The discarded materials are sorted based on quality and condition. The top quality materials are sold to local thrift outlets; mid-grade items are exported to international markets; and “unusable” items are processed for raw materials.

One questioner asked if it is not better to donate directly to local charities and thrift stores. That is an excellent option, but according to Simple Recycling, 85 percent of clothing does not get donated or recycled but ends up in landfills.

Learn more at: simplerecycling.com
And may all your holidays be green

The holidays are here and it is time to work against the accumulation of waste and belongings that happen every year. Waste tends to increase during the holiday season. For example, about 8,000 tons of wrapping paper are used every year and the 2.65 billion holiday cards sold each year in the U.S. could fill a football field 10 stories high.

You can reduce waste for the holidays in every aspect, including the meals you prepare, the gifts you give, and the decorations you hang. Some ideas include using eco-friendly decorations, a real Christmas tree, or giving experiences like a museum membership or cooking lessons.

You also can give gifts that will help others reduce waste in their everyday lives. Give the gifts that keep on reusing like:

- Canvas shopping bags
- Canning kits to help prevent food waste
- Coffee canteens
- Reusable produce bags

Real Christmas trees can be recycled at the Ramsey County yard waste collection site located at 3530 Hudson Avenue. Visit RamseyRecycles.com for the Arden Hills collection site hours of operation.

"The 2.65 billion holiday cards sold each year in the U.S. could fill a football field 10 stories high."

About those holiday lights...

Do you have strings of holiday lights that no longer work? Perhaps you’re switching to energy efficient LED lights. Don’t forget to recycle those old strings. For several years, the Recycling Association of Minnesota (RAM) operated a light recycling program statewide. Because so many other recycling options now exist, RAM has discontinued its own program but is continuing to work with Clean Energy Research Teams (CERT) and other partners to provide and relay collection location information. An updated map will be available on its website soon. (recycleminnesota.org)

Arden Hills residents can drop off lights year-round at the Ramsey County Household Hazardous Waste Facility – 5 Empire Drive, St. Paul. The phone number is 651-633-3279.

Your mailbox is intended for the mail—the kind with postage on it!

The City has received complaints about flyers without paid postage being placed in mailboxes. By federal law, only postage-paid mail delivered by the U.S. Postal Service is allowed in mailboxes. In addition, all merchants and businesses that wish to distribute mail that informs about products or services must be registered with the City as solicitors/peddlers.

For more information, visit the City website at www.cityofardenhills.org and search the keyword solicitor.
Building a strong Foundation

The Arden Hills Foundation is celebrating its five-year anniversary since its October inception in 2012. Nearly $60,000 has been donated by individuals, businesses, and other community foundations to fund multiple projects that impact the quality of life of Arden Hills’ residents.

“For years, City leaders talked about raising money for projects,” said Arlene Mitchell, one of the Foundation’s founders and currently treasurer. “There was considerable support from current and past local leadership, including Representative Betty McCollum’s office, who helped get our application for non-profit, 501 (C) 3 status approved by the IRS.”

The Foundation is separate from the City and accepts tax-deductible donations for projects that help the community and its residents. “The Foundation exists to connect people with the evolving needs of the community,” said Mitchell.

Donors have been very generous. To date, the Foundation has received 143 donations totaling $59,000 and has awarded $17,000 to benefit parks and trails and the City’s Parks and Recreation program; $11,000 to improve the water quality of Karth Lake; and $1,300 to support health and learning programs for children.

“We are always looking for ideas about ways we can fill the gaps and help the community,” Mitchell said. In addition to Mitchell, the Arden Hills Foundation is led by community volunteers Kim Tamble, Nick Roberts, and Mayor David Grant. While over 90 percent of donations come from individuals, local businesses also donate generously. These have included Presbyterian Homes, Land O’Lakes, Boston Scientific, Catholic United Financial, St. Katherine Ukrainian Church, University of Northwestern, Roberts Management Group, Kim’s Tailors, Morgan Stanley, and Potbelly Sandwich Works.

The Foundation also relies on volunteers like Gary Gerding to help raise donations. “Gary lives on Karth Lake and has taken the lead on gathering donations for six different projects to improve the Lake’s water quality, including stocking it with algae-eating fish,” said Mitchell.

