

# ARDEN HILLS

## notes

The Official City Newsletter for Arden Hills Residents

January/February 2014

### City Council approves 2014 budget and tax levy

by Kristine Goodrich

A modest tax levy increase was approved by the City Council in December, along with a 2014 budget. Overall expenditures are increasing 9 percent over 2013, but mostly for capital projects that don't impact the tax levy.

#### Levy increases by two percent

The 2014 City tax levy was set at \$3.26 million, a 2-percent increase from 2013. In September, the Council set a maximum levy of \$3.29 million. A few spending cuts were made to reduce the final levy. City taxes on a median-valued home of \$264,700 will increase by approximately \$23. The City's 2014 tax rate is 28 percent, compared to 27.9 percent in 2013.

The levy funds more than three-fourths of the City's operating expenditures, budgeted at nearly \$4.4 million. The General Fund now includes two expenses that were previously accounted for in other funds: reimbursable costs for TCAAP redevelop-

ment planning and some maintenance of streets and trails. Excluding those, operating expenses are increasing 1 percent.

Increased costs for public safety services account for 1.6 percent of the 2-percent levy increase. The contract fees for the Lake Johanna Fire Department and Ramsey County Sheriff's Office rose nearly 4 and 3 percent respectively. The cost for 911 dispatching, which is getting a system upgrade, is jumping nearly 16 percent.

Some staffing changes were approved. A part-time planning intern position was changed to a full-time staff position to help with the increased workload in the planning department due to TCAAP preparations. A request from City administration to replace three part-time intern positions in the finance and administration

#### Where your City tax dollar goes



Public Safety	General Government	Parks and Recreation	Public Works	Transfers
42¢	30 ¢	16.5¢	10.5¢	1¢

departments with a regular part-time accounting clerk and office support position failed to gain Council approval and funding to keep the intern positions was not added back into the budget.

#### Capital Improvement Plan approved

The Council also approved a 2014 Capital Improvement Plan in December. The

*Continued on page 5*

#### Other components of the City's 2014 budget:

-  The Celebrating Arden Hills festival won't be held in 2014. The cancellation will save \$10,000.
-  Utility rates are increasing — 2 percent for water and sewer and 15 percent for surface water management. The City hopes to build reserves in the utility funds to pay for maintenance projects.
-  City staff will receive cost-of-living wage adjustments: non-union employees, 2 percent; union employees, 1.5 percent.
-  Costs associated with Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant redevelopment planning are estimated at \$206,000.
-  A new expense this year is a \$14,500 contribution to Northeast Youth and Family Services (NYFS). In the past, charitable gambling proceeds supported NYFS on the City's behalf.
-  No funding was taken out of reserves to balance the operating budget. A \$50,000 withdrawal from the capital reserves will be used to fund equipment replacement.
-  A new state sales tax exemption will save the City \$85,000, including \$12,000 on General Fund purchases funded by the tax levy.
-  The City will receive an additional \$14,000 in Fiscal Disparities revenue, which is deducted from the local tax levy.



## Arden Hills Service Directory

1245 West Highway 96  
Arden Hills, MN 55112-5734  
Office Hours  
Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m.--4:30 p.m.

651-792-7800  
www.cityofardenhills.org

Sheriff and Fire Emergency  
911

Sheriff (non-emergency)  
651-767-0640

Fire (non-emergency)  
651-481-7024

Water and Sewer Problems  
(During non-business hours)  
651-767-9640

Mayor:

David Grant 651-538-0747  
dgrant@cityofardenhills.org

Councilmembers:

Brenda Holden 651-636-2987  
bholden@cityofardenhills.org

Fran Holmes 651-631-1866  
fholmes@cityofardenhills.org

Dave McClung 651-332-0352  
davemclung@comcast.net

Ed Werner 651-636-2547  
ewerner@cityofardenhills.org

City Administrator:

Patrick Klaers 651-792-7810

Communications Committee

Kristine Goodrich, editor; Susan  
Cathey

Council Liaison: David Grant

Staff Liaison: Amy Dietl

Desktop Publisher: Mary Nosek

Council meetings are held at City Hall on the second and last Monday of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings are televised live on Cable Channel 16. Meetings of the Planning Commission are televised live at 7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month.

Visit [www.cityofardenhills.org](http://www.cityofardenhills.org) for information about taped meeting playbacks.

