

BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



JANUARY 2021

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WALK IN BLOOMINGTON'S NATURAL BEAUTY THIS WINTER

A scenic walk and some fresh air are surefire cures for cabin fever. From Nine Mile Creek, *above*, to Normandale Lake, there are plenty of parks and trails to enjoy during the winter. In addition to 36 miles of off-road trails, Bloomington is home to the 14,000-acre Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, 3815 American Boulevard East. Put on some cross-country skis or check out some snowshoes and explore new territory close to home. Read more about local recreational trails on *page 8* or look through the Bloomington trail map online at blm.mn/hikemap.

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES 2021 BUDGET

Last month, the City Council adopted a property tax levy of \$66,468,834, an increase of 2.75%. This is the lowest property tax increase the Bloomington City Council has approved in nearly a decade.

The tax levy increase of 2.75% for 2021 is meant to limit the financial impact to taxpayers during very difficult economic times. For 2021, the median valued home in Bloomington will see an overall property tax reduction of about \$50 when considering the City, County, School District and other taxing jurisdictions.

The approach of a tax levy stabilization strategy allows the Council to control the levy and limit reductions in service to the community. Before the City Council voted on the budget, the Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) provided three tiers of reductions to consider. The Council chose the first tier, which mostly included service changes that would be largely unnoticeable to residents; a notable exception being elimination of the Motor Vehicle Office. The second and third tiers included increasingly impactful and difficult reductions. Bloomington's Motor Vehicle Office will close on March 31, 2021.

The budget framework presented to the City Council before budget adoption had these core values:

- Honor the work of the CBAC and the perspective of residents impacted by these decisions.
- Limit the impact of property tax increases to the greatest extent possible during a year that will financially challenge many taxpayers in the community.
- Minimize the impact of City service reductions to the greatest extent possible, recognizing that many people in the community rely on these services as necessary for quality of life, health and safety.
- Consider the implications and impacts on future budget years.

With those values in mind, the budget approved by the City Council is best summarized with these points:

- Property tax levy increase of 2.75% for 2021.
- Majority of reductions to City services included in CBAC's first tier option are incorporated into the budget, with some additions and subtractions suggested by City staff.
- Creation of a tax levy stabilization line in the strategic priorities fund as a balancing strategy to buffer tax levy increases.
- A conceptual 2022 property tax levy increase of 0%.

CBAC made it clear to the City Council that they focused on preserving the core functions of government, with special emphasis on not making reductions that would impact public safety. The recommendation to include the first tier changes honors the work of CBAC and reflects the voice of the community in this process.

For more information, contact Chief Financial Officer Lori Economy-Scholler at 952-563-8791 or leconomy@BloomingtonMN.gov. Read more about CBAC's work on *page 3*.



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In the 2020 community survey, City staff received an 86% approval rating for the services they provide, an all-time high.

MAYOR’S MEMO

TAKING STOCK OF OUR ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

By Mayor Tim Busse

Here in Bloomington, we’ve conducted an annual National Community Survey™ for 12 years now. The survey gives the City Council and staff valuable insights into how you relate to your local government; how you relate to the community; and how you relate to the environment around you. We use that data to inform our decision-making. Our 2020 survey gave us some interesting data to chew on. For example: it was pretty clear that the pandemic and the protests around racial justice had an impact on our community. Economic stability and people’s views on their financial prospects have clearly been affected by the economic fallout of COVID-19.

Meanwhile, people’s concern for addressing social, economic and racial equity differences in education, criminal justice and health are all top priorities. Community safety also continues to be a top priority, with people expressing that they feel very safe in their own neighborhoods, but are concerned that the overall sense of safety in the community is declining.

City staff received an 86% approval rating for their customer service—an all-time high that achieved one of our strategic goals around quality service delivery by exceeding an 85% approval rating. Another result that illustrates just how much residents value the services provided by City staff

is that 70% of respondents felt the value of taxes paid for services received is a good deal. That number is higher than the national benchmark of communities around the country. In fact, it is in the top 10% nationally.

One of the most important reasons we conduct the resident survey is to understand how people feel about the overall quality of life in Bloomington. In the 12 years we have been doing the survey, the response to this question has been remarkably consistent. The highest response was 92% in 2017 and the lowest was 85% in 2016.

In 2020, 88% of residents who took the survey said the overall quality of life in Bloomington was excellent or good. That is a slight uptick of two points from 2019. Survey respondents feel great about living in Bloomington—92% rated the city as an excellent or good place to live. That feeling about living in Bloomington is also consistently strong, ranging between 90 – 95% every year.

This was unquestionably the most unusual year in which we have conducted the National Community Survey™ in Bloomington. Despite the challenges presented by a global pandemic, social unrest, and economic downturn, the survey results were upbeat in many areas. It shows how positively you and other residents feel about our City services and the direction that we’re heading.

