

# ARDEN HILLS

## notes

The Official City Newsletter for Arden Hills Residents

Jan/Feb 2024

## Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP) Updates

Two notable events have occurred for Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP) in the past few weeks. The first being the City Council voted to amend the City's Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan to allow for an additional 500 units at Rice Creek Commons, for a total of 1,960 housing units. This follows a recommendation for approval by the Planning Commission and recent approvals of a Preliminary Development Agreement and Term Sheet by the Joint Development Authority (JDA). The new density maximum is still subject to approval by Ramsey County and the Metropolitan Council in the coming months.

Along with the new density, it was stipulated that 20 percent of the total units will be affordable at 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) or below. This means that 392 of the total units will be available to a family of four with an income of \$74,520 or less. While those units are likely to be rental units, an anticipated forty-four additional units (approx.) will be available for first-time home buyers through Ramsey County's Homebuyer Assistance Program. This

program assists first-time and first-generation homebuyers with low-to-moderate incomes who are purchasing homes in suburban Ramsey County.

The second notable event for the Rice Creek Commons project is the County's announcement of a purchase and sale agreement with Ryan Companies for the Outlot A parcel, otherwise known as the Thumb. Outlot A is the 40-acre shovel-ready parcel on the northern end of Rice Creek Commons, zoned for commercial, industrial, and retail uses. With the agreement comes a 15-month due diligence period by Ryan Companies. The site is expected to be a major job generator for the project, with an estimate of adding between 800 and 1,200 permanent jobs. While no end users have been identified, possible tenants could include national or regional headquarters, medical device manufacturers, life science companies, or other technology companies. Alatus will remain the developer for the rest of the Rice Creek Commons site.

A lot of work is still left to do on the



*Developer Rendering of Outlot A*

project as the JDA works towards a development agreement on the remaining 387 acres of the site.

Please continue to follow [RiceCreekCommons.com](https://www.RiceCreekCommons.com) for more information, the City's website, and meetings of the City Council and JDA.

## REWATCH THE 2024 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS



If you missed the State of the City Address on February 10, you can now view the replay online! At the State of the City, the Council shared the latest about City developments, Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP), parks and trails, City finances, and more.

Visit [cityofardenhills.org/1189/State-of-the-City-Address](https://cityofardenhills.org/1189/State-of-the-City-Address) to watch the 2024 State of the City Address.





## Service Directory

### City Hall

1245 West Highway 96  
Arden Hills, MN 55112  
cityofardenhills.org  
651-792-7800

### Office Hours

Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

### Sheriff and Fire

911 - Emergency & Non-Emergency

Water and Sewer Problems  
(During non-business hours)  
651-767-0640

### Mayor

David Grant • 651-538-0747  
[dgrant@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:dgrant@cityofardenhills.org)

### City Councilmembers

Brenda Holden • 651-636-2987  
[bholden@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:bholden@cityofardenhills.org)

Emily Rousseau • 651-792-7856  
[erousseau@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:erousseau@cityofardenhills.org)

Tena Monson • 612-758-0695  
[tmonson@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:tmonson@cityofardenhills.org)

Thomas Fabel • 651-303-3611  
[tfabel@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:tfabel@cityofardenhills.org)

### City Administrator

Dave Perrault • 651-792-7824  
[dperrault@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:dperrault@cityofardenhills.org)

### Sr. Communications Coordinator

Luke Cardona • 651-792-7817  
[lcardona@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:lcardona@cityofardenhills.org)

### City Council Liaison

Thomas Fabel

### Resident Resources

[cityofardenhills.org/resident-resources](http://cityofardenhills.org/resident-resources)

Council meetings are held at City Hall on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 7 p.m. Council meetings, Work Sessions, and Planning Commission meetings are televised live on Cable Channel 16. 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

### Voting Details for March 5 Presidential Primary

The Presidential Nomination Primary will occur on Tuesday, March 5, 2024. Only major parties will participate, and each major party will have a separate ballot. The party chairs have submitted candidates, and no other races will appear. A voter must request their party ballot choice, and their choice will be recorded and provided to the chairs of each major political party. For more information, visit [sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/how-elections-work/presidential-primary](https://sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/how-elections-work/presidential-primary).

