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## PIONEERS AND CHANGEMAKERS

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Photo courtesy of Diane Madsen.

## BIRDING IN WINTER IN BLOOMINGTON

**B**ird-watchers flock to Bloomington year-round. In winter, birds are easier to see and hear. Fewer leaves are on the trees and bird calls and other sounds carry further in the cold weather. The Minnesota River is a popular place for watching and photographing birds. Abundant City parks with lakes, creeks and marshes provide additional opportunities.

“There’s a lot to see. I just enjoy the beauty of nature,” Bloomington resident Diane Madsen said. “It’s a really cool hobby. It’s kind of taken over my life.”

Madsen goes out five times a week and belongs to four online birding groups to get the latest information on rare birds in the area. Birders are often passionate about their hobby, track bird sightings and compare notes with others. At its basic level, bird-watching is free although some birders have cameras and binoculars which can be costly.

Want to learn more about bird-watching? Bloomington Parks and Recreation has Bird-watching for Beginners as a get-outside activity at [blm.mn/rec-online](http://blm.mn/rec-online). Bloomington community groups which promote birding in their missions include the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, [blm.mn/mvnwr](http://blm.mn/mvnwr), MRVAC- Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter, [blm.mn/audubon](http://blm.mn/audubon), and Urban Bird Collective, [blm.mn/ubc](http://blm.mn/ubc).



## CHANGES COMING TO CURBSIDE CLEANUP IN 2022

**I**n 2019, the City started looking at the Curbside Cleanup program from an environmental perspective. The City landfilled 1,537 tons of waste during the cleanup in 2019, and 2,000 tons in 2020. With the exception of appliances and brush, all items collected by haulers during the cleanup are disposed of as garbage. Although some items set out at the curb are collected by other residents for reuse, most end up in the landfill. A study conducted in 2019 of more than 2,000 cleanup piles before garbage haulers came through revealed that 35% of the items landfilled were in good, reusable condition or could have been recycled.

The City Council directed the Sustainability Commission to develop alternative methods to dispose of chairs, couches and other bulky items in a more sustainable way. You may wonder why this is important. Landfilling causes emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Rising levels of greenhouse gasses cause climate change. Waste prevention and recycling are real ways to help mitigate changes to the climate. The bulky items picked up as trash during Curbside Cleanup end up in landfills, often the Burnsville sanitary landfill. Local landfills are approaching capacity and the City does not support the continuous growth of these landfills. The current method of

collecting bulky items is also very expensive. There is a need to find better solutions.

In May 2020, the Sustainability Commission recommended providing bulky item vouchers and having one or two community cleanup events in place of the spring Curbside Cleanup. The voucher would allow each household to schedule a pickup for two items from their curb at any time of the year. A community cleanup event would allow any Bloomington resident, including those who live in multi-family dwellings, to bring a variety of bulky items to a single location to be collected for recycling, reuse and disposal. Preliminary estimates show the recommendation would cost half of what the current Curbside Cleanup does.

The Sustainability Commission’s recommendation aligns with several City strategic priorities. It’s cost-effective, has clear environmental benefits and would expand accessibility to all Bloomington residents.

Curbside Cleanup will continue in 2021. *See page 5 for details.* Council and staff will use this year to develop the new program and seek community feedback in the coming months on different aspects of the voucher and drop-off program. We are looking for your input. Please visit [blm.mn/letstalk](http://blm.mn/letstalk) for additional details about the proposed changes and opportunities to provide feedback.





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](mailto:jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov)  
**Website: [BloomingtonMN.gov](http://BloomingtonMN.gov)**

## BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL



**Mayor**  
 Tim Busse  
 952-563-8782 (w)  
 952-457-7506 (c)  
 tbusse@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov

**Councilmember At Large**  
 Nathan Coulter  
 952-239-0531  
 ncoulter@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember At Large**  
 Jenna Carter  
 612-704-0942  
 jcarter@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov

**Councilmember District I**  
 Dwayne Lowman  
 952-270-2377  
 dlowman@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember District II**  
 Shawn Nelson  
 952-479-0471  
 snelson@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov

**Councilmember District III**  
 Jack Baloga  
 952-944-5194  
 jbaloga@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember District IV**  
 Patrick Martin  
 952-454-6657  
 pmartin@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov

*Elected officials presented for informational purposes.*

## COUNCILMEMBERS

[council@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:council@BloomingtonMN.gov)

## EXECUTIVE STAFF

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Jamie Verbrugge, <i>City Manager</i>   | 952-563-8780        |
| <a href="mailto:citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov">citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>             |                     |
| Kris Wilson, <i>Assistant City Manager</i>   | 952-563-8780        |
| <a href="mailto:citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov">citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>             |                     |
| Diann Kirby, <i>Community Services</i>   | 952-563-8717        |
| <a href="mailto:communityservices@BloomingtonMN.gov">communityservices@BloomingtonMN.gov</a> |                     |
| Lori Economy-Scholler, <i>Finance</i>  | 952-563-8791        |
| <a href="mailto:finance@BloomingtonMN.gov">finance@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>                     |                     |
| Ulie Seal, <i>Fire</i>   | 952-563-4801        |
| <a href="mailto:fire@BloomingtonMN.gov">fire@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>                           |                     |
| Amy Cheney, <i>Information Technology</i>  | 952-563-4885        |
| <a href="mailto:it@BloomingtonMN.gov">it@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>                               |                     |
| Melissa Manderschied, <i>Legal</i>   | 952-563-8753        |
| <a href="mailto:legal@BloomingtonMN.gov">legal@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>                         |                     |
| Ann Kattreh, <i>Parks and Recreation</i>   | 952-563-8877        |
| <a href="mailto:parksrec@BloomingtonMN.gov">parksrec@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>                   |                     |
| Jeffrey Potts, <i>Police</i>   | 952-563-8601        |
| <a href="mailto:police@BloomingtonMN.gov">police@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>                       |                     |
| Karl Keel, <i>Public Works</i>   | 952-563-8731        |
| <a href="mailto:publicworks@BloomingtonMN.gov">publicworks@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>             |                     |
| <b>General phone number</b>  | <b>952-563-8700</b> |

*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.*

## MAYOR'S MEMO

### TAKING STOCK OF LAST YEAR

By Mayor Tim Busse

We're approaching the one-year mark since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Working from home, wearing masks, socially distancing—it may come as a surprise that it's been almost 12 months since the way we live our lives changed seemingly overnight. Nothing about 2020 was normal, certainly worldwide, but specifically here in Bloomington. The City operated under an emergency declaration for most of the year. Our public buildings were locked. Community events were cancelled. Students were learning from home. We declared curfews in the city of Bloomington. If that's happened before, I haven't found anyone who remembers it. It was an extraordinary year and it has been a challenge.

The past 12 months have been very difficult. Hundreds of thousands of Americans and thousands of Minnesotans were lost to COVID-19. We've lost far too many businesses. Many people have lost jobs and livelihoods. People have lost their homes, and many have lost a sense of security, safety and control. Some people just feel lost.

It was a hard year. Even with the light at the end of the tunnel with vaccines beginning to be distributed, it has felt like a dark winter in many ways. Like everyone, I hope and pray that 2021 is better. I really do believe that regardless of what is going on around us, a better 2021 starts with me and you. It starts with all of us. The two best ways to jumpstart a better 2021 are with a sense of gratitude and by looking at all we managed to accomplish this past year despite everything.

So first of all, thank you. Thanks to everyone who played a part, large or small, in helping us all get through the last year. Thanks to our doctors, nurses and personal care attendants. Thanks to our essential workers and nonprofit community partners. Thanks to farmers, truckers and grocery store workers. Thanks to our transit workers. Thanks to our custodians. Thanks to our teachers, police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians.

Thanks to Bloomington City staff. You've done remarkable work this year under incredibly difficult circumstances. Now I think they did an amazing job, but you might accuse me of being a bit biased. Well, 86% of respondents in the National Community Survey™ said that overall customer service by Bloomington employees was excellent or good. Whether they were administering small business loans, providing essential public health services or administering an election with 85% voter turnout—all throughout a global pandemic—City staff made a difference for residents, visitors and businesses in our community.