RANKED CHOICE VOTING PASSED: NOW WHAT?

In November, fifty-one percent of voters approved ranked choice voting for future City Council and mayoral elections. Ranked choice voting will be used for municipal elections starting in November 2021. This changes how you vote in mayoral and city councilmember elections. This will not change how you’ll vote in federal, state, county or school board elections.

After adopting ranked choice voting for municipal elections, the City will no longer hold a primary election in August of odd-numbered years, as all eligible candidates who file for office would appear on the general election ballot. The City’s existing election equipment, including ballot counters, are compatible with ranked choice voting and will not have to be replaced.

WHAT IS RANKED CHOICE VOTING?

Sometimes referred to as “instant runoff voting” or “preferential voting,” ranked choice voting is a process that allows voters to rank their choices for each office.

First-choice votes are counted. If no candidate has a majority of the votes (more than 50%), the candidate with the least number of first-choice votes is eliminated. Voters who picked the eliminated candidate as their first choice have their second choice vote counted instead. This process repeats until one candidate has a majority.

WHERE IS IT CURRENTLY USED?

In Minnesota, Minneapolis, Saint Paul and St. Louis Park currently use ranked choice voting for municipal elections. It is also used in various other jurisdictions around the country. Voters in Minnetonka also opted for ranked choice voting in the 2020 election.

LEARN MORE

Expect to see more information about ranked choice voting as the 2021 election approaches on City social media pages, the City website and in the *Briefing*. Read more about ranked choice voting at blm.mn/rcv.

BRIEFING

Volume 29, Number 01

The *Briefing*, published monthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer file to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3071; PH 952-563-8819; MN Relay 711; FAX 952-563-8715; Email: jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov
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Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

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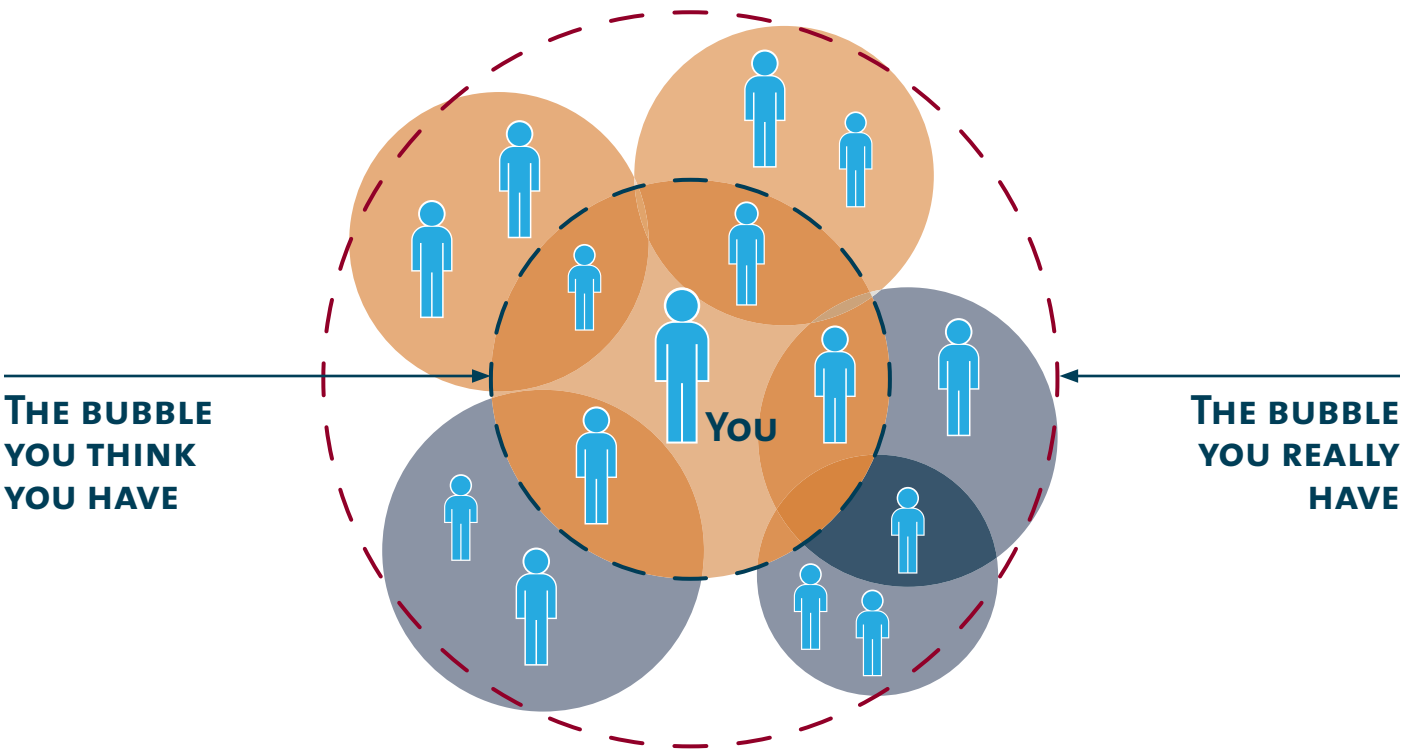
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The City of Bloomington complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. For more information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; 952-563-8733.

Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.





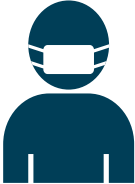

COVID-19: How BIG IS YOUR SOCIAL BUBBLE?

With COVID-19 cases on the rise in Minnesota, now is a good time to be mindful of your social circle. You may think you are keeping your social circle small. But how small is it really? *See graphic above.* Slow the spread of COVID-19 by following the most recent safety guidelines and keeping social circles small. When considering who to include in your social bubble, think about people who have similar practices as you do around avoiding exposure. This is especially important for people who are considered high risk. If you choose to visit with others outside your household, outdoor activities are best. Wear a mask and maintain a physical distance of six feet or greater.

For more information about COVID-19 in Bloomington, visit blm.mn/covid. To see the most recent Bloomington COVID-19 statistics, including case numbers, visit blm.mn/cdash.

How WERE CARES FUNDS USED IN BLOOMINGTON?

The Coronavirus Relief Fund, the CARES Act, provided payments to state, local and tribal governments as they navigated the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. Bloomington received \$6.75 million in CARES funds. The City used the funds to soften the impact of COVID-19 on the community in a variety of ways, including providing assistance to small businesses, payroll for public safety and other staff performing COVID-19-related duties, community testing for COVID-19, personal protective equipment and more.

\$6.75 MILLION CARES ACT CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND ALLOTTED AND USED:			
152 SMALL BUSINESS LOANS \$843 K	PUBLIC SAFETY STAFF AND MEASURES UNDERTAKEN IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 \$3.93 M	PUBLIC HEALTH AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT \$555 K	NON PUBLIC SAFETY STAFF RESPONDING TO COVID-19 \$1.43 M
			



VOLUNTEER GROUP AIMS TO CREATE LOCAL TRIBUTE TO VETERANS

Local veterans and volunteers established a nonprofit in 2018 with one project in mind—building a permanent veterans tribute in the city they call home. The nonprofit, Bloomington Remembers Veterans, has since worked closely with the City planning for a future memorial on the grounds of Civic Plaza. The group chose a design by Leo A. Daly to be constructed on the east lawn of Civic Plaza. The design was approved by City Council in November.

Bloomington Remembers Veterans is dedicated to the mission of honoring and recognizing all veterans, educating the public as to why wars were fought, and showing why we should continue to honor these heroes for the freedoms we enjoy.

Community support will be critical in making this project come to fruition. Learn more about donating or volunteering with the project at bloomingtonveteransmemorial.org.



CBAC WRAPS UP ITS WORK

In a year of unprecedented events, many cities experienced budget challenges. Bloomington was no exception. COVID-19 had a large impact on the hospitality industry, which greatly impacted the City's tax revenues.

With difficult budget decisions on the horizon, the City Council formed the first Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) last May to ensure community voices were at the forefront of all 2021 budget decisions.

The committee's main task was to conduct research and provide the City Council three options of assorted property tax levy amounts and service reductions. The City Council adopted one of these scenarios in December with a few minor adjustments. *Read more about the 2021 tax levy on the cover.*

CBAC and the City coordinated more public engagement around the budget than ever before with four engagement events and a digital platform where residents could provide feedback. That is one practice the City plans to continue moving forward.

"It is important to engage residents and businesses in budget and tax levy discussions so their community preferences are reflected in decisions about their local government services," Budget Manager Kari Carlson said.

For more information, visit blm.mn/cbac.

CITY COUNCIL CHANGES MEETING START TIME

In December, the City Council approved its 2021 meeting schedule with one notable change from years past. Each meeting will begin at 6 p.m. This will allow for more reasonable times in the evening for resident participation in public comments and public hearings. Starting meetings earlier should also help prevent taking up items too late in the evening for public participation or constructive Council discussion.

Find the Council's full 2021 meeting schedule online at blm.mn/councilcalendar.



How to Recycle Your Tree

You can have your Christmas tree taken as yard waste. Collections will occur during the weeks of January 4 – 8 and 11 – 15. A fee of \$10.66 per tree will appear on your following month’s utility bill.

Remove all decorations, wires and stands to prepare your tree for pickup. Set the tree out before 7 a.m. on your collection day but no earlier than the day before pickup. Keep ice and snow off the tree. No plastic, compostable or other bags should be included.

If you would like collection outside these two weeks, call Utility Billing at 952-563-8726 and schedule a bulky item pickup for a fee. For information, visit blm.mn/garbage.

Energy Assistance Programs Available

Do you need help paying your energy bills? You may qualify for the Energy Assistance Program (EAP). Both renters and homeowners may be eligible. The EAP helps income-qualified households pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs.

