



A Study: City of Edina Boards and Commissions

April 2006

“We are proudest, though, of our community spirit – the willingness of residents to participate in government and volunteer to make the community special. Although Edina is a flourishing city in a physical sense, our hope is to remain a “village” in a social sense, where neighborliness and civic pride are hallmarks.”

City of Edina Website, 2006 1

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About this Study

The League of Women Voters of Edina (LWVE) adopted a one-year study on City of Edina Boards and Commissions in May 2005. Term limits for appointed members of boards and commissions were to be included in the scope of the study. The study committee looked at all boards and commissions in Edina that had members appointed by the City, the application and appointment process, board organization, and citizen access as well as term limits for members.

Volunteer boards and commissions provide opportunities for citizens to be active participants in the community. The many volunteers who serve on these boards give their time and expertise to advise and make recommendations to the City Council.

According to the City Council brochure, Welcome to a Meeting of the City Council, the present boards and commissions in Edina are:

Art Center Board
Community Health Committee
Construction Board of Appeals
Heritage Preservation Board
Human Rights and Relations Commission
Park Board
Planning Commission
Recycling and Solid Waste Commission
Transportation Commission
Zoning Board of Appeals and Adjustments

While the East Edina Housing Foundation (EEHF) is not a city board, its members are appointed by the mayor and council and so it is included in this study.

Sources used for this study include interviews with city staff and staff liaisons to the volunteer boards and commissions; surveys of board and commission members, liaisons, and the City Council; observation of board and commission meetings and examination of the city's website along with websites of other cities. The term "boards" is used interchangeably for both boards and commissions in the body of the study document.

This study was prepared for member consensus in April 2006. LWVE Study Committee members are: Amy Alvero, Kathy Iverson, Suzanne Kerwin, Idelle Longman, Andy Otness, and Diane Plunket Latham.

Related League Positions

One principle of the League of Women Voters is the belief that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens at all levels of government. The national League of Women Voters position on open meetings and open records states that "Governmental bodies (should) protect the citizens' right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible." (Principles, 1974) Related League history is in Appendix A.

Introduction

Citizen advisory boards and commissions serve an important purpose for the City of Edina. These groups work with the City Council by providing advice and assistance in setting policies, granting funding, granting variances, approving contracts, understanding issues, and many other one time and ongoing matters. Members are appointed to city boards and serve without compensation.

Boards and commissions are established to meet statutory requirements or community needs. The Planning Commission, Zoning Board and Construction Board of Appeals are mandated by Minnesota Statute 2. The Transportation Commission, established in July 2003, was recommended by the report of the Neighborhood Traffic Task Force.

Boards and commissions reflect issues relevant to the community and their purpose may evolve over time. For example, in 2005 the Human Relations Commission was renamed Human Rights and Relations Commission to better reflect the scope of its work. Boards and commissions can also be dissolved. The Environmental Quality Commission was formed in the 1970s and later folded into the Planning Commission to eliminate overlap in project review.

Some boards are more popular than others. Historically, the Park Board and Planning Commission are the most popular with the number of applicants exceeding the number of positions open. Twenty-five people applied for two open positions on the Planning Commission in 2006.

The City Council oversees all boards and commissions. The City Council holds joint meetings with the boards on a rotating basis. Each board has a joint meeting with the City Council approximately every 18 months.

Application and Appointment Process

Applications for advisory boards and commissions are available from the City Clerk and on the city website under Permits and Applications (Appendix H). Completed applications are returned to the City Clerk's office or submitted online.

Vacancies on the boards and commissions are publicized by the city clerk through a press release sent to the Edina Sun-Current newspaper (Appendix B), city website manager, and community cable television Channel 16, in late December/early January each year.

All applicants receive acknowledgment that their application was received and will be considered when the mayor makes appointments starting in January. If an application was received in December the applicant would receive a letter after appointments were made in January, informing the applicant whether or not they were appointed. Applicants not appointed to a board are encouraged to watch for future press releases regarding board openings. Sometimes their previous application can be retrieved and resubmitted; otherwise a new application must be submitted.

The mayor, with the approval of the City Council, makes all appointments to city boards. To determine board vacancies, board members eligible for reappointment are contacted by the mayor via mail in late November/early December and asked to complete a form indicating their interest in reappointment. After that data is compiled, the reappointments are placed on the Council agenda. Applicants are then sought for the remaining openings. Usually lists of appointees are presented to the Council for approval beginning in January with terms starting in February.

Youth members are seated on most boards and serve for one year terms. These mayoral appointments are made in the fall after the school year has started. The Youth Development Coordinator and Gifted Resource teacher publicize youth board positions to students at the high school. Currently they place an announcement about City Boards and Commissions on the school's Edline system and announce openings to their students and to student groups that relate to specific city boards. For example, a youth member opening on the Edina Recycling and Solid Waste Commission was announced at a meeting of the student group Project Earth.

The City Council may remove board members who do not attend meetings. . Edina City Code #180.02 outlines the process for removing members with repeated absences: "*Any member now or hereafter appointed by the Council to any board, commission or committee who fails to attend three consecutive meetings, whether regular or special, or who fails to attend any four meetings in any calendar year,*

whether regular or special, may be removed from office by the Mayor with the consent of a majority of the Council Members."