And thanks to you, the residents of Bloomington. Thanks for all you've done over the past 12 months to make this community a better place, spread joy where you can and support each other. None of it goes unnoticed.

## SURVEY UNCOVERS PANDEMIC'S FALLOUT ON BLOOMINGTON BUSINESSES

A recent survey confirmed that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on Bloomington businesses.

Four in 10 businesses responding to the National Business Survey™ indicated that a decline in business and sales due to the pandemic was a major problem; an additional two in 10 reported it as a moderate problem. Paying commercial rent, mortgage or lines of credit was a major or moderate problem for 28% of respondents. Nineteen percent reported that not having funds to pay employees was a major problem.

Forty-two percent of respondents expected a serious shortfall in revenues compared to original 2020 budget

projections. In spite of the challenges, two-thirds of business owners and managers anticipated growth in the next five years.

Respondents to the National Business Survey™ remain pleased with the City of Bloomington's services. Services including police, street repair, and snow removal were ranked higher than the national benchmark.

A total of 195 businesses responded to the National Business Survey™, which was conducted between September 23 and October 21, 2020. The poll was conducted by the National Research Center of Boulder, Colorado.

For complete survey results, visit [blm.mn/bizsurvey](http://blm.mn/bizsurvey).

## CREATIVE SPARKS APPLICATIONS DUE IN MARCH

The City of Bloomington's Creative Placemaking Commission and Artistry are seeking proposals for permanent or temporary sculptures to display in the South Loop district. Preference will be given to Bloomington and South Loop residents and those who work in the South Loop, but all Minnesota residents, age 18 and up, are welcome to apply. Applications are due by March 1, at 11 p.m. Review full guidelines and details on the February 11 info session webinar, and access applications at [blm.mn/creativesparks](http://blm.mn/creativesparks).





## CREEKSIDE SET TO REOPEN IN 2021

Last March, Creekside Community Center closed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and remained closed through 2020. In an effort to address the budget shortfall, the Bloomington City Council considered permanently closing the facility and moving Creekside programs to Bloomington Civic Plaza and other locations. However, as part of the 2021 approved budget, Creekside will be reopening with limited services. A date has not been formally set for when the limited services will begin, but Creekside staff are working on plans to reopen safely. Participants can expect changes in staffing, operating hours and programming along with new guidelines and required activity pre-registration.

Visit [blm.mn/creekside](http://blm.mn/creekside) for the most up-to-date information.

## RENTAL ASSISTANCE DURING COVID-19

The demand for rental assistance in Bloomington is higher than ever. COVID-19 has strained some households to the point that paying rent is out of reach, but resources are available to help fill the gap.

“We’ve never seen this level of need, especially for rental assistance,” VEAP Chief Executive Officer Joe McDonald said.

Last year, VEAP provided support for approximately 600 – 650 households in the city. In all, the organization dispersed \$3.5 million to households in Bloomington, Edina, Richfield and South Minneapolis.

“We help keep people safe and secure in their homes during times of crisis,” McDonald said.

The economic impact of COVID-19 has touched people of all cultures and social backgrounds. Some were already having challenges before the pandemic. Others found themselves out of a job for the first time and facing economic hardship.

VEAP partners with Hennepin County, the City of Bloomington and the Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) for financial support and advocacy for affordable housing. Through meetings coordinated by the City and HRA, rental property managers were provided the latest information about rental assistance.

“My team was consistently made aware of new programs and resources that could support our residents experiencing hardships. We were also provided with a resource page to share with our residents,” a rental property manager said.

In addition to VEAP, other organizations are working to help residents to address their financial needs. Community groups and individuals also contribute their time to the effort.

For more information, call 952-888-9616 or visit [blm.mn/VEAPhelp](http://blm.mn/VEAPhelp).

## TRAFFIC PROJECTS FINISHING AT I-35W AND 106TH STREET

Over the last three years, multiple construction projects have been underway around I-35W and 106th Street. The work is scheduled to be completed this year and some projects are ahead of schedule. While the projects are separate undertakings by MnDOT and the City, they are related in their purpose to improve traffic flow and promote safety for motorists, pedestrians, bikers and other users.