For more information about the Energy Assistance Program, visit blm.mn/energyhelp or call Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County at 952-933-9639.

If you’re already enrolled in the EAP, you’re likely eligible for the Weatherization Assistance Program, which could pay for home energy-related upgrades. “Weatherization not only helps lower energy bills and prevents structural damage, but it offers health benefits, as well,” Sustainability Coordinator Emma Struss said.

Weatherization can enhance efficiency and reduce energy use. Other benefits are better air quality and more effective control of rodents. Heightened weatherization can improve the health of those living in the home by preventing asthma and other respiratory conditions.

For more information about the Weatherization Assistance Program, call Sustainable Resource Center at 612-870-4255 or visit blm.mn/weatherize.



Earth Action Hero: Sustainability Commissioner Deanna White



The first thing Deanna White and her partner did when they moved into their Bloomington home was reinsulate the attic. A rebate from Xcel Energy helped cover some of the expense. The long-term energy conservation was important for White.

Five years later, White tries to make sustainability a part of what she does in Bloomington and beyond. Besides serving as a Sustainability Commissioner, she works as State Director for Clean Water Action.

“I really started learning about environmentalism when I started working for the Sierra Club many years ago. Since then, it’s been a big part of my life,” White said.

Humility comes through as she speaks of her passion for promoting sustainability. White stresses that while no one is perfect, all of us can do something to help. Even small contributions add up when others do them too. Maybe it is to drive less, water your lawn less or adjust your thermostat to save energy.

“Do that one thing that is manageable, then do another,” White said. “I know that one person can make a difference. It’s not easy. When we all work together, we can make a bigger difference.”

Environmental sustainability is a strategic priority for the City of Bloomington. For more information, visit blm.mn/sustain or call 952-563-4862.

Snowplowing Service Rankings Increase

In this year’s resident survey, more than 80% of respondents rated the City’s snow removal services as excellent or good. People take notice of how roads are plowed.

Bloomington resident Molly Stark informed the City about the quality of the snow removal service in her neighborhood. “It was the winter we got so much snow, 2019,” Stark said. “It was amazing how they would clear things out. I just wanted to reach out and let them know because I know they work overnights and really long hours.”

Behind-the-scenes work ensures success. In all, 90 City staff contribute to keeping Bloomington roads plowed and safe.

“It’s really a team effort, the endless dedication of all the Public Works employees,” Assistant Maintenance Superintendent Kenneth Frosig said.

The beginning of each season kicks off with an all-staff meeting. Ongoing planning meetings give operators a chance to weigh in about how things are done. Operators are trained and certified on salt use and practice driving maneuvers on a course before hitting the road. Regular equipment checks ensure the fleet is always ready to roll.

When the time comes, weather forecasts and other factors determine how to handle each snow event. A decision on whether to use an anti-ice solution occurs two days before snowfall. An anti-icing brine mixture can prepare streets for inclement weather and reduce salt use. Reducing chlorides is a sustainable practice in keeping with the City Council’s strategic priority for environmental sustainability.

For more information, visit blm.mn/snow or call 952-563-8760.

Sustainability Progress Made in 2020

Last year, the Sustainability Commission and City staff made notable accomplishments through programs, initiatives and events focusing on the City Council’s strategic priority of promoting environmental sustainability. These activities not only support best practices within City operations, but also encourage efforts that residents and businesses can take to create a more sustainable Bloomington.

Achievements within the City included:

1. The move up to Step 4 status in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program. To earn the designation, the City began tracking specific metrics to help measure improvements to the City’s sustainable operations now and in the future.
2. Sustainable upgrades to City buildings and equipment that included additional LED lighting, improvements to building heating systems, and more efficient operation of the city’s water pumps.
3. The collection of organics in some City buildings to reduce the amount of material treated as garbage.

Successes within the community and businesses were gained through:

4. An Organics 101 virtual webinar to share information with residents about the organics recycling drop-off program.

5. A zero-waste workshop to promote more sustainable, everyday practices.
6. A celebration of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day which featured speakers and an opportunity for residents to make a commitment to sustainability.
7. A Commercial Irrigation Conservation Program to promote water conservation in partnership with local businesses.
8. A renewed commitment to participation in the Xcel Energy Partners in Energy offering to promote energy efficiency activities within the Bloomington community.
9. The development of an environmental justice working group to better understand the intersections between racial equity and sustainability.
10. The work of two Minnesota GreenCorps members on projects as diverse as chloride reduction and alternative transportation. The program is coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to preserve and protect the environment while training the next generation of environmental professionals.

For more information on these and other sustainability initiatives, visit blm.mn/sustainability or call 952-563-4862.