Staff Services

The city provides staff support services to volunteer boards and commissions. These services include administrative support, technical research and expertise and coordination with other city departments.

Each board is assigned a staff liaison. Liaisons do not have a vote on the board they serve. Depending on board needs, liaisons may use city support staff to fulfill their tasks, including:

- work with the board chair to develop a meeting agenda;
- inform the board of meeting times and provide advance materials and agenda;
- take or arrange for meeting minutes to be taken, typed and posted to a board's webpage after board approval;
- act as the link between the city staff and board members, conduct research on issues or verify facts with city staff, and bring city perspective to board members;
- serve as resident expert on the board, i.e. a person with the background, history and experience to provide input on issues/questions before the board;
- collect input from the public, governmental and other organizations that is pertinent to board activities.

Department administrative assistants often attend board meetings to take minutes. They may also type, copy, and distribute the minutes along with other meeting packet information to board members before the next meeting. Administrative assistants call members of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board to determine if member attendance will constitute a quorum at the meeting.

Board Process

The general outline of the board process can be summarized by three categories:

Input – Board members conduct research, make site visits, receive input from citizen phone calls, emails, or mail and sometimes solicit input from citizens through open forums or hearings.

Process –Recommendations are formulated following discussion of "Input". Recommendations for the City Council are voted on by the board according to their quorum/bylaws requirements.

Output – The board chair or his/her designate presents board recommendations to the City Council at Council meetings.

Most boards meet on a set schedule while others meet on an "on-call" basis. Board members are expected to read materials provided before their meetings and come prepared for discussion and/or decision making. Board members participate according to the bylaws adopted by their particular board.

Chairs are selected by most boards every year. The chair, together with the staff liaison, sets the board meeting agenda. The chair conducts board meetings and usually presents board recommendations to the Council. In the case of the Planning and Transportation Commissions, recommendations are not typically presented by the chair but by the staff liaison to these commissions. The City Council recommends that no board member serve as chair for more than three years (see Term Limits, p.9). At the time this study was printed, the Human Rights and Relations Commission chair limit is two years.

Board Organization

Comments on the organization of boards are listed below. A one-page summary can be found in Appendix I.

City Code: City boards and commissions are established by city code. The code contains detailed information on board organization.

Unique Requirements for Membership: Some boards and commissions have unique requirements for membership. For example, Section 801.05 of the city code states "*Heritage Preservation Board members shall have a demonstrated knowledge, ability, or expertise in heritage preservation...*" Geographic representation is recommended for the

Transportation Commission. The Edina City Code has details of all board member requirements.

Residency Requirement: The city code indicates that all board members shall be residents of Edina. Heritage and Planning Boards consider change in resident status an automatic resignation from the board. Other boards indicate that the Mayor may remove a member who is no longer a resident. The Art Center Board may have up to three members who are not residents.

Cross Representation from Other Boards: Several boards require members from other community boards or organizations. The Human Rights and Relations Commission (HRRC) is composed of half city and half school board recommended appointees. A Planning Commissioner must serve on the East Edina Housing Foundation, Heritage Preservation Board and Transportation Commission.

Youth Members/Students: Youth members are appointed for one year terms. Youth members may or may not have a vote on their respective boards. Student members of the Planning and Transportation Commissions do not have voting rights 3.

Orientation: Most new board members receive a packet that includes a copy of bylaws, meeting minutes, and other information to orient them to the board. New members of the Planning Commission meet with the staff liaison in addition to receiving the orientation packet. The Park Board liaison orients new members with a PowerPoint presentation.

Bylaws: All boards have adopted bylaws except the Construction Board of Appeals and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Boards update their bylaws as needed.

Meetings: Most boards meet monthly. Variations include the Zoning Board, which meets twice a month, the Community Health Committee, which meets quarterly, and the Construction Board of Appeals and EEHF, which meet on an “on-call” basis.

Voting Rights: All board members are entitled to vote on matters before the board with the exception of student members of the Planning and Transportation Commissions. City code 140.04 for the HRRC states that “*The Commission may appoint an ex officio youth member to the*

Commission to participate in all discussions,” but does not specify if the student member may vote. Staff liaisons do not have voting rights.

Task Forces: Task forces are appointed by the council for a specific purpose with a finite duration. They are sometimes overseen by a related board. Task force members may be chosen for expertise on a subject or through city staff recommendation. Sometimes a press release is issued asking for volunteer members for a task force. Task forces may or may not be charged with holding public hearings for citizen input. Current city task forces include the Affordable Housing Task Force, initiated by HRRC, and the Youth Sports Task Force, facilitated by the Park Board.

Committees: Permanent committees may be organized for specific purposes that relate to an established board. Members are appointed by the mayor. The Public Art Committee is a subcommittee of the Art Center Board.

Term Limits: Term refers to the length of time a person is appointed to serve on a board. Term limits restrict the number of terms an individual may serve on a particular board. Term limits are applicable for all boards. In general, term lengths are three years and people are limited to serving three consecutive terms. After three terms are served, a member must take one year off from the board before applying to the same board. An exception is the Community Health Committee which currently has a two-term limit. The EEHF does not have term limits.