Residents may be familiar with the Park Bench Program, which is designed to increase enjoyment of the City’s parks. Individuals can donate $650 for a bench and name the bench in honor of someone. The City will purchase, install, and place the bench. Parks and Recreation class scholarships also are available for people through Foundation scholarships, said Mitchell.

The Foundation is able to accept general donations, as well as designated donations for specific projects. Contribution sources can include wills, trusts, life insurance policies, securities, property, and grants.

Contact the Foundation at 651-792-7800 or visit the Arden Hills Foundation on Facebook. Donations can be sent to City Hall, where the Foundation has a mailbox, or to 3673 Lexington Ave. N., H-2, #315, Arden Hills, MN 55126, a new mailbox for the Foundation. A Foundation website is under construction.

Benchmarks-- a review of City Council Action

October 23, 2017

Absent: Holmes (excused)
Consent Items Approved (all by 4-0 vote):
• Approval awarding a Utility Rate Study to Ehlers, Inc. for not-to-exceed $40,000
• Approved 3rd Quarter City Budget Actuals report.
• Designated City polling locations for the 2017 election. No changes from previous locations.
• Approved Resolution 2017-041 authorizing an application to receive Recycling Grant funds of ~$24,000 from Ramsey County.
• Approved Planning Case #17-023 for Master and Final PUD with Caliber Lodging to construct a 137 unit Marriott Springhill Suites hotel on Northwoods Dr.
• Approved purchase of a skid steer trailer for Public Works for $8,124
• Approved purchase of replacement tires for Public Works’ Case Loader for $9,152.

• Approved final payment of $39,462 for Lift Station #11 rehabilitation.
• Approved $15,782 for final design services for County Road F watermain project.
• Approved $22,790 to Dukes Root Control to clean out tree roots from City sewer lines.

New Business Items:
• Approved acceptance of a grant and purchase of Johanna Marsh playground equipment for $112,000. (4-0)
From the Mayor

Some of you may remember the old maintenance facility on the south side of Highway 96, just east of Keithson Drive. It was an old cinderblock building not large enough to house all of the City maintenance equipment. It was eventually torn down in 2010. In 2006, the City along with Ramsey County, Mounds View Public Schools, and Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department built a new joint maintenance facility located northwest of the intersection of Highway 96 and Hamline.

The joint maintenance facility is large, and the Arden Hills maintenance area is no longer able to be easily identified by itself, even more difficult given the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department is now adjacent to the east of the facility. I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the facilities we have and some of the operations that are performed.

We have nine double-wide garage doors (see photos), one additional garage door with a hoist, five additional parking stalls in the joint parking area, and additional covered outdoor parking. We operate a fleet of 12 trucks, in addition to a wide variety of specialized equipment, such as a street sweeper, a vac truck, a skid steer, a water tanker, two tool cats, several generators, trailers, mowers, a front end loader, pot hole patching equipment, and heavy duty trailers just to name a few.

Public Works performs general maintenance of the City equipment. The Department also plans for equipment upgrades as equipment ages. It determines the best mix of equipment for the City to have, given its needs and the ever-changing equipment types available on the market.

The Public Works Department consists of eight full-time employees, one superintendent and the Public Works Director/ City Engineer. In the summer the Department adds eight seasonal employees, usually college students, to assist with the busy summer season. Every day the supervisor assigns job duties based on current priorities and in some cases the weather conditions.

As with a lot of occupations, each employee needs to keep various certifications current. It is more than just a commercial driver’s license; it includes state licenses such as sewer from MPCA, water from Department of Health, forestry certification, and safety training, to name a few. In addition, the Department keeps up-to-date on the latest innovations and changes to state mandated reporting requirements.

As the seasons change, so does the use of the equipment. The effort to change from summer equipment to winter equipment, or vice versa, is a large one. Summer equipment has to be winterized and stored; snow plows need to be mounted for use.

It takes a large facility and dedicated employees to maintain a City. Soon the snow will be here, and our employees will be working, often irregular hours, to keep our streets cleared. While you may not be able to easily identify our shop, rest assured Arden Hills has the facilities and trained staff to get the job done.

Happy Holidays,

David Grant, Mayor