At Your Service: Marie Sharah

You can expect a warm welcome from the City’s main information desk at Civic Plaza. If you’ve visited the building or called the City’s main number, chances are you’ve experienced the excellent customer service Marie Sharah provides. For 10 years, Sharah has worked as an information assistant. Even on the frontlines during COVID-19, she has a friendly hello for everyone.

Her radiant personality comes through every interaction of her work. From her pleasant and outgoing nature, it’s obvious Sharah enjoys working with people.

On a personal level, she likes animals too. At her desk, she keeps her daily calendar of cats. It’s a tribute to her feline friend Snickers.

Sharah has a bachelor’s degree from St. Catherine University and is a Bloomington resident. But her story started in Orofino, Idaho, where she was born in a loggers’ hospital on a mountain top. The hospital was so small, she and her mother were the only females. Her parents worked as teachers in the Native American community.

As a child of the Rockies, Sharah was destined for adventure. Travel is a lifelong hobby and has taken her everywhere from Europe to Asia. Highlights include a climb on the Great Wall of China and a visit to the Taj Mahal.

“The more cultures you come in contact with, the better understanding you have of human nature,” Sharah said.



Bloomington Police Team Up With Meals on Wheels

The Bloomington Police Department started a new partnership with Meals on Wheels in the fall of 2020. The idea for the new partnership came up when Crime Prevention Coordinator Katie Zerull was sharing scam protection information with block captains. One block captain was the Bloomington Meals on Wheels program director. This sparked an idea. Zerull offered to have the BPD officers and staff personally deliver meals, provide safety tips and answer any questions meal recipients may have. Now, BPD officers and staff look forward to delivering meals and meeting residents in their homes the first and third Fridays of the month.

“This is a great way for us to give back and build relationships in the community. Meals are being offered. Connections are being made. And the community is reminded that BPD is here for them,” Zerull said. “With so many event cancellations as a result of COVID, it’s great to have a new way to connect with people and provide safety and crime prevention information.”

Meal recipients have provided BPD good feedback. One said: “I hope you get to deliver my route every time. This is just great!”



Sgt. Erik Norling volunteers to deliver food for Meals on Wheels.

Police Deliver Thanksgiving Meals

Thanks to partnerships with the Minnesota Vikings and UnitedHealth Group, the Bloomington Police Department received a donation of 50 Thanksgiving meals. Officers distributed these meals to local families in the days leading up to Thanksgiving. BPD officers visited local apartment complexes, military families and Creekside Community Center members. They dropped off turkey, pumpkin pie, mashed potatoes, green beans, stuffing, crescent rolls and kind words.

“It was great to see some happy faces and spread some cheer during this tough time,” Sergeant Erik Norling said. “Thank you to our partners who made this happen.”



Tools of the Trade: Mini-Pumper

The Bloomington Fire Department uses a truck known as a mini-pumper to put out fires in places full-sized fire trucks can’t fit. Parking ramps are one of the most common places the mini-pumper is used since their low clearance doesn’t allow access for a full-sized fire truck. The mini-pumper is housed at Station 3. It usually responds to vehicle fires in large parking structures in the South Loop area, but can be used to respond to any incident citywide. The truck holds four firefighters with a full complement of equipment.

By the Numbers

- 1,250 feet of hose
- 250 gallons of water held
- 10 gallons of foam held



COVID-19 Testing Site in Bloomington

A new COVID-19 testing site opened in Bloomington November 23. There is no charge to visit the site at Ridgeview Elementary School, 9400 Nesbitt Avenue South. The Minnesota Department of Health runs the site. It will remain open through at least mid-January. Registration is required. To schedule an appointment, visit blm.mn/tests.

“The more we can test, the better we can get a handle on this virus’ presence in our community, and hopefully slow the spread,” Chief of Police Jeff Potts said. “I appreciate the state directing resources to help the people of Bloomington and surrounding communities by giving them one more opportunity for fast and convenient testing.”

In addition to the new free testing site in Bloomington, the COVID-19 Test at Home program is available to all Minnesotans. For more information about testing at home, visit blm.mn/homeC19test.

The mail-order program and Bloomington testing site, along with other sites across the state, offer “barrier free” testing. Anyone can be tested, whether they have symptoms or not. No insurance is required.

Importance of Exercise

A little exercise makes a big difference in your health. It can be hard to get started and keep going, but once you do, workouts offer many benefits. From better balance to diabetes prevention to improved mental health, physical activity enhances quality of life. You’ll also benefit from sounder sleep and a stronger immune system, an important defense during this pandemic.

“With COVID-19, with all the feelings of stress and anxiety, exercise is a positive way to deal with it,” Public Health Specialist Joan Bulfer said.

One reason people put off exercise is that it can take time to make a noticeable difference. But there is one immediate reward. Endorphins released during a workout can improve your mood.

“The evidence is overwhelming that exercise is good for us, our hearts and minds,” Bulfer said. “Even a short burst of exercise can distract you from your thoughts and get you through the winter.”