City Website: Information about boards and commissions is found on the city website, www.ci.edina.mn.us or cityofedina.com. Select the “City Council” tab and click on “Advisory Boards and Commissions”. The city website contains over five thousand pages and parts of it are updated every day by the city’s webmaster. Individual email addresses for staff and council members are not on the website due to past problems with computer viruses and the city’s contractual agreement with the current internet provider. Correspondence can be sent to edinamail@ci.edina.mn.us. Email messages are then forwarded to the appropriate staff member or department by the city webmaster.

Work of the Boards and Commissions

A brief summary of the work each board does is listed below:

Edina Heritage Landmarks; and encouraging the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of significant heritage properties through public education” 4.

Art Center Board

The Edina Art Center Board develops and reviews plans for the Edina Art Center as well as making recommendations to the City Council concerning city art activities and programs.

The Public Art Committee is a sub-committee of the Art Center Board. This committee was formed in the spring of 2004 to enhance the beauty of Edina’s public spaces with two- and three-dimensional art such as sculpture, murals, fountains, decorative sidewalk pavers, railings, benches, plaza mosaics, fabric, and art glass panels.

Community Health Committee

The Community Health Committee was established by the Community Health Board (a board mandated by Minnesota Statute and composed of the members of the Council) to advise, consult with and make recommendations on matters related to the development, maintenance and funding of community health services. The committee regularly advises the Community Health Board on community health activities designed to protect and promote the health of the population by emphasizing the prevention of disease, injury, disability, and preventable death through the use of community resources and by extending health services into the community.

Construction Board of Appeals

The Construction Board of Appeals considers appeals of decisions made by the Chief Building Official, Public Health Sanitarian, or the Fire Prevention Bureau in the application of city ordinances regulating building construction.

Heritage Preservation Board

“The Heritage Preservation Board assists and advises the City Council, City Manager and other City boards and commissions on all matters relating to heritage resource preservation, protection and enhancement in the community. The Board safeguards the significant heritage properties of the City by identifying and nominating them for designation by the City Council as Edina Heritage Landmarks. In addition, the Board is responsible for developing and maintaining a comprehensive preservation plan; reviewing applications for City permits in relation to properties designated as

Human Rights and Relations Commission (HRRC)

The HRRC advises the City Council and School Board on matters relating to discrimination and human relations. The HRRC works to secure for all residents freedom from discrimination because of race, color, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin in connection with employment, housing, public services, and education. The HRRC makes recommendations for funding of human services during the yearly budget process and will implement programs of education and community action designed to strengthen human rights and relations. The HRRC oversees the Affordable Housing Task Force.

Park Board

The Park Board advises the City Council on parks and recreation facilities and activities. The Park Board discusses and makes recommendations on activity and recreation fees for the coming year and priorities for Edina’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The board advises the Council on grants such as the “Mighty Ducks” grants which provided state money to help build ice arenas throughout Minnesota (HF1620) and MNDOT’s Roadside Landscape Partnership Program. The board oversees the Youth Sports Task Force and is working on a Needs Assessment Survey of both the city parks and the recreation programs.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission reviews and provides recommendations on development proposals and land use requests, both private and public, with regard to city zoning ordinances, the Comprehensive Plan and Vision 20/20 (two long-range plans developed by the City of Edina) and amendments to same. It reviews the reports of the Heritage Preservation Board regarding preservation of lands and buildings of significance; and it makes recommendations concerning low and moderate-cost housing to the City Council. The Planning Commission also is responsible for recommendations to the Council regarding the City’s environmental quality and major commercial, industrial, and residential redevelopment in the City.

Recycling and Solid Waste Commission

The Recycling and Solid Waste Commission was established in recognition of the need to conserve natural resources and discourage waste to improve the overall welfare of the residents of Edina. The board's duties are to assist and advise the City Council on the establishment and operation of recycling and solid waste programs and policies along with related studies, reports, and recommendations.

Transportation Commission

The Transportation Commission (ETC) advises the Council on matters relating to the operation of the local street system with respect to traffic volumes, congestion, and functional classification. The ETC reviews and comments on plans to enhance mass transit opportunities in the city, evaluates methods for traffic calming and other speed and volume mitigation measures, and recommends their implementation, where appropriate, to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Vision 20/20. The ETC is currently participating in a study of northeast Edina traffic along with the cities of St. Louis Park and Minneapolis.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals hears and acts upon requests for variances to zoning regulations. The board is made up of all the current members of the Planning Commission plus six additional appointees. Four separate boards rotate attendance at meetings.

East Edina Housing Foundation

The East Edina Housing Foundation (EEHF) is a non-profit corporation that provides assistance to low/moderate income individuals as well as non-profit developers and sponsors of low/moderate income housing.

The Foundation offers affordable housing funding opportunities to income/asset eligible homebuyers that meet low/moderate income guidelines.

Programs offered by EEHF include:

- Second Mortgage Program – 2nd mortgages have been issued since 1985, accruing 5% simple interest. The term for these mortgages is the same as the first mortgage and must be paid back upon sale

or if the dwelling is no longer the primary residence.

These mortgages are only subordinated to a new second if no cash is taken out.

- Community Homebuyer Program – This program provides down payment assistance through an interest free, deferred repayment loan in conjunction with FNMA Community Homebuyer program.
- Home Partners Program – This program provides deferred repayment loans bearing 3% simple interest for basic home improvements in conjunction with a home purchase through the FNMA Community Homebuyer program.