Arden Hills Notes is the official newsletter of the City of Arden Hills, an equal-opportunity employer.

## News from Around the Town:

### Bethel University explores creation of “east” campus

by Susan Cathey

Bethel University has a vision of creating an east campus to accommodate growth. At its meeting on October 28, 2013, the Arden Hills City Council reviewed a proposal from Bethel for a conditional use permit (CUP) to allow higher education as the principal use of the property at 2 Pine Tree Drive, offered for sale by Country Financial. Plans call for the site to have a diverse mixture of normal daytime office uses along with both daytime and evening classes. A mix of transportation modes would be used between the two campuses, including shuttle service, carpooling and personal vehicles.



During discussion of the motion to approve the permit, the Council passed three amendments. One relates to a plan for construction of pedestrian and bicycle trails to connect the two campus areas, for which Bethel has agreed to contribute \$800,000 to the City. The second amendment requires Bethel to submit an annual parking plan to the City for approval, and the third specifies the dates of the first two implementation phases as 2013-14 and 2015-18. The motion was then continued to a future meeting.

On November 25, the Council returned to discussion of Bethel's CUP. Council members spent some time discussing the desirability of limiting the maximum amount of classroom space, including hearing from a Bethel representative, who said there is still much work to be done on the master plan in light of the acquisition of this property. An amendment was passed limiting classroom space to the 19,000 square feet specified in Bethel's phase-in plan, although the University has the option to request additional space in the future if needed.

Another point of discussion involved the construction timeline and location of the pedestrian/bike trail, which would be used by Arden Hills residents as well as Bethel students. No additional amendments were passed. The Council then voted on the amended motion to allow the conditional use permit and passed it by a vote of four to one.

Mayor Grant noted that this was a strategic decision for the City and for the University. He commented that Bethel is an asset to our community culturally, educationally and religiously.

### Council schedules hearings on franchise fees

The City Council will hold two public hearings in February regarding proposed franchise fees.



The City is considering charging monthly fees to gas and electricity users as an alternative revenue source to support street, trail, and park improvements.

For more information about the fees, see the December issue of this newsletter or the City website.

Council members will hear public comments on the proposal during their meetings at City Hall on:

- **February 10 at 7 p.m.**
- **February 24 at 7 p.m.**

# Benchmarks: a review of recent City Council action

## November 25, 2013

- Approved cancellation of the December 30, 2013, regular City Council meeting (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2013-042, regarding no-waiver of the statutory liability limits and accepting the liability coverage limits from the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust for 2014 (5-0)
- Approved Ordinance 2013-010 for amendments to Section 1320 of the Zoning Code related to the proposed Conservation District (5-0)
- Approved Ordinance 2013-011 for amendments to Section 1305.04 and Section 1320 of the Zoning Code related to the proposed Parks and Open Space District (5-0)
- Approved the first amendment to the Lexington Station Phase I Final Plan and Master Planned Unit Development Agreement based on the September 30, 2013, City Council approval of Planning Case 13-014 (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2013-040 authorizing the application for recycling SCORE Grant funds for 2014 in the amount of \$19,611 (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2013-041 setting the 2014 Curbside Recycling Fee (5-0)
- Awarded the 2014 tree removal services agreement to Precision Landscape and Tree (5-0)
- Approved a motion acknowledging the application of Catholic United Financial for an exempt permit to conduct a raffle with a drawing date of March 13, 2014 (5-0)
- Approved the Certificate of Completion for 1201 County Road E (e-Street Flats) (5-0)
- Approved Planning Case #13-018 for a site plan review and sign standard adjustment at Gradient Center, 4105 Lexington Avenue North (5-0)
- Tabled Planning Case #13-019 for a site plan review and permanent accessory structure at 4105 Lexington Avenue North (5-0)
- Approved Planning Case 13-013 for a Conditional Use Permit and Development Contract for Bethel University

to allow a higher education use in up to 189,804 square feet in the existing office building located at 2 Pine Tree Drive (4-1 McClung)

- Approved Ordinance 2013-012 for amendments to Section 1325.05, Subd. 8 of the Zoning Code regarding Additional Design Standards for New Development, Redevelopment, and Modifications to Existing Sites in the B-2 and B-3 Districts (5-0)