This spring MnDOT will complete the I-35W Minnesota River bridge project. Work included reconstruction of the I-35W bridges spanning the Minnesota River and 106th Street. Pavement was replaced from Cliff Road to 106th Street and a pedestrian and bike trail was added on the east side of the river bridge. For up-to-date MnDOT project information, visit [blm.mn/mndot35](http://blm.mn/mndot35).

A separate City project will reconstruct 106th Street between Verdi Road and Lyndale Avenue with connections to new trails and other improvements. Access to 106th Street from West Bloomington Freeway and River Terrace will be permanently closed. The goal is to have the project complete by August.

Another City project, the East Bloomington corridor reconstruction, will restart this spring. Last phases include final paving of the East Bloomington Freeway Trail.

This area has endured several years of construction activity and all are looking forward to this work being completed. “We tried to get all projects done at one time so when it’s done, it’s done,” Civil Engineer Amy Marohn said.

For more information about City projects, visit [blm.mn/roadprojects](http://blm.mn/roadprojects) or call 952-563-4532.



## CHIEF POTTS RETIRES

After serving with the Bloomington Police Department nearly 30 years, including 12 years leading the department, Chief Jeff Potts retired on January 31.

Chief Potts started with BPD as a patrol officer when he was 23 years old. He later established BPD’s branch base at Mall of America and served as a sergeant and commander. At the time of his promotion, he was the first chief to come from within the department in 35 years.

“Serving at the Bloomington Police Department for the past 29 years has truly been an honor and a privilege and I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to serve as police chief for the past 12 years,” he said.

While leading the BPD, Chief Potts has had many notable accomplishments. They include: the Pathways to Policing program, the Joint Community Police Partnership, the Multicultural Advisory Committee, body-worn and squad car cameras, robust community engagement, efforts toward equity in policing, an embedded social worker program, and directing the department’s response to many national events like the Super Bowl in 2019 and presidential visits.

“Chief Potts’ commitment to professional standards, innovative thinking, and community relations has been invaluable to the City Council and to me. We wish him well in his future pursuits,” City Manager Jamie Verbrugge said.

## SAVE THE DATE: 2021 STATE OF THE CITY

Mayor Tim Busse will talk about the past year’s accomplishments and challenges and take a look at what’s to come at the 2021 State of the City on Wednesday, March 24. The event will be held as a virtual address and will be recorded for YouTube and cable TV.

For more information, visit the City’s website.





## VIRTUAL HOME ENERGY VISITS AVAILABLE

**R**eady to save money on your energy bill? Home Energy Squad can help you explore your home's energy potential and take the next steps to make it a reality.

Home Energy Squad visits are usually performed in person, but a free virtual home energy audit is available. After your free virtual visit, you and your energy expert may decide to do an in-person visit, which can be performed safely using health and safety guidelines. Free in-person visits are available to income-qualified households.

During a visit, energy experts help you to look at your home from a new perspective. Discover how your home uses energy, and find ways to lower your energy use. Recommended improvements can include LED lightbulbs, door and attic hatch weather stripping, thermostat programming, high-efficiency water fixtures, furnace upgrades and more.

To schedule your audit or for other information, call 651-328-6220 or visit [mncee.org/hes](http://mncee.org/hes).

## GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR ECO-FRIENDLY GARDEN AND LANDSCAPE PROJECTS

**D**uring the cold days of February, what better time to think about spring and your garden or landscape? This could be the year to plan something to help Bloomington's ecosystem. Environmental stewardship grants are available to help fund projects that protect and improve natural resources.

While the rain garden has become a symbol of urban natural resource restoration, there are many ways you can manage a landscape to improve local ecological health. Native habitat restorations, pond buffers and other projects can make positive environmental impacts. Unlike sterile turf lawns, native plant landscapes promote environmental stewardship, provide habitat for pollinators and wildlife, improve air quality, build soil structure and more.

Cost share programs provide funding which residents match. Typically, grants are awarded to cover up to 50 – 75% of a project's cost for professional consultation, engineering, labor and materials.