There are options to vote early. Absentee voting began on January 19. You can request a ballot either by visiting the MN Secretary of State's office at [mnvotes.sos.mn.gov/abrequest/index](https://mnvotes.sos.mn.gov/abrequest/index) or by contacting Ramsey County Elections at 651-266-2171. You can return your ballot by mail or in person at the Ramsey County Elections office located at 90 Plato Blvd in St. Paul. Direct ballot voting starts February 16. This is where you vote in person and will place your ballot directly in the voting machine. During this period, you can vote at the Shoreview Ramsey County Library or the Roseville Ramsey County Library. Check [ramseycounty.us/residents/elections-voting/voters/vote-election-day](https://ramseycounty.us/residents/elections-voting/voters/vote-election-day) for information about these locations and hours of operation. Don't want to vote early? You can vote on election day, Tuesday, March 5, but you must vote at your polling place.

Visit [cityofardenhills.org/134/Elections-and-Voting](http://cityofardenhills.org/134/Elections-and-Voting) for this and other city-related election information.

### Spring/Summer Recreation Activity Guide

It's already time to start thinking about those warm, weathered days ahead! The 2024 Spring/Summer Recreation Activity Guide will be available in mid-February. There will be plenty of programs to choose from, like soccer, t-ball, playground programs, yoga, and more! Visit [cityofardenhills.org/203/Recreation-Programs](http://cityofardenhills.org/203/Recreation-Programs) to learn more.

### Arden Hills Planning Commission

The City's Planning Commission plays a crucial role in shaping the future of our community. Comprised of dedicated volunteers appointed by the City Council, the Planning Commission is an advisory body that reviews proposed developments, zoning changes, and long-term planning initiatives such as the City's Comprehensive Plan. Recent reviews include variances for residential additions, zoning code amendments, and commercial redevelopment proposals. Residents are encouraged to sign up for email notifications of upcoming agendas as the City embarks on an anticipated 18 to 24-month process to review and update the planning and land use regulations.

Commission members include Jonathan Wicklund, Arlene Mitchell, Joshua Collins, Shelley Blilie, Brad Bjorklund, Steven Jones, Steve Erler, and the new Chair of the Commission, Kurtis Weber. Kurtis transitioned into his role as Chair in January after three years of service to the Commission. When asked about his involvement in the Planning Commission, he said, "Joining the Planning Commission was my way of diving into the heart of our community and getting involved in the best way I know how to help my neighbors!"



There is one open vacancy on the Planning Commission. If you are interested in learning more, visit [cityofardenhills.org/127/Planning-Commission](http://cityofardenhills.org/127/Planning-Commission).

## City Adopts Budget and Approves Tax Levy

The annual Truth in Taxation hearing was held on December 11 at Arden Hills City Hall. City staff presented information regarding the 2024 budget and tax levy. The City Council adopted a 2024 property tax levy of \$5,310,950. This sets the City's property tax levy increase for 2024 at 12.55 percent, which is the same as the preliminary levy rate set in September 2023. The impact of a 12.55 percent levy increase translates to a \$99.86 increase in annual city taxes paid by resident owners of median-valued homes. Arden Hills continues to have one of the lowest tax rates in Ramsey County. In Arden Hills, the levy is split between the General Fund (\$4,650,950), the Equipment/Building Replacement Fund (\$270,000), the Economic Development Authority Fund (\$100,000), and Capital Funds (\$290,000). The Council adopted a 2024 City budget of \$19,826,890, which includes the General Fund, Capital Funds, and Utilities.

### What your Arden Hills Tax Dollar Buys You

A \$469,000 home (the average in Arden Hills) generates \$1,148 in annual City property taxes, or \$95.67 per month for 2024.

Type of Service	Balance
Public Safety	\$41.41
General Government	\$21.77
Parks and Recreation	\$11.71
Street Maintenance	\$12.04
Capital	\$7.33
EDA	\$1.41
<b>Total per Month</b>	<b>\$95.67</b>

### 2024 General Fund Budget

#### Revenues

- General Fund revenues in the 2024 budget are set at \$5,939,200.
- The property tax levy accounts for approximately 78 percent of the General Fund revenues and will be increased by 13.7 percent (\$559,810) over the previous year.

#### Expenditures

- General Fund expenditures for 2024 total \$6,121,270, with Public Safety accounting for almost half of overall General Fund

expenditures

- Public Safety costs are set to increase by 9.1 percent (\$131,960) for the Ramsey County Sheriff contract, 11.0 percent or \$82,750 for the Lake Johanna Fire Department, and 5.4 percent (\$20,350) for Protective Inspection costs.
- Personnel costs are increasing by 8.5 percent (\$158,060) due to cost of living adjustments, step increases and health insurance premium increases.