## December 9, 2013

- Approved the 2014 Employee Compensation Plan for non-union employees effective January 1, 2014 and the seasonal employee 2014 part-time scale (5-0)
- Approved 2014 liquor license renewals (5-0)
- Approved 2014 tobacco license renewals (5-0)
- Approved Ordinance 2013-013 adopting 2014 Fee Schedule (5-0)
- Approved payment of \$15,480 to the Lake Johanna Fire Department (5-0) (City's share for reimbursement of station capital construction—Station #2 remodel and Station #4 addition)
- Approved the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Mobile Data Agreement with Ramsey County (5-0) (Joint Powers Agreement for the management and maintenance of a CAD system and mobile data communication services for public safety agencies that serve Arden Hills)
- Approved Payment No. 3 and final payment No. 4 to Classic Protective Coatings, Inc., for the South Water Tower Rehabilitation Project in the total amount of \$185,350 (5-0)
- Approved final payment No. 3 to SAK Construction, LLC, for the 2013 Sanitary Sewer Lining Improvement in the amount of \$31,792 (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2013-043 receiving the feasibility report and authorizing the preparation of plans and specifications in the matter of the County Road E (B-2 District) Improvements (5-0)

- Approved the Shared Service Agreement with Ramsey Conservation District for 2014 (5-0) (Assists the City with inspections required by the City's grading and erosion control permits under Chapter 15, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance)
- Approved the 2014-2018 Capital Improvement Plan (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2013-050 adopting the proposed 2014 Budget in the amount of \$15,100,345 (4-1 McClung)
- Approved Resolution 2013-051 setting the final tax levy for taxes payable in 2014 in the amount of \$3,257,456 (4-1 McClung)
- Approved Resolution 2013-044 ordering the preparation of the Round Lake Road, Gateway Boulevard and Gateway Court Feasibility Report (5-0) (2014 Pavement Management Project)
- Approved Resolution 2013-045 receiving the Round Lake Road, Gateway Boulevard and Gateway Court Feasibility Report and ordering the Public Hearing for January 27, 2014 (5-0)
- Approved Resolution 2013-046 ordering preparation of plans and specifications for the Round Lake Road, Gateway Boulevard, Gateway Court Improvements (5-0)

## December 16, 2013 – Special City Council Meeting

- Appointed Matthew Bachler to the position of Planner I, effective January 1, 2014 (4-1 McClung)

## And we thought winter and road construction could not exist together!

by Dave McClung

Most years road construction season ends and winter season appears just days later. This year, winter came too early. Construction crews that have been working in and around Arden Hills for two years could not completely finish all the road construction projects before Father Winter blew in with ice, snow, and very cold weather. The most noticeable overlap of seasons was seen at the intersection of US Highway 10 and County Road 96.

When County and City snow plows confronted their first snowfall of the winter season, they had to dodge orange construction barrels on County Road 96. Construction crews ran out of time to complete the sound wall on the north side of County Road 96 (along Arden Manor Manufactured Housing Park) and to install traffic signals at the two intersections of County Road 96 and Old Highway 10 and Round Lake Road. The orange barrels stayed in place for a couple of weeks with snow piling up until crews could complete some work that needed to be done this year.

On December 18, MnDOT emailed its regular project update and announced that County Road 96 was open to two lanes of traffic in each direction between Hamline Avenue and the I-35W bridge. MnDOT advised that some work would continue on the new traffic signal system. The signals may not be functional until later this winter or spring, depending on the weather. Barrels can still be seen at the sides of the road because the curbing is not completed and won't be finished until spring.

County Road 96 has now been totally rebuilt from Highway 61 in White Bear Lake to the Round Lake Road intersection. Only a couple hundred feet of reconstruction remain. The County Road 96 bridge across I-35W is scheduled to be rebuilt in 2015 and that will finalize the total reconstruction.

With that first snowfall, the construction crews rushed to complete the traffic signal at Hamline Avenue and County Road F and finalize some landscaping in the southeast quadrant of that intersection. At the same

time, the ramp from Hamline Avenue to westbound US Highway 10 opened with snowflakes in the air. When winter season ends (early, we hope) and construction ramps up again, crews will be back in this area to complete landscaping.



All traffic lanes are open on I-694 after a full construction season, but MnDOT tells us that some finishing work will take place when the next construction season starts.

Left: Westbound Highway 96 at US Highway 10 bridge.