These grants are awarded by the various watershed districts. To find which watershed district you live in and related links, visit [blm.mn/watershed](http://blm.mn/watershed).



## EARTH ACTION HERO: CLARA VON DOHLEN



**C**lara von Dohlen sees many possibilities for the Bloomington community and they all come together through intersections. The Utah native came to Minnesota to attend Macalester College to study human rights and civil rights. Personally, she's a natural connector and puts her skills to use on the job.

Last fall when Clara von Dohlen became a Minnesota GreenCorps member with the City, her work plan took a quick pandemic turn. What was slated to be a project to improve alternative transportation options changed. With COVID-19, the level of community outreach needed for the project could no longer be done.

In her revised GreenCorps role, she helps with energy sector and air quality issues in the community. Reduction of mold in homes and more use of electric vehicles are just a few ways energy burden and air quality can be improved.

The work fits in with the greater need COVID has exposed for more equitable health outcomes. Some populations have a higher rate of asthma than others. Air quality can contribute to asthma and the condition can put people at greater risk for COVID-19 complications. For von Dohlen this is where public health, environmental health and sustainability intersect.

"We're working to help support communities and make sustainability attainable for everyone," von Dohlen said.

The Minnesota GreenCorps program is coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Initiatives done with the City and other partners, preserve and protect the environment while training the next generation of environmental professionals.

For more information, visit [blm.mn/greencorps](http://blm.mn/greencorps) or call 952-563-4862.

## KEEP STORM DRAINS FREE OF ICE AND SNOW

**D**uring the winter, it's important to keep storm drains clear of ice and snow. The work really begins in autumn with the removal and proper disposal of leaves.

When leaves fall, they can collect in storm drains and cause clogs. Leaves do not compost when they sit in storm drains or go down into sewer systems. As temperatures drop and snow falls or ice accumulates, the precipitation can stick to the leaves. This can block water from going into the storm drain.

As snow and ice melt, water needs a channel to flow into to get down the storm drain. Maintaining proper drainage helps to prevent potential flooding.

If you can do so, aim to keep your storm drain clear year-round. Consider signing up for the adopt-a-storm drain program. It's a free and easy way to promote clear storm drains and make a difference in the community. For more information, visit [blm.mn/drain](http://blm.mn/drain) or call 952-563-4870.

## HOW ORGANICS RECYCLING BECOMES COMPOST

**E**ver wonder what happens to your recycled organics? Your organic materials are transformed into compost in a six-step process.

- First, you separate your organic materials at home, put it in your compost bin and bring it to a drop-off site. From there, the organics recycling dumpster gets collected by the City's hauler and brought to a commercial composter.
- Organic material from your household and other sources is mixed together. Balanced proportions of green (food scraps) and brown (leaves, tree branches and paper) organics are needed.
- Stacking the compost into long piles, known as windrows, helps microbes to digest material. Water is added as needed to keep piles moist.
- Over time with the help of turning and heat from the digestion process, the compost breaks down to resemble soil.
- Screening and testing ensure that the compost is safe. Any large material is filtered out and removed.
- Compost is ready for a new use in garden beds, landscaping, erosion control projects and more.

Want to compost at home? Learn more by watching an organics recycling video, and sign-up for the free Organics Recycling Drop-Off Program at [blm.mn/organics](http://blm.mn/organics) or call 952-563-8760.

Do you have a business and want to start an organics recycling program? Hennepin County has a grant program to help purchase bins. Free technical assistance is available. For information, visit [blm.mn/bzorganics](http://blm.mn/bzorganics) or call 612-543-9298.

## ORGANICS RECYCLING AT CITY FACILITIES

**I**n late 2020, the City began offering organics recycling at Civic Plaza, Public Health, Public Works, and the kitchen at Creekside. Currently, most containers are in staff-only areas. However, in the future, the program may be expanded to more areas and buildings.

Organics recycling reduces the amount of material going into the waste stream and ending up at the landfill or at an energy recovery facility. It also reduces greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to climate change, and returns nutrients to local soil. Waste sorts conducted at Civic Plaza, Public Works, and Creekside before the start of the program revealed approximately 40% of what was thrown away could be composted.

