

# ARDEN HILLS

## notes

The Official City Newsletter for Arden Hills Residents

January/February 2021

### City Adopts Budget and Approves Tax Levy

—Down from Preliminary Levy, Home Values Up, Tax Rate Stays Steady

Arden Hills continues to have one of the lowest tax rates in Ramsey County. Compared to 17 other jurisdictions in the County, Arden Hills has the sixth lowest tax rate based on preliminary information from November 2020.

The annual truth-in-taxation hearing was held on December 14 at Arden Hills City Hall. City staff presented information regarding the 2021 budget and tax levy.

The City Council adopted a 2021 property tax levy of \$4,280,080. This sets the City's property tax levy increase for 2021 at 3.5 percent, which is less than the preliminary levy rate set in September 2020 of 4.25 percent.

In 2021, the City tax rate is projected to be reduced by 1.3 percent. The tax rate is just one

factor in calculating a tax bill, and even with property values rising, many property owners will see their total tax bills decrease. Home values are determined by the Ramsey County Assessor's Office.

The impact of a 3.5 percent levy increase translates to a \$29.01 increase in annual City taxes paid by resident owners of median valued homes.

In Arden Hills, the levy is split between the General Fund (\$3,760,080), the Economic Development Authority Fund (\$100,000), and Capital Funds (\$420,000). Less than 18% of the residential properties will see an increase to their total property tax bill (including the county, city, school district, and other taxes) in 2021, not including special assessments and referendums.

#### Check Register—What your Arden Hills tax dollar buys you.

Description of Transaction	Balance
Public Safety	\$34.49
General Government	\$16.51
Parks and Recreation	\$11.59
Public Works	\$10.61
Capital	\$ 5.90
EDA (Economic Development Authority)	\$ 1.40

A \$387,500 home generates \$966 in annual City property taxes.  
This breaks down as \$80.50 per month for 2021.

### 2021 General Fund Budget

The Council adopted a 2021 city budget of \$16,373,100, which includes the General Fund, Capital Funds, and Utilities.

#### Revenues

- General Fund revenues in the 2021 budget are set at \$5,122,260.
- The property tax levy accounts for approximately 73 percent of the General Fund revenues and will be increased 2.6 percent or \$94,740 over the previous year.

#### Expenditures

- General Fund expenditures for 2021 total \$5,212,980.
- Public Safety costs are set to increase by 5.7 percent for the Lake Johanna Fire Department, 3.8 percent for the Ramsey County Sheriff contract, and 22.4 percent for dispatch costs.
- Personnel costs are increasing by 5.4 percent due to cost of living adjustments, step increases, and health insurance premium increases.

The approved budget and tax levy can be viewed in detail on the Finance Department web page at [cityofardenhills.org](http://cityofardenhills.org).

## Arden Hills Service Directory

Arden Hills City Hall  
1245 West Highway 96  
Arden Hills, MN 55112-5734  
[www.cityofardenhills.org](http://www.cityofardenhills.org)  
651-792-7800

**Office Hours**  
Monday through Friday  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Sheriff and Fire**  
911  
Water and Sewer Problems  
(During non-business hours)  
651-767-0640

**Mayor**  
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**City Administrator**  
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**Communications Committee  
Council Liaison**  
Fran Holmes

Council meetings are held at City Hall on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are televised live on Cable Channel 16. Meetings of the Planning Commission are televised as well. Please visit [cityofardenhills.org](http://cityofardenhills.org) for information about archived meeting playbacks.

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

## City News

### Recognition of Re-Elected City Councilmembers

Councilmembers Brenda Holden and Dave McClung have been re-elected to serve four-year terms (2021–2024).

Generally, the Oath of Office would be given at an in-person Council meeting; however, due to COVID-19 precautions and Council meetings currently being held virtually, each Councilmember was sworn in separately on Tuesday, January 5 by the City Clerk.

### Commission and Committee Appointments

At the January 11 City Council meeting, Paul Vijums was reappointed to the Planning Commission (term to expire 12/31/2023) and was named Chair. Dan Erickson was reappointed to the Economic Development Commission (term to expire 12/31/2023) and he will continue as Chair of that commission. John VanValkenburg was named Chair of the Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee (PTRC).

Thank you to previous Planning Commission Chair Nick Gehring for his leadership and Nancy O'Malley for her time and efforts on behalf of the PTRC.

### Door-to-Door Soliciting Currently Suspended

Licenses to solicit door-to-door in Arden Hills are currently suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If residents are approached by solicitors, they should report the activity to Arden Hills City Hall during normal business hours or to the Ramsey County Sheriff after business hours and on weekends.

### MVHS Update

The Arden Hills City Council has worked hard to support pedestrian safety at Mounds View High School. Council partnered with the school district during remodeling to make sure student safety was a priority. To that end, a new pedestrian crossing signal has been installed at the Lake Valentine Road crosswalk.



### Join Your Local Government

Volunteers are needed to serve on the City's Planning Commission and other committees.

Please visit the City's "Commissions & Committees" web page for more information and to fill out an application, or call City Hall at 651-792-7800 to learn more.

## Benchmarks: A Review of Recent City Council Action

*Except as indicated, all items were approved unanimously by 5–0 vote.*

### December 14, 2020 City Council Meeting

- Approved the 2021 Shared Service Agreement with Northeast Youth and Family, a non-profit social service agency serving at-risk youth and families residing in the northern suburbs of Ramsey County.
- Approved elimination of Associate Planner staff position.
- Approved 2021 Fee Schedule with increases/revisions.
- Conducted Truth-in-Taxation hearing on the 2021 Budget and Tax Levy and:
  - ✓ Set Final Tax Levy for Taxes Payable in 2021 at 3.5%, reducing it from a projected 4.25% rate and certified the

Levy amount at \$4,280,080 (4–1, Holmes opposed).

