

ARDEN HILLS

notes

The Official City Newsletter for Arden Hills Residents

December 2024

Franchise Fees Update

On October 28, a Public Hearing was held at City Hall, where staff shared a presentation on the process the City took to implement franchise fees in 2025. You can view the presentation online at cityofardenhills.org/Franchise-Agreements.

The City Council adopted two already existing franchise ordinances. One for gas and one for electricity. They were last adopted in 2009 and have a term of 20 years. These ordinances allow Xcel Energy permission to construct, operate, repair, and maintain its gas and electric distribution systems for the purpose of furnishing energy for public and private use within the City.

A new ordinance adopted by the Council is for implementing electric franchise fees. This franchise fee was

explicitly adopted to help fund the new Lake Johanna Fire Department station, expected to begin construction in the spring of 2025. It will be collected by Xcel Energy as part of your monthly energy statement and remitted to the City. The City will issue bonds in the spring of 2025 to cover Arden Hills' portion of the upfront costs associated with the new fire station.

The collection of franchise fees is expected to start in February of 2025 to allow a full year of revenue

Rates for New Xcel Energy Franchise Fee

CLASS	FEE PER PREMISE PER MONTH
Residential	\$3.00
Small C&I - Non-Demand	\$4.00
Small C&I - Demand	\$22.00
Large C&I	\$329.00
Public Street Lighting	\$0.00
Muni Pumping - Non-Demand	\$0.00
Muni Pumping - Demand	\$0.00

collection in order to pay back bondholders in February 2026.

If you have any questions, please contact Joua Yang, Finance Director, at jyang@cityofardenhills.org or 651-792-7800.

Rice Creek Commons Clean Energy Analysis

At their November 4 meeting, the JDA agenda included a review of the Rice Creek Commons Clean Energy Analysis Report prepared by the consultants Ever-Green and LHB. The report outlines options for clean energy to power the site, including an analysis of geothermal, solar, and community district energy systems. It also reviews strategies for reducing energy use in buildings and implementing other sustainability measures at the development.

The JDA discussed the feasibility of the development being all-electric based on the analysis in the report. In response to questions about potential flexibility, LHB provided examples of waivers granted at The Heights redevelopment in St. Paul, which has a similar all-electric policy, such as when an essential piece of equipment for a business did not have an electric equivalent.

After discussion, the JDA approved the adoption of a policy stating, "Rice Creek Commons seeks to be an all-electric, carbon-free development, and the JDA directs staff to identify steps to implement this policy and provide updates to the JDA." The next steps by staff and the Environmental Advisory Committee will be to finalize the draft sustainability design guidelines and determine the JDA approval process for waivers, which will likely include further discussion at the JDA and through community engagement.

For the most up-to-date information, please watch the City's website, JDA meetings, and the project page at ricecreekcommons.com. To view the Energy Analysis Report, visit cityofardenhills.org/agendacenter and download the November 4 JDA meeting minutes.



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

City Councilmembers

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

Emily Rousseau • 651-792-7856
erousseau@cityofardenhills.org

Tena Monson • 612-758-0695
tmonson@cityofardenhills.org

Thomas Fabel • 651-303-3611
tfabel@cityofardenhills.org

Interim City Administrator

Jessica Jagoe • 651-792-7810
jjagoe@cityofardenhills.org

Sr. Communications Coordinator

Luke Cardona • 651-792-7817
lcardona@cityofardenhills.org

City Council Liaison

Thomas Fabel

Resident Resources

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 for information about archived meeting playbacks.

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

City Council Benchmarks

Nov. 12, 2024 City Council Meeting

All votes 5-0 unless otherwise noted.

- Approved Resolution 2024-051 Certifying 2024 Municipal Election Canvass Results
- Acknowledged Application of Catholic United Financial for an Exempt Permit to Conduct a Raffle with the Drawing being March 27, 2025, with No Waiting Period
- Approved 2025-2029 Agreement for Law Enforcement Services with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office (\$1,758,287.45)
- Approved Resolution 2024-052 Accepting the Liability Coverage Limits from the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust (LMCIT)
- Approved Springbrook Holding Company LLC Invoice for 2025 Software Maintenance Fees (\$33,114.04)
- Authorized the City's Participation in the

Partners in Energy (PiE) Program with Xcel Energy

- Approved Quote from Precision Landscape & Tree, Inc., for Hazardous Tree Removal at Freeway Park (\$21,700)
- Approved Professional Services Agreement with TKDA for the 2025 CIPP Lining Project (\$70,000)
- Authorized Refund of Special Assessment Interest for 2024 PMP Street & Utility Improvements Project (\$1,668.87)

Nov. 25, 2024 City Council Meeting

All votes 4-0 unless otherwise noted (Monson excused absence)

- Approved Ramsey County Joint Powers Agreement for Recycling Funding
- Approved Resolution 2024-053 Authorizing the Application for Recycling SCORE Grant Funds from Ramsey County for 2025
- Acknowledged the

Application of Ducks Unlimited North Suburban Chapter 239 for an Exempt Permit to Conduct a Raffle with the Event being January 23, 2025, with No Waiting Period

- Approved Resolution 2024-054 Certifying the 2024 Municipal election Canvass Recount Results
- Approved Resolution 2024-055 Adopting and Confirming Quarterly Special Assessments for Delinquent Utilities
- Adopted Ordinance 2024-015 Amending Chapter 13 – Zoning Code Sections 1305, 1320 and 1325 – Cannabis Zoning Standards for Planning Case 24-019 (passed 3-1, Rousseau opposed) and Authorization to Publish a Summary Ordinance 2024-015 (passed 4-0)

For a complete listing of recent City Council actions, visit cityofardenhills.org and click on "View Agendas and Minutes."