City Council Member Survey

In March 2006, Edina City Council members were asked, via email, the following questions regarding city boards and commissions:

- Have you been a member of a city board or commission before being elected to Council? If yes, which board or commission were you a member of?
- How do you benefit from the work of the boards/commissions in performing your role as Council Member?
- Are there changes you would recommend for boards and commissions?

The majority of council members served on a city board before being elected to the City Council. Council Members Housh and Hulbert served on the Park Board, and Council Member Swenson served on the Planning Commission. Each values their personal service on city boards. Council Member Swenson responded that her experience on the Planning Commission was invaluable for her service on the Council.

The advisory role of city boards and commissions is highly valued by the Council. Mayor Hovland recently enlisted the assistance of the Chair for reviewing candidates for a Commission and found the process very beneficial. Member Hulbert answered that she valued board opinions as being more representative of the desires of residents. Council Member Housh responded that he appreciated reviewing minutes of board meetings to

get a sense of the feelings of the boards and those residents who attend the board meetings about a topic. Council Member Masica answered that “*as each board is able to focus on one area or piece of an issue, each board has the ability to explore a significant level of detail that the Council would not be able to investigate in processing the global issue. The summation of that detail, as forwarded to Council, is extremely helpful in determining policy decisions.*”

Changes that individual council members would like to see regarding city boards and commissions are:

- Expand the purpose of the Art Center Board to include music and theater.
- Improve communication to residents about board and commission openings.
- Televising meetings of the Park Board and Transportation Commissions.
- Board member term limits of six-years vs. the current nine-year term limit. (Two Council Members gave this response.)
- Eliminate members serving on multiple boards except where cross representation is mandated by code.
- Allow the Council to vote on a slate of board candidates vs. board member appointment by the mayor.
- Create more boards so that other community needs have a forum for discussion.

Board Member Survey

Board members were surveyed on a number of areas related to their service on boards. Summarized answers are in Appendix C. Highlights from the surveys are discussed in this section.

Surveys were distributed via board meeting packets and through the mail. A LWVE study committee member attended a meeting for each board (for those that met in January 2006) to explain the purpose of the study and to request that all surveys be completed. 90 surveys were distributed and 48 replies were received.

A common theme of respondents is the desire to give back to the community through active participation in an area that interests the individual. 15% (9) of respondents were asked to serve prior to volunteering. On average, respondents spend 7 or more hours on board business each month and have 5.1 years of experience serving their board. Experience varies from 1 month to more than 25 years service. 11% (5) of respondents were on a wait list prior to being appointed to their current board. 23% (12) of respondents have served on other city boards. Most respondents highly value the citizen input they received. The format and quantity of input varies by board. Some receive a lot of citizen input at their meetings and via email or phone calls to City Hall; others receive very little input.

Comments from respondents are included in Appendix C. Common themes are “It has been a great experience to serve,” and “I regret having to leave when my term is up.”

Board members devote time and effort to support the work of their boards. Many members spend time at other meetings and seminars, researching issues, preparing and hosting public forums, creating publications for citizens, and reviewing reports and literature. They work with the City Council members to provide solid, balanced advice on their topic(s) of expertise.

Overall, citizen volunteers are committed to the work of their boards and give greatly of their time, effort and attention. They spend many hours working to understand issues, solve problems and provide solid advice to the city council. A very strong theme of service to a community they care about is woven through board members’ survey responses.

Staff liaisons also were surveyed on a number of areas relating to their service to the volunteer boards. Many of the liaisons also answered follow-up questions from study committee members. The role of the staff liaison is outlined in the Staff Services section of this report. Summarized responses are in Appendix D.

Diversity

It is interesting to compare the diversity of the community against that of boards to determine if the

boards are representative of the city. Edina census information is available on the city website 5.

In October 2005, Dr. Ghafar Lakanwal, Executive Director for the Minnesota Multicultural Diversity Center (MMDC), presented a program, sponsored by the Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission: A Conversation About Cultural Diversity in Edina. According to Dr. Lakanwal Edina's population is:

- 46% male, 54% female;
- 19% age 16 or younger;
- 32% between the ages of 17 and 44;
- 49% age 45 and over;
- 94% Caucasian and 6% people of color.

While the board member survey didn't examine specifics the following is known: As of February 24, 2006, the city appointed volunteer boards have a gender split of 39% female and 61% male compared to the city population of 54% female and 46% male. The 8 youth members of the city boards represent 9% of the total board population.

Term Limits

The policies regarding term limits are spelled out in detail in the meeting minutes from the April 5, 2005 Edina City Council meeting. The following, adopted by the City Council on that date, is the current policy regarding membership on city appointed volunteer boards:

1. *Term limits would be nine years with one intervening year before a person was eligible for reappointment;*
2. *An individual who now exceeds the term limit may finish their current term but are not eligible for reappointment;*
3. *One membership per person except for mandated cross representation;*
4. *Council may waive the term if no new qualified individual has applied; and*
5. *Recommendation to each Board/Commission/Committee that no one individual serve more than three consecutive years as chair.*

Term limits of neighboring communities are listed in detail in Appendix E.

Public Access and Data Privacy

All board meetings are open to the public. Meeting dates, times and places are usually posted on the city website calendar, and may also be found on the board's webpage in the Edina Sun-Current newspaper or by calling City Hall.