NEW TRAIL PROMOTES ACCESSIBILITY

Longtime Bloomington residents, Steve and Carol Cermak, *above*, enjoy outdoor trails, especially ones with accessible features. The Cermaks want everyone to know about the new paved trails near the Lyndale Avenue boat launch at the Minnesota River.

“Since my wife is in a wheelchair, these things are really nice,” Steve said. “You get a whole new perspective when someone is elderly or disabled. A smooth path makes a big difference to someone pushing a wheelchair.”

As avid outdoor enthusiasts, the Cermaks enjoy getting out into nature and hitting the trails around town. In the past, that was difficult in Bloomington along the Minnesota River.

On their Facebook page, “Wandering Wheelchair,” they wrote, “A great big thank you to the City of Bloomington for taking just a boat ramp at the end of Lyndale and making it into a place to be enjoyed by walkers, bicyclists, families, and picnicking. AND ACCESSIBLE. Also, really love the new walkway on 35W going over the river!”

The I-35W walkway and Minnesota Valley State Trail were constructed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and reflect a collaborative effort to make Bloomington more accessible, connected, and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.

Paved trails promote accessibility and support the City’s strategic priorities for community amenities, and equity and inclusion. For more information, call 952-563-8920 or visit blm.mn/trailMVR.

PARKS AND REC SUMMER INFORMATION COMING

Summer Parks and Recreation program information is coming soon. Look for a special insert in the March issue of the *Briefing* that highlights summer programs and events. Summer program sign-up will take place in April. The full Parks and Recreation Summer Experience catalog will also be available online and in limited quantities at Civic Plaza. Visit blm.mn/parksrec or call 952-563-8877 for the latest updates on programming and for any other changes due to COVID-19.



Coloring contest art supplied by Crayola.

NAME _____ GRADE _____ PHONE _____

ENTER A WINTER COLORING CONTEST

Get creative from the comfort of your own home with the winter coloring contest for kids. Create something with markers, crayons or colored pencils. The contest is open to preschool to fifth-grade children, and there’s a chance to win prizes. Prizes will be awarded for each age group. Return your colored entry by email to parksrec@BloomingtonMN.gov or by U.S. mail by 4:30 p.m., Monday, February 1, to Parks and Recreation, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431.

BLOOMINGTON YESTERDAY: DOME WHIRL BY THE SLEDDING HILL

In the early 1970s, snow only added to the fun at Poplar Bridge Park, 4600 West 85th Street. Kids made good use of the hill going down from Palmer Avenue South and Poplar Bridge Elementary School. The spot has everything in place for sledding.

In the foreground, the red-capped Miracle Dome Whirl is surrounded by a telltale ring of footprints. Even during winter, kids enjoyed the thrills, spills and dizzy delight of this vintage spin ride. The challenge was to keep hold of the metal handles, and make the dome twirl and go faster with foot power. No doubt, the snow provided some much-welcomed padding for inevitable tumbles off the ride.

The spinning dome was removed more than 30 years ago. These days playground equipment offers safer experiences for children. The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Division completes multiple park improvement projects each year. In 2019, the City and Bloomington Public Schools partnered to install a new playground at Poplar Bridge Elementary.

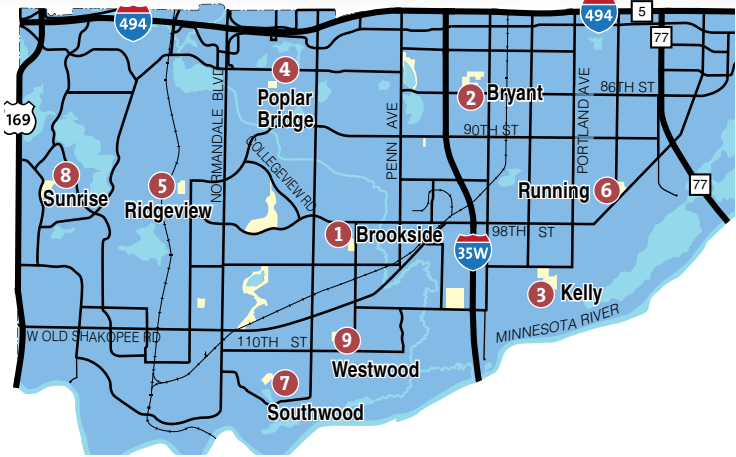




2021 OUTDOOR RINK SCHEDULE

Embrace the chill of winter at one of Bloomington’s outdoor skating rinks. Skating offers hours of family fun and a way to exercise outdoors. Weather permitting, lights are turned on daily between 4 and 5 p.m. and off between 8 and 9 p.m. (7 and 8 p.m. on Sundays). Outdoor benches are always available for changing into and out of skates. This season warming houses will remain closed due to COVID-19.

For rink conditions and more, visit blm.mn/rinks or call 952-563-8878 and select option 3.