Right: Eastbound Highway 96 at Round Lake Road intersection



## Goodwill store proposed for Arden Hills

by Susan Cathey

A proposal has been submitted to the City of Arden Hills by the Davidson Corporation for the construction and lease of a building at the corner of Lexington Avenue and County Road E to Goodwill Industries. The proposed project is a one-story, approximately 17,000 square foot building to be used as a Goodwill store.

The building would include an inside drop-off area on the north side, as well as two docking areas for a semi-trailer and a trash compactor located behind the building and screened from view. Plans call for trees, shrubs and perennial flowers throughout the property, particularly along the Lexington Avenue side and the border with e-Street Flats.



Proceeds from Goodwill's retail stores provide the main funding for the organization's career training and counseling program worldwide. Because the success of the stores is primarily based on receiving high quality donated goods for resale at the same location, Goodwill's goal is to locate their new stores in desirable communities such as Arden Hills.

The proposal for this development was scheduled to go to the Arden Hills Planning Commission on January 8 and would tentatively be considered by the City Council at its meeting on January 27.

## City amends Zoning Code and adopts new open space zoning districts by Jessica Luther

On November 25, City Council amended the current Zoning Code and adopted two new zoning districts—the Parks and Open Space District and the Conservation District. Staff will make the necessary revisions to the Zoning Code and rezone individual parcels of land as “Parks and Open Space” or “Conservation.”

The primary purpose of the Parks and Open Space District is to create land use regulations that support the parks and open spaces managed by Arden Hills or Ramsey County. Setting aside land for recreational uses addresses public health and welfare concerns through supporting community

health, promoting ecological stewardship, and conserving environmental resources.

“The Parks and Open Space District would create greater consistency between existing land uses and the Zoning Code. Currently, most parks in the City are zoned as residential districts,” said Matthew Bachler, Community Development Intern of Arden Hills. “As a result, the zoning requirements that regulate these areas are designed for residential land uses and not necessarily for park uses.”

By creating a new district, the City will be able to craft regulations that provide better protection of park and open space

resources and support the long-range plans of the Arden Hills and Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Departments.

Bachler explained that the Conservation District applies to the Arden Hills Army Training Site (AHATS) north of Highway 96. “Currently, AHATS is under the ownership of the federal government, but most of the site is zoned R-1 Single Family Residential. Recognizing that portions of AHATS could be sold to private parties in the future, the purpose of the Conservation District is to provide the City with more control over any future development that may occur on the site. It helps ensure that the development would be phased,” he said.

### Tips for a greener 2014

Here are nine small changes you can make for a BIG impact on the planet.

#### 1. Start with your light bulbs

Installing a compact fluorescent bulb (CFL) is the quickest, easiest way to save energy and money. CFLs convert most of the energy they use into light rather than heat. That translates to less cost over the life of the bulb—a savings that can be \$83 for one 75-watt incandescent bulb swapped out for a 25-watt CFL.

#### 2. Go ahead, buy a new appliance

Older appliances can be energy suckers. According to Energy Star, a household with Energy Star efficient appliances uses about 30 percent less energy.

#### 3. Do a home self audit

A home self-audit can give you a close-up look at your home’s energy usage and identify areas that could be more efficient. You can get more information about home audits at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

#### 4. Get rid of toxicity

Improving your eco-friendliness and removing toxic substances from your house is as easy as buying a spray bottle and some vinegar.

#### 5. Switch to showers

A typical shower uses 1/2 to 3/4 less water than a bath.

#### 6. Capture that rainwater

For many areas of the United States, rain-water harvesting systems could probably provide at least half of the water needs.

#### 7. Recycle your clothes

Donating your unused clothes has an impact on the environment and on the individuals who receive your items.

#### 8. Turn old clothing into cleaning rags

If all Americans used one less paper towel a day, 571,230,000 pounds of paper would be spared over the course of the year.

#### 9. Buy a reusable water bottle

Buying bottled water can add up in costs and contribute to plastic consumption.

