parts of the task force's work will become revisions to the City's Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan, while others will be tools residents and businesses can use to help. They expect the City Council to review their recommendations in March and formally adopt them in early April.

"There will be a few quick wins, but most of it will be part of a larger plan and decisions for policymakers," Bintner said.

Find the estimated flood risk of your home in the online map at bit.ly/EdinaWaterResources. More resources about flood prevention are at EdinaMN.gov/371/Flooding-and-Drainage.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Recurring Events:

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

Children's Programs, Edinborough Park
Noon Thursdays

Sunday, Feb. 2, 1-3 p.m.

Super Sunday Skate, Arden Park

Tuesday, Feb. 4, 7 p.m.

City Council meeting, Edina City Hall

Friday, Feb. 7, 6:30 p.m.

Friday Family Movie Night, "Abominable,"
Edinborough Park

Saturday, Feb. 8, 10-11 a.m.

The Author's Studio: *Raising Will*
by Katherine Quie, Edina Art
Center



Saturday, Feb. 8, 7-9 p.m.

Rockin' Hollywoods Valentine's
Concert, Braemar Golf Course

Thursday, Feb. 13, 7:30 a.m.

Housing & Redevelopment Authority meeting,
Edina City Hall

Saturday, Feb. 15, 10 a.m.

Walk With the Mayor, Southdale Center

Monday, Feb. 17

Presidents Day; City Hall Closed

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 7-8 p.m.

Town Talks: Public Safety, Edina City Hall

Hear from the Police and Fire chiefs about trends in public safety, staying up to date with equipment and how safety remains a top priority in Edina.

Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m.

City Council meeting, Edina City Hall

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 11:30 a.m. -1 p.m.

State of the Community, Edina Country Club

The Edina Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Clubs of Edina and Edina Morningside present the annual State of the Community. Edina Mayor James B. Hovland, School Superintendent John Schultz and City Manager Scott Neal will address City issues and present upcoming plans.

Thursday, Feb. 27, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Chat with the Chiefs, Patisserie Margo

Thursday, Feb. 27, 5-8 p.m.

Opening Reception, Edina Art Center Instructor and Student Exhibition, Edina Art Center

For a complete listing of meetings and events, visit EdinaMN.gov.



Presidential Primary

Minnesota will hold a presidential nomination primary **March 3** to vote for each major party's nominee for President. Learn more at bit.ly/ElectionsVoting.

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4801 WEST 50TH STREET
EDINA, MN 55424

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The Ballot

- Only two of the four major political parties will participate – DFL and Republican.
- Each major party chair submitted a list of candidates for their party. The DFL submitted 15 candidates and an option for “uncommitted.” The Republican submitted one candidate and a “write-in” option.
- You will be required to indicate your party preference when you vote absentee or in-person at your polling place to receive a ballot. You will not be able to vote if you do not indicate a party preference.
- Your party preference ballot will only include the candidates from that party.
- A record of which party's ballot you selected will be made available to the major political parties.

- A “data breach” of a voter’s major party ballot choice before, during or after the primary election day could result in criminal charges or civil penalties on individuals as well as the City.
- Some candidates on the DFL ballot have dropped out since it was submitted. For questions about which candidates have dropped out, voters must contact the party directly.

Precinct Caucuses

- The major parties will still hold caucuses Feb. 25 to discuss and vote on other issues.

Party Contact Information

Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party
255 E Plato Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55107
651-293-1200

Republican Party of Minnesota
2200 E Franklin Ave., Suite 201
Minneapolis, MN 55404
651-222-0022

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CAR-RT-WS

City Seeks Approval to Pursue Local Tax

Sales Tax Could Be Used For Fred Richards and Braemar Parks, Weber Woods and Street Projects

The City seeks approval from the State Legislature to pursue a local option sales tax to fund significant park improvements and some street reconstruction projects.

A local option sales tax is a tax for a specific purpose or project of regional significance. It would only apply to taxable goods. The sales tax would be 0.5 percent, equating to an additional 50 cents on each \$100 purchase of taxable goods. The local option sales tax is estimated to generate more than \$4 million annually in Edina.

The community amenities being considered for use of the funds are:

- Fred Richards Park Master Plan (\$17.7 million)
- Braemar Park Master Plan and Braemar Arena improvements (\$20.9 million)

- Weber Woods Park and storm water facilities (\$2 million)
- Street reconstruction on State-Aid Streets (Projects total \$39.2 million)

There is a lengthy legislative process to be navigated before a new local option sales tax could be implemented in Edina. After

steps locally and at the State Capitol, Edina voters would have to approve it in a special referendum. It could take at least a year and likely more before a local option sales tax could be implemented if approved by Edina voters.

For more information, visit EdinaMN.gov.

– COMPILED BY JENNIFER BENNEROTTE

Process to Approve a Local Option Sales Tax in Edina