From food scraps to paper products to unwanted houseplants or flowers, all materials that come from living things can go into the compost bin. Find a complete list and other information at [blm.mn/organics](http://blm.mn/organics) or call 952-563-8700.



# 2021 CURBSIDE CLEANUP SCHEDULE

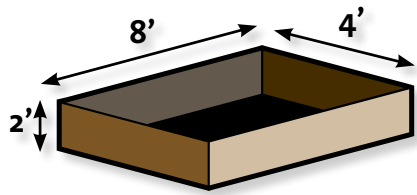
- APRIL 3 — WEST OF NORMANDEALE BOULEVARD (FRIDAY GARBAGE AND RECYCLING DAY).**
- APRIL 10 — FRANCE AVENUE TO NORMANDEALE BOULEVARD (THURSDAY GARBAGE AND RECYCLING DAY).**
- APRIL 17 — PENN AVENUE TO FRANCE AVENUE (WEDNESDAY GARBAGE AND RECYCLING DAY).**
- APRIL 24 — PORTLAND AVENUE TO PENN AVENUE (TUESDAY GARBAGE AND RECYCLING DAY).**
- MAY 1 — EAST OF PORTLAND AVENUE (MONDAY GARBAGE AND RECYCLING DAY).**

## WHAT'S ACCEPTED AT THE CURB

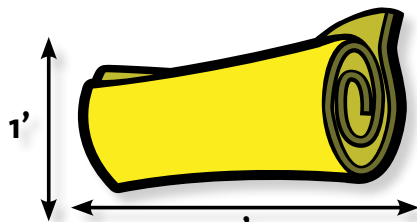
- Unusable general junk, household building materials, lumber, windows and doors:**

Pile size is limited to what fits in one level, standard-size pickup truck bed. Lumber must be stacked and no longer than five feet. General junk must be boxed or bundled with twine and weigh less than 100 pounds per box or bundle.

- Carpet and pads:** Roll and securely tie with twine. Keep under five feet in length and one foot in diameter.
- Appliances:** Limit of two appliances per house. Water heaters and softeners, microwaves, washers, dryers, stoves, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, freezers, dishwashers, trash compactors, garbage disposals, water coolers, refrigerators (remove door or tie securely shut). Do not set out until the morning of your pickup date.
- Unusable furniture:** Limited to two items. Tie down or disassemble hide-a-way sofa beds so they cannot open when handled.
- Bundled brush:** Branches must be smaller than three inches in diameter and five feet in length, tied with twine and put in bundles that should be light enough for one person to carry. Bundled brush piles must be no more than what can fit in a standard pickup truck bed.



ONE LEVEL TRUCK BED OF GENERAL JUNK DIMENSIONS



CARPETS/PADS DIMENSIONS

- Mattresses or box springs.** Limited to two items.
- Large metal ONLY:** Large scrap metal items that do not fit in the trunk of a car (bikes, grills, lawn mowers, snow blowers, swing sets, treadmills, etc.) Drain all fluids and remove tires. Take smaller items to the South Hennepin Recycling and Problem Waste Drop-Off Center, 1400 West 96th Street.

## WHAT'S NOT ACCEPTED AT THE CURB

- Loose cardboard.** While we understand residents might place small items in a box and set the box out on the curb, loose cardboard on its own is not accepted. Cardboard should be flattened and recycled.
- Small metal.**
- Tires, batteries.**
- Tubs, sinks and toilets.**
- Extra heavy and bulky items:** Pianos or organs, etc.
- Electronic items:** Cell phones, computers, stereos, printers and TVs.
- Hazardous waste:** Fluorescent tubes, motor oil, paint, propane, solvents and other household chemicals.
- Miscellaneous building items:** Contractor materials, bricks, concrete, railroad ties, shingles (asbestos) or treated wood.
- Organic materials:** Food waste, grass clippings, leaves, logs, sod and stumps.
- Recyclable materials:** Boxboard, cans, loose cardboard, glass, corrugated cardboard, newspapers and plastic bottles.



## CURBSIDE CLEANUP'S COMING

Prepare for your Cleanup day by setting your materials at the curb **before 7 a.m.** Trucks only pass by once. Large appliances and brush are collected for recycling in separate trucks and any remaining items are collected and taken to a landfill.