Volunteer on a City Commission or Committee

The City is seeking residents to join its commissions and committees. You can play an important role in shaping the future of Arden Hills by providing guidance and recommendations to the City Council.

- **Economic Development Commission (EDC)** advises on economic growth, redevelopment, and community development matters.
- **Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee (PTRC)** evaluates the city's parks, trails, and recreation services, recommending ways to improve these amenities.
- **Planning Commission** reviews land use applications, considers zoning changes, and helps guide community development.

Visit cityofardenhills.org/125/Commissions-Committees to learn more about these opportunities and how to get involved!

City Council Election Results

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's City Council election. After a close race, a publicly funded ballot recount was conducted at the Ramsey County Elections Office at the request of candidate David Radziej. The recount, led by Ramsey County Elections Manager David Triplett, took place on November 19 and 20 and was open to the public.

The recount confirmed the final vote totals: Brenda Holden (2,561 votes), Kurt Weber (2,045 votes), David Radziej (2,041 votes), Richard Priore (1,794 votes).

Congratulations to Brenda Holden and Kurt Weber, who will each begin serving four-year terms on the City Council starting January 2025.



Brenda Holden



Kurt Weber

For more information and detailed election results, visit the Minnesota Secretary of State's website at sos.state.mn.us.

City Council Governance

In Arden Hills, the City Council works to ensure the City runs smoothly and meets the needs of its residents. Arden Hills operates as a statutory city, and the City Council plays an important role in making decisions, setting policies, and representing residents' interests. Learn more about the City's governance structure and how the Council works to serve the community effectively.

What is a Statutory City?

Minnesota law provides for two basic types of cities: statutory cities operating under the statutory city code and home rule charter cities operating under a local charter. Most Minnesota cities are incorporated as statutory cities. Although all statutory cities have the same basic powers, the code allows them to select one of several forms of organization, which include the Standard Plan, Optional Plan A, and Optional Plan B. Arden Hills, along with 649 other cities, operate under Optional Plan A.

Features of Plan A Governance

A Plan A Statutory City is a form of government that emphasizes professional management and provides the City Council with expanded administrative authority. Key features of Plan A include:

- **Council Structure:** Arden Hills has a five-member council, consisting of the mayor and four council members, all of whom are elected. The structure follows a weak mayor-council plan, the most common plan in Minnesota, where the mayor may not veto council legislation and serves as the presiding officer at council meetings. Each council member, including the mayor, has an equal vote and by majority can add or remove duties. Under this plan, the Council holds ultimate responsibility for both administrative and legislative authority.
- **Appointed Officials:** The Council is responsible for appointing all city personnel, including the Clerk and Treasurer (Finance Director) for indefinite terms. Arden Hills City Council also appoints a City Administrator.
- **Advisory and Boards:** The Council has the authority to appoint advisory boards and commissions, such as the City's Planning Commission, Economic Development Commission, Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee, and others.

To learn more about Statutory City code, plans, and more, please visit the League of Minnesota's dedicated webpage at cityofardenhills.org/Statutory-City.

Council Meetings and Public Participation

The Arden Hills City Council meets on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall. Residents are invited to attend meetings, which are also live-streamed and archived for viewing online. Agendas and minutes are also available online to help residents stay informed about Council decisions. Both can be found on the City's homepage at cityofardenhills.org. You can also visit cityofardenhills.org/723/City-Council for more information or to contact the Arden Hills City Council.

HOLIDAY LIGHT MAP



Tour the Holiday Lights and Cast Your Vote

The holiday season is here, and neighborhoods across Arden Hills and nearby cities are glowing with festive displays! From December 9 through January 1, take a driving tour using the Holiday Light Map to explore some of the beautifully decorated homes in Arden Hills, New Brighton, Mounds View, Roseville, and Columbia Heights.

Participate by visiting cityofardenhills.org/1034 and:

- **View the map:** The Holiday Light Map is available on the City’s website.
- **Vote for your favorites:** Once you’ve seen the displays, cast your vote for the best decorated!
- **Win prizes:** By voting, you’ll also be entered into a drawing for a chance to win exciting prizes!

Celebrate the season by enjoying the creativity and holiday cheer in our community. For more information, visit the webpage listed above.