The property tax levy does not cover the City's overall budget and will use existing fund balance reserves to cover the budget deficit. The approved budget and tax levy information can be viewed in detail in the December 11 City Council agenda at [cityofardenhills.org](http://cityofardenhills.org).

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the 2024 budget information concerning the City of Arden Hills for interested citizens. This Budget Summary is published in the format prescribed by Minnesota Statutes Section 471.6965.

This report is not the complete City budget. Once the completed City budget is available, it can be viewed at Arden Hills City Hall, located at 1245 West Highway 96, or online at [cityofardenhills.org/176/Budget-Financial-Planning](http://cityofardenhills.org/176/Budget-Financial-Planning). The City Council approved this budget on December 11, 2023.

## City Financial Report Receives Certificate of Achievement



We're proud to announce that the City of Arden Hills' 2022 Financial Report has once again received GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting!

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and receiving it is a significant accomplishment by a government and its finance department. Special thanks go out to former Finance Director Gayle Bauman, Pang Silseth, Amy LaMere, and new Finance Director Joua Yang.

**Dec. 11, 2023 City Council Meeting**

*All votes 5-0 unless otherwise noted.*

- Approved the 2024 Non-Union Employee Compensation Plan
- Approved Resolution 2023-058 Approving the 2024 City Contribution to Employee Monthly Benefits
- Approved Northeast Youth and Family Services 2024 Agreement (\$23,303.54)
- Approved Ordinance 2023-016 Amending Chapter 2, Section 210, Subsection 210.03 – Council Meetings
- Approved Cancellation of the January 22, February 26 and March 25, 2024 City Council Regular Meetings and Worksessions
- Approved Ordinance 2023-017 An Interim Ordinance Prohibiting the Issuance of New Tobacco Licenses
- Approved Resolution 2023-059 Application for Met Council Environment Services (MCES) 2024 Private Property Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) Grant Program
- Approved Resolution 2023-060 Authorizing the City to Submit a 2024 Regional Solicitation Safe Routes to School Grant Application – Old Highway 10 Trail Project (\$4,072,616)
- Approved Resolution 2023-061 Authorizing the City to Submit a 2024 MnDOT Safe Routes to School Grant Application – Old Highway 10 Trail Project (\$4,072,616)
- Acknowledged Resignation of Committee Member/Chair Marie Hinton and Committee Member Kristine Poelzer from the Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee (PTRC)
- Approved Resolution 2023-064 Accepting Donation from Arden Hills Foundation for Annual Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt

(\$394.40)

- Approved the Adoption of the 2024 Budget and Tax Levy  
Resolution 2023-062 Setting the Final Tax Levy (12.55%) for Taxes Payable in 2024 (*passed 3-2, Grant and Holden opposed*)
- Resolution 2023-063 Adopting the Proposed 2024 Budget (*passed 3-2, Grant and Holden opposed*)

**Jan. 8 City Council Meeting**

*All votes 5-0 unless otherwise noted.*

- Approved Resolution 2024-001 Relating to the 2023 Organization of the City of Arden Hills
- Approved Resolution 2024-002 Appointing 2024 City Council Liaisons for Commissions and Committees and Mayor Pro-Tem (*passed 4-1, Holden opposed*)
- Approved Resolution 2024-003 Relating to the 2024 Appointments and Chairs of the Commissions and Committees of the City (*passed 4-1, Holden opposed*)
- Approved Compensation and Classification Study Proposal (\$12,650)
- Accepted Resignation of Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee Member Mark Kelliher
- Accepted Resignation of Planning Commissioner Paul Vijums (*passed 3-2, Grant and Holden opposed*)
- Approved Resolution 2024-004 Designating City-Owned Property as South Point Park
- Approved Invoice from Emergency Apparatus Maintenance, Inc. – Tanker Truck Repairs (\$10,657.88)
- Approved Invoice from Valley-Rich Co., Inc – Old Highway 10 Watermain Break Repair (\$34,897.71)

- Approved Professional Services Agreement with Bolton & Menk – Arden Manor Hardcourt Improvements Project (\$33,695)
- Approved Met Council 2024 Private Property Inflow/ Infiltration (I/I) Grant Agreement
- Planning Case 23-021 – Chapter 13, Section 1380 – TCAAP Redevelopment Code, Rezoning and Comprehensive Plan Amendments (*passed 3-2, Grant and Holden opposed*)

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

**City Snow Plowing**

Let this serve as your reminder that winter is still here. We think... If we get snow again this season, remember that plowing will occur whenever the City gets at least two inches of snow accumulation.