LOCATIONS AND FEATURES					
	Park	Address	General	Hockey	Floodlights
1	Brookside	10000 Xerxes Avenue South	•	•	•
2	Bryant	1001 West 85th Street	•	•	•
3	Kelly	185 East 102nd Street	•	•	•
4	Poplar Bridge	4600 West 85th Street	•	•	•
5	Ridgeview	6001 West 94th Street	•	•	•
6	Running	9501 12th Avenue South	•	2	•
7	Southwood	4800 Terracewood Drive	•	•	•
8	Sunrise	9401 Bloomington Ferry Road	•	•	•
9	Westwood	3490 West 109th Street	•	2	•



FIT FOR WINTER: TIPS FOR EXERCISING

During winter, keeping fit can seem harder, but it doesn’t have to be. Start small. Consider a short walk outside. Invest in a pair of traction or grip clips for your shoes. Pair up with a friend or two, and gain the benefits of a social connection while keeping six feet apart. As you become more comfortable with your walks, increase the time.

Had enough of walking? Minnesota winters are made for ice skating, cross-country skiing, sledding, snowshoeing and other snow sports. Bloomington Parks and Recreation offers outdoor activities the whole family can do to keep on the go all winter long. Visit blm.mn/parks or call 952-563-8877.

When it’s too cold or icy to be outside, try an indoor workout for aerobics, dance, stretch, try strength training, run in place or practice yoga. Need inspiration or instruction? Watch an exercise video from your computer or phone. For a more social approach, try a video conference call with friends.

For those with specific health issues or conditions, consult with your doctor to determine what kind of activity you should do. See *page 8* to read about some of Bloomington’s walking trails.



BOOK A PARK SHELTER

Get ready for summer and book your park shelter now. Shelters are available to rent for picnics, meetings, receptions and reunions as Minnesota Department of Health guidelines allow. Registration began January 4, for shelter use April 15 – October 15.

Shelters have electricity, grills, restrooms and drinking fountains. City parks offer nearby playgrounds, volleyball and horseshoe courts, trails, softball fields and other amenities.

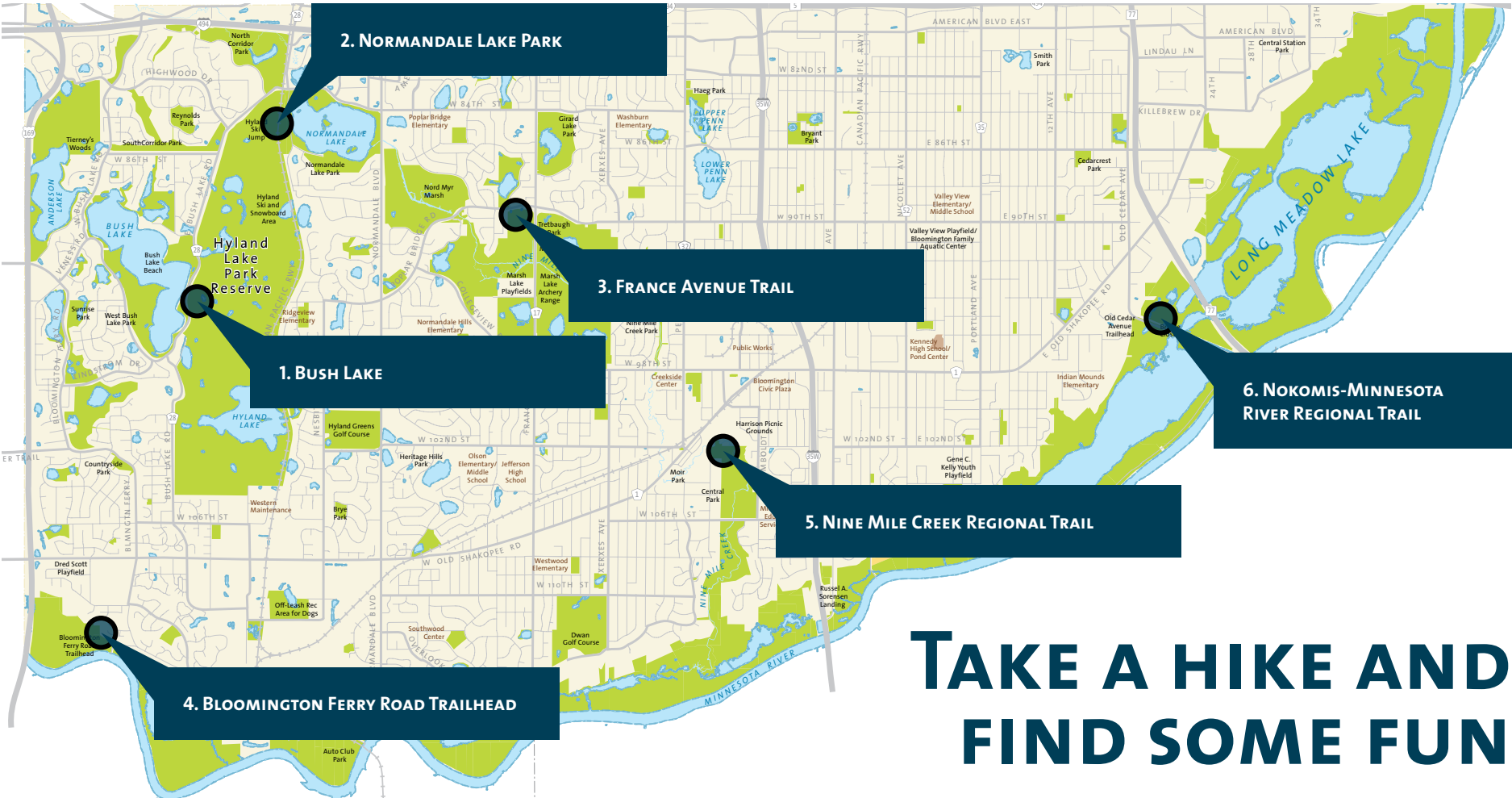
- Moir Park, 104th Street at Morgan Avenue, Shelter 1: Accommodates 200+. Shelter 2: Accommodates 60.
- East Bush Lake Park, 9140 East Bush Lake Road, Shelter 3: Accommodates 200.
- West Bush Lake Park, 94th Street at West Bush Lake Road, Shelter 1: Accommodates 200. Shelter 2: Accommodates 100.