Recycle Old Holiday String Lights

Do you have broken holiday lights or old strings of lights you no longer use? Recycle them responsibly by dropping them off at the collection bin in the City Hall lobby. The bin is available now from through January 31, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Lights will not be accepted when City Hall is closed for holidays.

When dropping off lights, please ensure only the lights themselves are placed in the bin—bags, containers, and other storage items cannot be accepted. For information on recycling additional hazardous materials, visit RamseyRecycles.com/hhw.

Arden Hills Welcomes Thousand Branches Wellness

The City welcomes Thousand Branches Wellness, a new addition to the community dedicated to improving mental health and wellness. This innovative outpatient center at 6 Pine Tree Drive, suite 290-295, provides services tailored to adolescents and adults, including group therapy, medication management, and individual therapy. The facility emphasizes a comfortable, confidential setting with modern amenities to support overall well-being.

On November 14, they celebrated their grand opening with a ribbon cutting. Mayor Grant and Councilmembers Holden and Rousseau joined in celebrating their mission of fostering resilience and promoting brighter futures for their clients.

To learn more about Thousand Branches Wellness and the services they provide, visit thousandbrancheswellness.com/locations/arden-hills.



Clarifying Water Service Line Inventory Letter

The City has received some calls from residents who are concerned after receiving a recent letter regarding water service line materials. This letter was sent by Arden Hills Public Works and created using language provided by the Minnesota Department of Health.

Please note that receiving this letter does not mean your service line is confirmed to contain lead.

The City is conducting an inventory to identify the material of service lines throughout Arden Hills. If you received this letter, it means the material of your service line is currently unknown, and we need your assistance to determine what it is.

To help, please visit cityofardenhills.org/1227/Water-Service-Line-Pipe-Inventory and complete the online survey. This process will allow us to collect accurate information and better serve our community.

For questions or assistance, contact Public Works at 651-792-7814 or email servicelineinventory@cityofardenhills.org.

Thank you for helping with this important effort!



Biz Recycling



Biz Recycling, a program offered by Ramsey and Washington Counties, continues to help businesses, nonprofits, schools, apartment buildings, and institutions improve waste reduction and recycling practices.

Since 2014, Biz Recycling has supported over 1,400 organizations, awarding more than 900 grants to improve recycling efforts and reduce costs. Their experts work with businesses and property managers to identify effective recycling and waste reduction opportunities, offering tailored, industry-specific solutions that are simple to implement.

The program also provides free resources, such as educational posters for recycling and organics, bin labels, and in-unit recycling bins for apartment residents, making it easier to engage employees, customers, and tenants in sustainable practices. To learn more about Biz Recycling, visit bizrecycling.com.

Smart Salting

While salting is effective in melting snow, excessive use can cause significant harm. Once the snow melts, the salt doesn't simply disappear. Instead, it makes its way into the soil and water resources through runoff, harming plants, animals, and aquatic ecosystems. Overuse of salt accelerates wear and tear on roads and sidewalks, increasing maintenance costs for the City.

Did you know that just one teaspoon of salt can permanently pollute five gallons of water? Salt helps make sidewalks and roadways safer, but runoff can accumulate in lakes, wetlands, and soil, raising contamination risks. To use salt responsibly, consider these simple guidelines for your driveway and walkways:

- **Shovel early and often.** Clear walkways before snow turns to ice to reduce the need for salt.
- **Pay attention to temperature.** Salt is ineffective on pavement below 15 degrees Fahrenheit. Use sand for traction in colder conditions.
- **Apply wisely.** Use salt only where it's necessary and spread it thinly and evenly.
- **Sweep and save.** Collect leftover salt, sand, and deicer for future use to minimize waste.





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2024 State Veterans Day Celebration Held in Arden Hills



On Monday, November 11, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs held the official statewide Veterans Day event at the National Guard’s Ben Franklin Readiness Center in Arden Hills. The ceremony paid tribute to the courageous service of Minnesota’s veterans. It was attended by numerous dignitaries, veterans, and community members, including Governor Tim Walz, Senator Amy Klobuchar, U.S. Representatives Betty McCollum and Ilhan Omar, State Representative Kelly Moller, Mayor Grant, and Councilmember Holden.

Mayor Grant opened the program by leading the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Governor Walz followed with a Veterans Day proclamation, recognizing Arden Hills’ continued support of Minnesota’s National Guard units. The governor highlighted the city’s role in approving military construction projects and its ongoing commitment to supporting military initiatives.

The event underscored the community’s appreciation for those who have served. You can view an on-demand live stream of the event by visiting the Department of Veteran Affairs website at mn.gov/mdva/news/events.

Residential Water Efficiency Rebates

This is a reminder that Arden Hills residents can take advantage of the Residential Water Efficiency Rebate Program, running through 2026.

The program provides up to \$200 in rebates for qualifying water-saving upgrades like high-efficiency toilets, washing machines, irrigation controllers, and sprinkler heads. If you haven’t applied yet, consider making these upgrades to save both water and money!

Visit cityofardenhills.org/WaterGrant for program details and application instructions.