Ramsey County Recycling  
651-633-3279; [RamseyAtoZ.com](http://RamseyAtoZ.com)



### Budget and tax levy continued from page 1

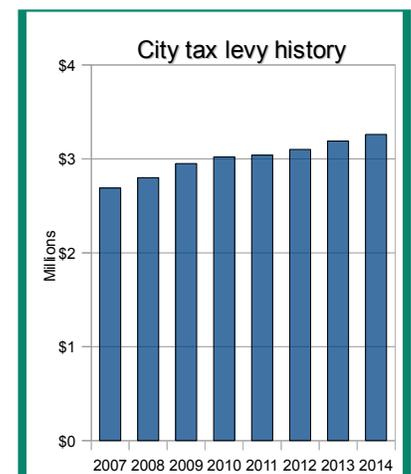
proposed projects are pending final Council approval. Total cost is \$4.6 million, funded by a variety of sources. Most of the planned spending is for road projects, including:

- reconstructing a segment of Round Lake Road and replacing the utilities infrastructure,
- making a small (proportionally) cost contribution to the County’s planned improvements to Lexington Avenue between I-694 and County Road F,
- planning for the road reconstruction and utility improvements in the Glenview Neighborhood in 2015, and
- planning for improvements to County Road E between Lexington and Snelling Avenues.

Other planned capital improvements include:

- constructing a new sidewalk segment on Highway 96 filling a gap from Hamline Avenue to North Heights Church,
- improving the baseball fields at Perry Park,
- installing gateway signs at City entryways,
- replacing office equipment and upgrading software,
- replacing water system valves
- removing and replacing diseased trees on City property and boulevards if needed to thwart the spread of emerald ash borer, and

- contributing to the Lake Johanna Fire Department to help it maintain and replace its equipment.





Arden Hills, MN • 55112-5734

ECR-WSS  
PRST STD  
U.S. Postage Paid  
St. Paul, MN  
Permit #1962

**I**  
**n** *Levy and budget outlined*  
**s** *Bethel University considers "east" campus*  
**i** *Franchise fee hearings set*  
**d** *Zoning Code amended*  
**e**

## Postal Customer

### Notes from the City Council

#### Looking back on 2013

As is common with TV specials this time of year, I too want to take this opportunity to look back at 2013. It was a busy year on many fronts, far too many to mention all of them. Here are some items to look back on:

##### First Quarter

First quarter brought us the start of planning for the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) redevelopment and formation of the Joint Development Authority — a group that will oversee the implementation of the City-developed Master Plan for the site. We also approved the acquisition of the triangle property at the intersection of Lake Johanna Boulevard and County Road D. This property had a building removed, new soil added, new grass and a City gateway sign installed in August.

##### Second Quarter

Second quarter brought us road construction which seemed to be everywhere: Lexington Avenue, I-694 and Highways 10 and 96. The Council and staff spent time working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the County to mitigate the impacts of traffic congestion to the extent possible.

In April the County formally purchased TCAAP and selected Bolander and Sons, Inc. to perform the cleanup and remediation. In June, we had the formal ground

breaking ceremony and with it the long held dream of cleanup and future reuse became realized.

Several building-related items took place in second quarter. The former Holiday Inn received approval for a remodel into 74 apartments, along with retail shops— know known as e-Street Flats. The Arden Woods building became Gradient Center, home of the Gradient Financial Group. The building exterior received a \$1.5 million facelift. After several revisions, Sand Companies received approval to build a 54-unit, market-rate apartment building on County Road F.

##### Third Quarter

Valentine Park reopened with a ribbon cutting ceremony and picnic shelter dedication. The park was completely redone and has been extensively used this year.

Two public information gathering sessions were held for the public to provide input on TCAAP development. The input gathered was used to create the draft Master Plan, which was reviewed in December.

Lexington Station plans were approved, consisting of three buildings to be built in three phases. The first building began in late 2103 and depending on the winter construction season should open in mid-2014.

##### Fourth Quarter

The City finished the rehabilitation of the south water tower, which includes the City logo. Rehabilitation is one of the projects that comes along about every 20 years and is needed to ensure ongoing water service.

Late November brought an end to the road construction season; roads opened up, and it was a welcome relief from the traffic congestion we were experiencing. Putting up with lane closures and detours is no fun, especially with the design of our City, but if we want roads in good repair some impact will be felt.

In December the City Council reviewed the first draft of the TCAAP Master Plan. The draft shows three main neighborhoods referred to as, Creek, Town and Hill. The draft shows 1,550 homes and businesses with an estimated 4,000 jobs. We currently have about 3,000 homes and 10,500 jobs in our City. Please check the City website at [www.cityofardenhills.org](http://www.cityofardenhills.org) for more information on the Master Plan.

I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

David Grant  
Mayor of Arden Hills