Maximum capacity of shelters is subject to change to comply with the latest guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health.

Call 952-563-8877 or visit blm.mn/rentals for more information. Smaller shelters at other City parks may be available to reserve upon request.

REGISTER FOR SUMMER SOFTBALL

Does winter have you dreaming of sunny summer days on the softball field? Make plans to play softball in Bloomington. Registration for the 2021 summer softball season will open January 22 for returning teams who played in 2019. (The 2020 season was canceled due to COVID-19.) Registration for all teams will open February 22. Details on how to register, and the dates and locations of games are available at blm.mn/adultsports or call 952-563-8877.



TAKE A HIKE AND FIND SOME FUN

The City has more than 36 miles of off-road trails. Many of the longer trails have segments that are plowed in winter to allow year-round access. Take a look at a few trails around Bloomington in the map above. Or check out the City's complete online trail map at blm.mn/hikemap. For more information, visit blm.mn/parks or call 952-563-8877.



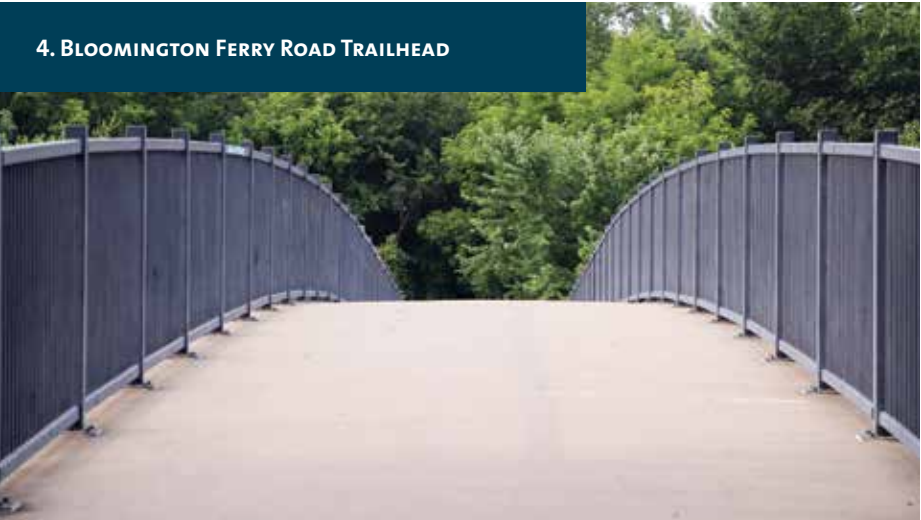
A paved trail runs along most of the shoreline. Private properties block some areas. Do not trespass. 9140 East Bush Lake Road.



This paved, 1.9-mile loop around Normandale Lake is the most popular trail in Bloomington, 84th Street and Chalet Road. It is kept plowed in the winter.



A new raised boardwalk trail is adjacent to the Marsh Lake wetland on the west side of France Avenue between West 84th Street and West Old Shakopee Road.



The pedestrian bridge over the Minnesota River makes a dramatic connector for unpaved and paved trail segments.



This trail meanders through Moir Park and Central Park ending at the Minnesota River. The paved portion north of 106th Street is plowed.



This paved, five-mile trail parallels Old Cedar Avenue to American Boulevard and goes north to Lake Nokomis. The Old Cedar Avenue Bridge also connects to trails in Burnsville.