Plows will get as close to mailboxes as possible, but residents must clean in front of and around mailboxes and fire hydrants for access. Please ensure trash and recycle cans are placed behind the curb, as this allows operators to plow the entire roadway. Only park vehicles on the streets after they have been plowed. As a reminder, parking is not permitted on any city street between 2 and 6 a.m. year-round. Thank you for your continued support. The Public Works crew appreciates it!



**HIRING**

**PARKS & RECREATION**

Are you interested in a seasonal Parks & Recreation job? Contact the City's Recreation Supervisor, Matt Johnson, at 651-792-7848 or email [mjohnson@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:mjohnson@cityofardenhills.org) for more information!

**OPEN POSITIONS:**

- Playground Leaders (\$13.50/hr. & up)
- Youth Soccer Officials (\$18.85/hr. & up)
- Evening Sports Instructors (\$17.70/hr. & up)
- Tennis Instructors (\$15.75/hr. & up)

**Minimum Requirements:** Applicants must be 16 years or older.

**Desired Qualifications:** Completion of a minimum of one year of college or other high-level training preferred. Should have some related experience in youth work. First Aid/CPR certified.

**PUBLIC WORKS**

Contact Public Works at 651-792-7850 or email [publicworks@cityofardenhills.org](mailto:publicworks@cityofardenhills.org) for more information about seasonal Public Works openings!

**OPEN POSITION:**

Seasonal Maintenance Worker (\$18.50/hr. & up) depending on experience

**Minimum Requirements:** Applicants must be 18 years or older with a valid Class D driver's license and the ability to pass a drug test.



Visit [cityofardenhills.org](http://cityofardenhills.org) to complete a job application. The application deadline will be Friday, May 3, or until all positions are filled.

## Protecting City Stormwater Ponds

When the rain and snow come, City stormwater ponds and wetlands work especially hard to take care of the extra water. Stormwater not properly managed can contaminate streams, rivers, and lakes and destroy aquatic habitats, plants, fish, and animals. Below is information about these systems and what you can do to help protect them.

### Stormwater Ponds vs. Wetlands

Both stormwater ponds and wetlands capture and treat stormwater runoff. Stormwater ponds are manufactured and designed to collect and catch water runoff in developed areas. Wetlands are distinct ecosystems that are permanently or seasonally full of water.

Algae blooms or aquatic plants in ponds and lakes need nutrients to grow. Pollutants or nutrients that enter a pond through stormwater runoff can lead to large algae blooms, excess plant growth, or even hurt wildlife.

An overabundance of plant and algae growth may inhibit a stormwater pond's function and degrade the pond's water quality. More importantly, however, the degradation of a stormwater pond results in polluting the watershed or drainage area around a lake, stream, wetland, or pond. This negatively affects water quality, adversely affecting plant and animal life, and decreases the recreational potential for these bodies of water.



Photo of a wet detention (stormwater) pond

### Common pollutants that are washed into stormwater ponds and wetlands include:

- Fertilizers and pesticides from lawn care
- Animal waste and debris
- Lawn clippings or leaves
- Oil or grease from vehicles
- Road salt

### What You Can Do:

1. Seal your trash bags and keep litter out of the street.
2. Use pesticides and herbicides sparingly.
3. Pick up and properly dispose of pet waste.
4. Wash your vehicle on your lawn instead of the driveway so the water infiltrates the ground.
5. Keep your car maintained so it does not leak fluids onto the streets.
6. Maintain healthy sod and grass to limit erosion. Reseed or re-sod all bare areas to keep stormwater from washing soil particles that contain phosphorus into a storm sewer or pond.
7. Be aware of where your storm drain is and keep it free of debris.