A majority of survey respondents indicated that citizen input was important to their board. Open meetings, phone calls or emails to the city, and phone calls or emails to board members were cited by respondents as existing opportunities for citizens to give input to the boards. At the present time, City Hall will not give out the phone numbers or email addresses of board members due to data privacy concerns.

Minnesota Statue, chapter 13.43 (Appendix F) deals with personnel data and defines what is public data. This statute applies to individuals that perform services on a voluntary basis. The City of Edina application form for volunteer boards and commissions states:

"Under the law, your telephone number is private data. If you are selected to serve, your telephone number(s) will be listed on your Board, Commission or Committee roster so other members of your Board, Commission or Committee, City officials and the public could contact you. There is no consequence for refusing to supply this information."

Neighboring communities vary in their descriptions of public vs. private data regarding volunteer board members. They also vary in the inclusion of board and commission contact information on their websites. Examples of what neighboring cities cite regarding data privacy laws on board and commission applications, and relative website content, are contained in Appendix G.

A sampling of the City of Edina's individual board and commission webpages in March 2006 found:

- All boards except the Construction Board of Appeals and Zoning Board of Appeals have individual webpages. The EEHF does not have a webpage.

- The Park Board, Planning Commission, and Transportation Commission list board member names on the board webpage.
- Five boards list the staff liaison and/or a city phone number for contact purposes. Art Center Board, Park Board, and Recycling and Solid Waste Commission do not list either a liaison name or phone number for contact.
- Five boards list meeting information on their webpage; HRRC, Park Board and Recycling and Solid Waste do not.
- All boards with a webpage have a link to board meeting agendas and/or minutes.
- Seven boards describe the work of the board on the webpage. The Community Health Committee webpage does not include a description of its work.
- The HRRC and Park Board have information on their webpages about the work of the task force they oversee. The Art Center Board webpage does not mention the Public Art Committee but the Public Art Committee has its own city webpage.

Conclusions

1. Citizen advisory boards and commissions serve an important purpose for the City of Edina. These groups work with the City Council by providing advice and assistance in setting policies, granting funding, granting variances, approving contracts, understanding issues, and many other one time and ongoing matters.
2. Volunteer boards and commissions are an opportunity for citizens to be active participants in their community. Board members are committed to the work of their boards. They devote a great deal of time, energy and attention to board activities. The overall theme amongst respondents to the LWVE survey is that boards and commissions serve as a means of giving back and supporting a community about which they care deeply.
3. Staff services are critical to successful board operations.

4. Members are appointed to city boards by the mayor with approval of the Council. Diversity could be considered when selecting board and commission members for appointment. Youth Members/Students increase the diversity of city boards and commissions.

5. Term limits open board membership to new people.

6. Information concerning boards and commissions and their work should be accurate, timely and accessible to residents. While the quality of information on the city website is good, individual boards vary in the information available on their webpage.

Acknowledgements:

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 James Hovland, Mayor of Edina
 Alice Hulbert, Edina City Council
 Gordon Hughes, Edina City Manager
 Doug Johnson, Edina Public Schools Community Education Services & Facilities Director
 John Keprios, City of Edina Parks and Recreation Director
 Steve Kirchman, Chief Building Official, City of Edina
 Craig Larson, Edina City Planner
 Steve Lillehaug, City of Edina Traffic Engineer
 Deb Mangan, Edina City Clerk
 Linda Masica, Edina City Council
 Joyce Repya, City of Edina Associate Planner
 Lonni Skrentner, Gifted Resource Teacher, Edina High School
 Ann Swenson, Edina City Council
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Readers

Thank you to our proofreaders:

Joni Bennett, Amy Frankfurt, Paulette Hastings, and Paulette Hutton.

NOTES and BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Quote from City of Edina website;
http://www.cityofedina.com/Pages/L3-04_ResInfo.htm
2. Mandated boards for cities; Minnesota Statutes 462.351 through 462.364;
<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/data/revisor/statutes/2005/>
3. Ordinance 2005-7, Edina City Council Meeting Minutes, July 19, 2005 re: student members and voting privileges.
4. City of Edina Heritage Preservation Board Webpage, http://www.ci.edina.mn.us/Pages/L4-88a_HeritagePreservationBoard.htm.
5. Census information:
http://cityofedina.com/Pages/L3-01_Census.htm.

Appendix A: Related League Positions

League of Women Voters Minnesota (LWVMN)

history: The 1974 Minnesota Open Meeting Law required all meetings of governmental bodies to be open to the public (except those of the Board of Pardons; the Corrections Board; and the Legislature, which sets its own rules) and that these bodies maintain records on their actions that are accessible to the public. The 1983 Legislature passed an LWVMN-supported bill that requires pertinent materials on subjects discussed at an open meeting be made available to the public. Ever since the 1974 Minnesota Legislature enacted the Data Privacy Act, LWVMN has monitored the action of the Legislature in the area of open records, balancing our desire for openness with the individual's right to privacy. In 1979, the Legislature passed a LWVMN-supported bill which defined the terms "public," "private," and "confidential," and stated that all government data will be open to the public unless specifically classified as confidential or private by state statute. LWVMN continues to monitor all bills dealing with the Data Privacy Act. The League has resisted attempts to facilitate the

classification of materials since it impedes the public's right to know.