- ✓ Set the Final Tax Levy for Karth Lake Special Taxing District for Taxes Payable in 2021 to \$6,611 (affects Karth Lake properties only).
- ✓ Adopted the proposed 2021 Budget in the amount of \$16,373,100.

### December 21, 2020 Special City Council Meeting

- Approved 2021 Tobacco License Renewals for five businesses and 2021 Liquor License Renewals for 11 businesses, all of which have successfully passed a background check conducted by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office. On-sale liquor fees for the first six months of 2021 are waived due to State mandates affecting sales.

### January 11, 2021 City Council Meeting

- Named the St. Paul Pioneer Press as the official newspaper for legal notices; reappointed Campbell Knutson, P.A. as city attorney with Joel Jamnik as primary city attorney; reappointed Ehlers & Associates, Inc. as financial consultant; and reappointed Malloy, Montague, Karnowski, Radosevich and Company (MMKR) as auditor.
- Tabled a request for variance at 3493 Siems Ct. for a larger than ordinance permitted accessory structure located in the Shoreland Management District adjacent to Lake Johanna.

*For a complete listing of recent City Council action, visit [cityofardenhills.org](http://cityofardenhills.org) and click on View Agendas & Minutes.*

## Welcome New Public Works Employee, Matt Seifert



As a Public Works Maintenance Worker for the City of Arden Hills, Matt Seifert's day could include responding to a water main emergency, clearing a trail, cleaning a sewer line, or pre-treating streets before a snowstorm. When Matt isn't on shift for the City, he is on duty for the Army Reserves, of which he has been a proud member for eight years. His unit purifies and transports water, and Matt put those skills to use on deployment to Iraq in 2016.

Matt grew up in Eagle Bend, Minnesota, and he currently lives in Fridley. When he isn't on drill in Wilmar for the U.S. Army, Matt relaxes by fishing and hunting (he is a bow hunter and sometimes fashions his own arrows) and climbing—he's scaled mountains in Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana.

**Did you know?** Residents brought in more than **500 pounds** of broken holiday string lights during the collection drive at City Hall! These lights are being diverted from the landfill and taken to the local electronics recycler Tech Dump. You can drop off lights, cords, and more at the year-round household hazardous waste collection site in Saint Paul: [RamseyRecycles.com/HHW](http://RamseyRecycles.com/HHW).

Turn to page 4 for more recycling news. →



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## Inside

*2021 Budget and Levy*

*City Council Benchmarks*

*City News Update*

*Year-End Recycling Report*

## 2020 Year-End Recycling Report for Arden Hills

Arden Hills recycled almost 800 tons in 2020! That includes over 125 tons of glass, 138 tons of cardboard, and 249 tons of office paper recycled this past year.

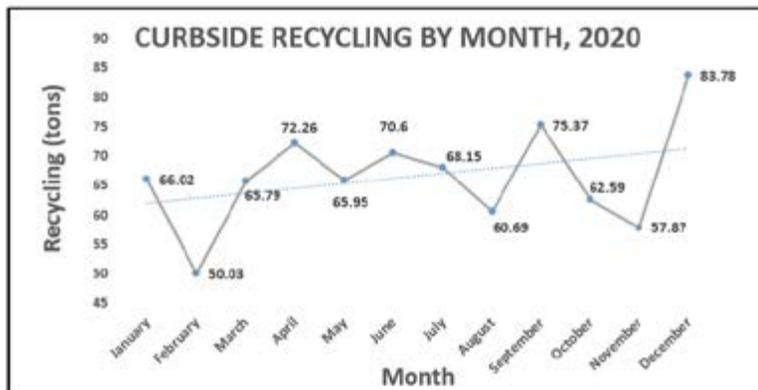
The amount of mixed office paper recycled by Arden Hills residents this year diverted the equivalent of 1,322 trees that would have been cut down to provide raw materials for paper and pulp mills.

**As a community, we should be proud of our efforts!** Visit [RamseyRecycles.com](https://www.ramseyrecycles.com) or call 651-633-3279 for more information on what can be recycled in Arden Hills.

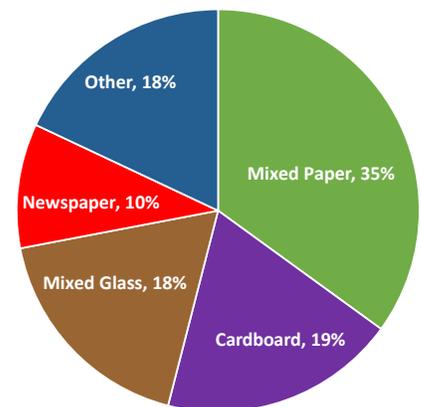
### Holiday Schedule for Residential Recycling

In 2021, there are **FIVE** holidays that will cause your recycling to be delayed by one day:

New Year's Day, Jan. 1 • Memorial Day, May 31 • Labor Day, Sept. 6 • Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25 • Christmas Day, Dec. 25  
*Questions? Contact Republic Services at 952-941-5174.*



Recycled Materials by Percentage



*Dear residents: I wanted to clarify from my previous note in December's newsletter. I referred to the death of George Floyd as "murder." It was not my intent to state a legal conclusion, but rather to convey the tragic nature of his death within the context of various social, cultural, and political issues. It is especially important in today's environment that we are careful and precise with our words.*

*—Dave Perrault, City Administrator*