Eligible Bloomington residents will see a "Citywide Curbside Cleanup" charge on their utility bills. At an annual cost of \$53.04 for residents, this program is a bargain. (Disposing of one mattress with the bulk pickup program costs \$53.32.)

Remember to box small items or bundle them with twine. NO plastic bags are accepted. Do not set out reusable containers that you do not want collected by the haulers.

The City is considering more environmentally efficient ways to handle bulky items. *See more on page 1.*

## PLANT A TREE TO CELEBRATE ARBOR DAY

Help build Bloomington's urban forest. Order your trees from the City's annual tree sale ahead of time and pick up your trees during the event. Now in its 14th year, the tree sale has added approximately 2,800 trees to Bloomington's urban forest. This program is among the initiatives that helps Bloomington maintain its Tree City USA status.

Through the sale, Bloomington residents can purchase affordable shade trees and find out more about trees. Experts will give a demonstration about planting bare-root trees and be on hand to answer questions. Learn proper planting techniques and why a diverse mix of species is important.

Residents may purchase a maximum of up to five trees per household. To place a tree order, go to [blm.mn/treesale](http://blm.mn/treesale), mail in the order form below, or call 952-563-8760. Trees will be delivered to the address listed on the order form in the first week of May.

### ARBOR DAY TREE SALE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. All trees are bare-root, one-and-a-quarter to one-and-a-half inches in diameter and cost \$50 each. *Trees are viable at the time of sale and no refunds will be issued.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email (needed to arrange deliveries) \_\_\_\_\_

*Fill in number of each tree type desired. First come, first served. Maximum five trees total per household, \$50 each. Check must accompany order.*

|                          |                          |                            |                               |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ Autumn blaze maple | _____ Black Hills spruce | _____ Imperial honeylocust | _____ Japanese tree lilac     |
| _____ River birch        | _____ Serviceberry       | _____ Snowdrift crab apple | _____ Prairie Fire crab apple |

Total trees \_\_\_\_\_ X \$50 ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost

Trees will be delivered to the address listed on the order form in the first week of May.  
 Send check and this form to City of Bloomington, Park Maintenance,  
 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027.



## CURBSIDE PILE ITEM LIMITS



TWO MATTRESSES OR BOX SPRINGS



TWO PIECES OF FURNITURE



ONE LEVEL TRUCK BED OF GENERAL JUNK



## HOW TO CARE FOR CLOTH FACE MASKS

**D**o you know how to care for your cloth mask? Change your cloth mask whenever it gets dirty or at least daily, then wash. Include your mask with your regular laundry. Use your normal laundry detergent and settings recommended for the fabric. Completely dry your mask on a warm or hot setting.

A cloth mask can be washed by hand if you're not ready to do a full load of laundry. Hand wash your mask with tap water and laundry detergent or soap. Rinse thoroughly with clean water to remove all detergent or soap.

If you are using a disposable mask, throw it away after wearing it once. Use a proper waste can for disposal. Be sure to wash your hands before and after mask use.

For more information, call 800-232-4636 or visit [blm.mn/washmask](http://blm.mn/washmask).

## COVID-19 DASHBOARD IMPROVED

**H**ave you taken a look at the City of Bloomington's COVID-19 dashboard? There you'll find a summary of information about COVID-19 cases in Bloomington. The dashboard has new and improved features. In response to community input, Bloomington Public Health has added more data points. Now you can easily find more information, including:

- Median age for all cases, hospitalized cases and deaths.
- Daily cases graph with a seven-day average to make looking at trends clearer.
- Information on hospitalized individuals by age group and month of first admission.
- Information on deceased individuals by exposure type, sex and month of death.
- Context on rates of infection by race and ethnicity.

For more information visit, [blm.mn/C19dashboard](http://blm.mn/C19dashboard) or call 952-563-8900.



## VACCINE FOR COVID-19 COMING TO BLOOMINGTON

**T**he news about a vaccine for COVID-19 is really exciting but it's going to take time to get everyone vaccinated. Until then, it's important to control the spread of COVID-19

through other measures, which are just as important as a vaccine to end the pandemic.