### City's Responsibility:

The City does not treat stormwater ponds or wetlands for algae, weeds, odors, or other aesthetic problems, but they are responsible for the following tasks:

1. Maintenance of the "hydraulic and treatment function" of water resources located within City-owned property, drainage, or utility easements.
2. Removal of sediment accumulation, obstructions, and debris that impede the flow of water and clearing clogged stormwater pipes.
3. For drainage concerns or pollution and water quality concerns, contact City Hall staff at 651-792-7800.

## Electronics Recycling

Did you get any new electronics this holiday season? Is it time to recycle those old ones? Read on to find out where to recycle your electronics safely!

Ramsey County has partnered with Repowered to offer recycling of televisions, computers, and devices that connect to them, such as DVD players, keyboards, and printers, for FREE. This partnership is for Ramsey County residents only. Ramsey County residents can bring unwanted electronics to Repowered's Saint Paul location through this partnership.

Electronics from businesses and out-of-county residents are not part of this program but are still accepted at Repowered for a fee.

### Items accepted:

- Cameras, camcorders, and accessories, including chargers and memory cards.
- Cell phones and accessories, including chargers, adapters, and headphones.
- Computers and accessories, including monitors, laptops, tablets, keyboards, mice, speakers, printers and scanners.
- Televisions and accessories, including VCRs, DVRs, Blu-ray players, gaming consoles, and cable boxes.

Visit [ramseycounty.us/residents/recycling-waste/collection-sites/electronics-recycling](https://ramseycounty.us/residents/recycling-waste/collection-sites/electronics-recycling) for a list of items \*not\* accepted, frequently asked questions and more pertinent information. Learn more about Repowered at [getrepowered.org](https://getrepowered.org).

**Repowered hours and location:**  
860 Vandalia St.  
Saint Paul, MN 55114

Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Second and fourth Saturday: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.  
*Closed: Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day*



## EyeOnWater



Are you looking for a way to monitor your water consumption and avoid surprise charges for a leaky toilet? EyeOnWater is an online tool that will help residents monitor and conserve water.

EyeOnWater allows customers to easily view and understand their water usage throughout the billing cycle with consumption graphs. It also allows tracking usage and establishing alerts to detect high usage caused by a leaky toilet, sprinkler system, or something similar.

EyeOnWater can be accessed online or via a mobile app. Follow these simple steps:

- Visit [eyeonwater.com/signup](https://eyeonwater.com/signup).
- Enter your service or billing Postal Code and account number (all nine digits with no dash), which can be found on your utility bill.
- Enter your email and create a password.

Only one email address can be attached to an account. Priority will be given to property owners over tenants for access to the online tool.

If you need assisting using EyeOnWater, please visit [help.eyeonwater.com](https://help.eyeonwater.com).

## City Hall Closed on President's Day

In observance of President's Day, City Hall will be closed on Monday, February 19. Regular hours will resume the following day. Police and firefighters will remain on duty. For immediate emergencies, always call 9-1-1.



## Inside

*Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP)*

*Voting Details for Presidential Primary*

*2024 Budget and Tax Levy*

*Seasonal Hiring*

*Protecting Stormwater Ponds*

*Electronics Recycling*

## Postal Customer

## New Building Inspector and Code Enforcer Austin Rademacher

Welcome to the City, Austin Rademacher, Arden Hills' new building inspector and code enforcer who joined the staff last fall. Austin grew up in Maple Grove and has always enjoyed the outdoors. His love of the outdoors is why he enjoys spending time in the field on construction sites and meeting Arden Hills residents.

Austin attended North Hennepin Community College and earned an Associate in Engineering and a Certificate in Building Inspections Technology. He is also a licensed Minnesota Building Official with an ICC Certification as a Residential Building Inspector. He chose a career in building inspections because it is one where he can serve a community in a municipal setting while using the skills he learned throughout his training and education. Before working in Arden Hills, Austin was an inspector for the City of Wyoming and worked as a permit tech in Maple Grove.



Some of the things Austin likes about Arden Hills are the friendly residents and sense of community. He also noted "the many diverse projects around the town, some of which are using new exciting methods of building and materials." Overall, Austin is excited about future projects that will help grow Arden Hills.

## Ralph Reeder Holiday Donation



We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the incredible generosity shown by the residents of Arden Hills! Because of your kindness, City Hall received a whopping 490 pounds of food and household supplies for the Ralph Reeder Food Shelf.

Your donations will make a significant impact in supporting families and individuals in need within our community. Thank you for your kindness and for making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. If you'd still like to donate or make a repeat donation, City Hall accepts donations year-round!