Appendix B: Press Release on Board and Commission Openings

Edina Sun-Current, December 2005

"Edina Mayor Jim Hovland is now accepting applications for appointment to the City Council's advisory boards and commissions.

The city's advisory boards and commissions include the Community Health Committee, Construction Board of Appeals, Edina Art Center Board, Heritage Preservation Board, Human Rights & Relations Commission, Park Board, Planning Commission, Recycling & Solid Waste Commission, Transportation Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals and Adjustments.

The majority of the Edina City Council must approve all of the mayor's appointments.

To receive an application or for more information, visit the city's Website at www.cityofedina.com, or call City Clerk Debra Mangen at 952-826-0408.

Applications must be received at Edina City Hall by 4:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20."

Appendix C: Board and Commission Survey Summary

Respondents' answers are summarized below: (Some respondents provided multiple answers for a question and not all respondents answered all questions. Therefore, total number of responses may not add up to the total of surveys returned.)

1. Why did you volunteer for this Board/Commission?

Interest in the topic – 27 (46%)

Learn about and serve community – 23 (39%)

Asked to serve – 9 (15%)

2. What experience, special skills or interests do you contribute to this Board?

Interest in the topic – 16 (29%)

Work in the area – 14 (25%)

Skills listed – 26 (e.g., analytical skills, people skills) (46%)

3. How much time do you spend every month on Board/Commission business?

Used 47 responses, total of 331 hours per month, average = 7.1 hours

Used weighted average for responses when monthly variations were delineated.
Used the middle number of a range when provided (e.g., 5 – 7 hours, used 6 hours).

4. Do you have a specific role or responsibility on this Board/Commission?

Chair - 8
Vice Chair - 5
Student - 6
Taskforce Member - 2
None - 23
Other - 4

5. How long have you served on this Board/Commission?

Used 47 responses, total of 240.5 years served, average = 5.1 years
Used a convention of 6 months for those who wrote less than one year.

When does your term expire?

Overall, seems to be good understanding of term end. A few members are uncertain when their terms end.

Were you on a waiting list before being asked to join this Board/Commission?

No - 38 (79%)
Yes - 5 (11%)
Unsure - 5 (10%)

6. Have you served on any other Edina City Board/Commission? If so, which Board/Commission and when did you serve?

No - 36 (77%)
Yes - 12 (23%)
Boards- HRRC (3), Traffic Safety, Park Board (3), Health (3), not listed (5)

7. What opportunities exist for citizen input to your Board/Commission?

None – 3
Many Opportunities - 18
Open Meetings - 23
Call/Email City - 7
Call/Email Board - 2
TV-1
No Response - 3

What is the value of citizen input to this Board/Commission?

Input is important - 40
Input is not valuable - 4
Left blank - 4

8. Any additional comments or question?

“Any appointee should have the ability to listen”
“Where will all this go? What is it for? Will you use this info? Where? How?”
“Regret having to leave”
“It has been a great experience. Found applying for board was an easy and open process.”
“Information was easy to gather from Edina City Website. Simple process with good follows up from the city.”
“A two year term limit does not give you enough time to learn the rules and procedures and with experience be effective.”
“I think the city board experience has been very positive and fun for me.”
“Not at this time other than I was happy to be appointed and to serve.”
“I would just like to say Thank You for the LWVE presence in our Edina community.”
“I think this is a great project- I just noticed a community ed. class in the St. Louis Park program designed to inform citizens about various boards and how to get involved, & thought that was a great idea too.”
“I am a strong believer in term limits for boards and commissions”
“Members of this commission should be aware of the history / background of the issues and ‘problem areas’ they are being asked to address, but are not and have chosen to disregard public comment they have received on this.”
“The advisory boards are only going to work as well as the council allows them the opportunity to do their job. I believe the council needs to remember that they are a policy board for the City. Their job is not to run the city or do the jobs of the advisory boards. In the last several years I believe the council has not been doing their best at times to remember their role. This has caused too much debate on certain issues because of the councils desire to handle day to day activities in the City. This has hurt the effectiveness of the advisory boards and the City Employees. If the council is not happy with the City Workers or the advisory board members then changes should be made. Otherwise, there needs to be a more cooperative working relationship between advisory boards, council and the city staff.”
“It seems this is getting better and I hope we are on the right track. However, there are certain issues that have become to big and conflicting because people who work or volunteer at certain levels of our city government have forgotten their roles. I hope for the betterment of our community we have learned from these times and it will make our

community stronger and more willing to work in the right direction for the future.”

“I constantly have to avoid personal bias when addressing issues....otherwise; peers tend to view me as an ‘outsider’.”

“I would like staff role more clearly defined”

“It has been a great experience to be on a board and represent the youth of Edina”

“I enjoy HRRC very much.”

“We need more ethnic/racial diversity on the commission.”

“Perhaps form a cooperative effort between LWVE and SWRC on buckthorn removal?”

“Good idea, thanks for your work!”

“I am not in favor of term limits for Planning Commissioners. Good city planning comes from “evolution” and continuity, not a revolution every 3 years. We now have 3 new members and a majority of the commission with less than 3 yrs. experience.”

Appendix D: Liaison Survey

1. What are your roles and responsibilities as liaison?

Responsibilities may be performed by the liaison him/herself or by other city support staff

Record, type and distribute minutes and other handouts – i.e., act as secretary to the board

Bring forward related issues and policies

Provide research and background materials to the board

Bring forward city staff recommendations on related topics

May present board recommendations to the City Council

2. How is the Chairperson for your Board selected? What are the roles and responsibilities of the Chairperson?

Nominated and voted on by other commissioners. Voting may be open or be via ballot.

Chair works with liaison to set monthly meeting agenda. The chair runs regular and special meetings. Typically, the Chair presents board recommendations to the City Council as needed. The Chair may also represent the board at public meetings or private functions as well as sign pertinent documents on behalf of the board.

3. How are Board members and citizens informed of regular and special meeting schedules? How are changes in meeting times or cancellations publicized? Have you received

any complaints from anyone concerning lack of notice for meeting time changes or cancellations?

All meetings are publicized on the City’s website. Most regular meetings operate on a set schedule so additional publicity is not typically required. Special meetings may be publicized on the City website, in the Sun-Current, in About Town and in fliers posted around town. The liaison may send meeting reminders to board members via mail, email or telephone.

It is rare for meetings to be rescheduled or cancelled. When it does happen, signs are posted on the meeting room door, board members are called, and the website is sometimes updated to reflect the change. Public complaints are rare. Several boards have not cancelled or rescheduled any meetings during the current liaison’s tenure.

4. What opportunities exist for citizen input to this Board?

All meetings are open to the public. The chair allows the public who are present an opportunity to be heard. Letters, email and phone calls to the liaison from the public are shared with board members. Boards may invite residents or speakers to speak about a topic of interest/expertise.

5. When are your Board minutes posted on the city website?

Most boards minutes are placed on the website once they have been approved by the board. The Zoning board does not post its minutes.

6. What expenditures does this Board make recommendations for? Where do the funds come from? What are they used for?

Expenditures range from zero to a lengthy list of specific items. Some examples are studies in support of board work (e.g., traffic study), hiring a consultant (e.g., heritage preservation consultant) and setting facility funding levels. Funds come from a variety of sources ranging from the city’s general fund to a portion of a department’s budget to end user fees to referenda.

7. Is there anything that this survey did not ask that you think is important to consider when looking at citizen participation in volunteer Boards and Commissions?

One liaison commented on the unique and infrequent meetings of the board he supports. It met only four times between March 1999 & December 2005 due to few items to act upon. One liaison offered appreciative statements for those who volunteer their time and service to the city. Another commented favorably on the addition of student members to boards.

Appendix E: Term Limits of Neighboring Cities

Neighboring cities have varying policy on term limits, but in most cases, the term limits are codified.

Bloomington has codified three year terms, with a two term limit.

Bloomington City Code, Section 2.71
Code 1958, S. 88.03 Ord.No. 72-10, 1-24-72,
Ord.No. 73-10, 1-22-73, Ord. No. 87-35, 5-18-87,
Ord. No. 92-26, 4-27-92, Ord. No. 2001-5, 1-16-
2001

Eden Prairie has codified three year terms with a two term limit.

Eden Prairie City Code, Section 2.22
Ord. No. 4-2002, 2-14-02

Hopkins has a term limit only for the Park Board. The term is three years, with a two term limit.

Hopkins City Code Section 335
Amended Ord. No. 87-582 Sec 1, Amended Ord.
No. 2002-886

Minnetonka has a term length of two years for each board, but there is no term limitation specifically stated in code.

City Code (Park Board) 125.005 (Senior Citizen Commission) 130.00 (Heritage) 135.00 and (Planning) 300.04

Appendix F: Minnesota Chapter 13, Data Privacy Act

13.43 Personnel data.

Subdivision 1. Definition. As used in this section, "personnel data" means data on individuals collected because the individual is or was an employee of or an applicant for employment by, performs services on a voluntary basis for, or acts as an independent contractor with a government entity. Personnel data includes data submitted by an employee to a government entity

as part of an organized self-evaluation effort by the government entity to request suggestions from all employees on ways to cut costs, make government more efficient, or improve the operation of government. An employee who is identified in a suggestion shall have access to all data in the suggestion except the identity of the employee making the suggestion.

Subd. 2. Public data. (a) Except for employees described in subdivision 5 and subject to the limitations described in subdivision 5a, the following personnel data on current and former employees, volunteers, and independent contractors of a government entity is public:

(1) name; employee identification number, which must not be the employee's Social Security number; actual gross salary; salary range; contract fees; actual gross pension; the value and nature of employer paid fringe benefits; and the basis for and the amount of any added remuneration, including expense reimbursement, in addition to salary;

(2) job title and bargaining unit; job description; education and training background; and previous work experience;

(3) date of first and last employment;

(4) the existence and status of any complaints or charges against the employee, regardless of whether the complaint or charge resulted in a disciplinary action;

(5) the final disposition of any disciplinary action together with the specific reasons for the action and data documenting the basis of the action, excluding data that would identify confidential sources who are employees of the public body;

(6) the terms of any agreement settling any dispute arising out of an employment relationship, including a buyout agreement as defined in section 123B.143, subdivision 2, paragraph (a); except that the agreement must include specific reasons for the agreement if it involves the payment of more than \$10,000 of public money;

(7) work location; a work telephone number; badge number; and honors and awards received; and

(8) payroll time sheets or other comparable data that are only used to account for employee's work time for payroll purposes, except to the extent that

release of time sheet data would reveal the employee's reasons for the use of sick or other medical leave or other not public data.

APPENDIX G: Neighboring Cities Data Privacy and Website Information

Applications of neighboring communities for volunteer city boards and commissions were examined to learn what applicant information were considered to be public data. The contact information for two boards (Planning and Parks) available on the respective city's website was also examined.

Bloomington- Application states that name, current volunteer position and previous work history is considered public data under MN Data Practices Act and available to anyone who requests the information (www.ci.bloomington.mn.us/forms/21_003.pdf).

The webpages for each of the Planning and Park Commissions exclude member names and how to contact commission members. These webpages do list a staff contact, phone, fax and email.

Eden Prairie- Application states that name, address, current employment position, previous work history, education and training are public data under the MN Data Act, MS 13.43, (www.edenprairie.org/vCurrent/upload/contents/228/Commission)

Names and a photograph of the Park and Planning Commission members are on the corresponding commission webpage. Staff liaison names, title, phone and email are listed on the webpage.

Hopkins- Application states that name, address and phone number are public data under MN law (www.hopkinsmn.com/pdf/forms/boards-commission-committee-application.pdf).

Webpage did not list names or contact information for either Park Board or Planning Commission members. Staff liaison name and phone number were listed on each webpage.

Minnetonka- Application states name and home address are public information under MN law; if appointed to a board or commission the following information is also made public: education and training background, previous work experience and

a work telephone number along with any reimbursed expense (<http://eminnetonka.com/vertical/Sites/uploads/.PDF>).

The Park Board webpage has a photograph and names of the board members. A 2006 member roster is a link on the webpage of both the Park Board and Planning Commission. The roster lists home address and at least one phone number for each board member. Some members also list work or cell phone numbers and email.

St. Louis Park- Application cites MN Statute 13.43: Applicant's name and address are public data available to anyone who requests the information. "Should you be chosen to serve on a board or commission, you will be asked how you prefer to be contacted by members of the public who wish to do business with you regarding your duties as a member" (www.stlouispark.org/pdf/CommApp.pdf) Boards and commissions do not have individual webpages. One general number is listed for contact information.

Appendix H:

CITY OF EDINA APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO ADVISORYBOARDS/COMMISSIONS

• 4801 W. 50th Street • Edina, MN 55424

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____
_____ ZIP CODE

* HOME PHONE _____
WORK PHONE _____

e-mail ADDRESS _____

RESIDENT (number of years) _____
EMPLOYMENT (firm and occupation/profession) _____

CIVIC, PROFESSIONAL, COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES _____

PREVIOUS PUBLIC EXPERIENCE (Elective or Appointive) _____

EDUCATION _____

ON THE REVERSE, briefly list aspects of your experience which you believe qualify you for this advisory board/ commission and why you are interested in serving:

APPOINTMENT PREFERENCE:

- _____ ART CENTER BOARD
- _____ PARK BOARD
- _____ EDINA COMMUNITY HEALTH
- _____ PLANNING COMMISSION
- _____ COMMITTEE
- _____ RECYCLING & SOLID WASTE
- _____ CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF APPEALS
- _____ COMMISSION
- _____ HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD
- _____ TRANSPORTATION
- _____ HUMAN RIGHTS/RELATIONS
- _____ COMMISSION
- _____ ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

(Return completed form to City Clerk's office)

** Under the law, your telephone number is private data. If you are selected to serve, your telephone number(s) will be listed on your Board, Commission or Committee roster so other members of your Board, Commission or Committee, City officials and the public could contact you. There is no consequence forrefusing to supply this information.*

Appendix I: Board Organization Chart

as of February 22, 2006

Commission/ Board Organization	Art Center	Community Health	Construction Appeals	Heritage	Human Rights & Relations	Park	Planning	Recycling	Transportation	Zoning	EEHF
Code	Sec. 1221	Sec. 700	Sec. 400	Sec. 801	Sec. 140	Sec. 1220	Sec. 805	Sec. 145	Sec. 1225	Sec. 850	No
Members	11 ¹	7	5	9 ¹	12	11 ¹	9	6 ¹	9 ¹	5 plus pool ²	5
Special Requirements for Membership? ³	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Resident?	Up to 3 non- residents allowed	Yes	Yes	Must	Yes	Yes	Must	Yes	Yes	Yes	Must
Cross Representation?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Students ⁴	Yes / voting	Yes / voting	No	Yes / voting	Yes	Yes / voting	Yes	Yes / voting	Yes	No	No
Orientation of New Members?	---	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Meetings	Monthly	Quarterly	On-Call	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Twice per Month	On-Call
By-laws	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Chair	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Task Force	No	No	No	No	Affordable Housing	Youth Sports	No	No	No	No	No
Committees	Public Art	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	SAC East Edina Traffic	No	No
Term Limit	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	No
Webpage	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

1 - Members number includes student representative.

2 - Up to 3 more people are selected from a pool of qualified builders for each meeting.

3 - See the City Code for details.

4 - Students vote except on HRRC, Planning, and Transportation.