Wear a mask when you leave your home or are around others from outside your household. Wash your hands frequently. Keep six feet or more from people outside your household. If you are sick, stay home. For now, stay vigilant to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in Bloomington and beyond.

Following the latest CDC guidelines will help you, your family and others in the community. It's the neighborly thing to do. We want to make sure as few Bloomington residents get COVID-19 as possible.

"The interest in vaccination is great to see. We are aiming to provide vaccine to as many Bloomington residents as we can, but it will take some time as distribution ramps up," Public Health Specialist Amanda Lemke said.

The COVID-19 pandemic and news about vaccine development and distribution is changing rapidly.

For more information, visit [blm.mn/vaccine](http://blm.mn/vaccine) or call 952-563-4960.

I GOT  
MY COVID-19  
VACCINE!



I GOT  
MY COVID-19  
VACCINE!



## REMEMBERING FRIENDS AND FAMILY LOST TO COVID-19

**T**his time of year, hearts are recognized as symbols for Valentine's Day but the City is using hearts in another way — as emblems to commemorate those lost to COVID-19. In December, a virtual memory wall launched on the City's website. Its display of hearts serves as a reminder for friends and family lost to COVID-19. Each heart pays tribute to a Bloomington resident.

The virtual memorial wall is presented not only as a tribute but as an opportunity for people to think about the emotional side of COVID-19. The toll of the pandemic amounts to much more than numbers. The life of a real person from the Bloomington community is behind every heart. As of January 19, Bloomington has lost more than 130 residents.

The virtual memory wall is updated on a weekly basis. To share a photo or story in memory of a loved one you've lost, email [communications@bloomingtonmn.gov](mailto:communications@bloomingtonmn.gov).

## STAY VIGILANT TO CURB COVID-19 IN THE COMMUNITY

“Every couple of weeks, we have at least one Bloomington officer that tests positive for COVID. We're out in the community every single day,” Officer Erika Brown said.

Even with a vaccine's arrival, we must remain vigilant to protect ourselves, our families and neighbors. Pandemic fatigue can set in, but public health measures — wearing a mask, keeping your distance from others — are tools that will bring us to a faster and more sustainable recovery and help us return to normal day-to-day activities.

“Keep practicing the guidelines, stay safe, not only for your sake, but our sake too, with the masks and the distancing,” Brown said.

In March, Brown came down with COVID-19. Around that same time, Sergeant Erik Norling and Officer Jerry Wukawitz contracted the coronavirus. They all became very ill and have recovered for the most part. Wukawitz still experiences a loss of taste and smell. These officers know how serious the virus is and want others to take precautions.

“We just ask that the public is patient. I know it's tough. It's tough. It's wearing on everybody. The finish line is out there. We see it. Let's get there. Let's do it together,” Wukawitz said.

Councilmember Jenna Carter understands how quickly COVID-19 can take over a family; everyone in her household became infected. She said each one of us can make a difference by following public health measures and if you have the opportunity to get a vaccine, do so.

“The approved vaccines are safe and effective, and if we all do our part, they will help us get through this quicker,” she said.

Want to learn more? Watch videos at [blm.mn/policeC19](http://blm.mn/policeC19) and [blm.mn/Carter](http://blm.mn/Carter). For other information, visit [blm.mn/COVID](http://blm.mn/COVID) or call 651-201-3920.



## BLOOMINGTON YESTERDAY

You've got mail in a vintage envelope from the City of Bloomington. These red, white and baby blue illustrations come from the back of an envelope, circa 1961-1962.

The message was clear: Bloomington was big league and booming — an ideal place to work, live and play. The city was growing with an abundance of new homes, recreational activities and modes of transportation, which were crowned by the Metropolitan Airport just to the north. Modern planes, trains, trucks and boats kept things moving at the fast pace progress demanded.

As home to the Minnesota Vikings, Minnesota Twins and Metropolitan Stadium, Bloomington was on the world map for professional sports. The city was even home of the Twin City Skippers of the National Bowling League.

Bloomington offered all the modern conveniences and in big ways, it's a tradition of service that continues today.



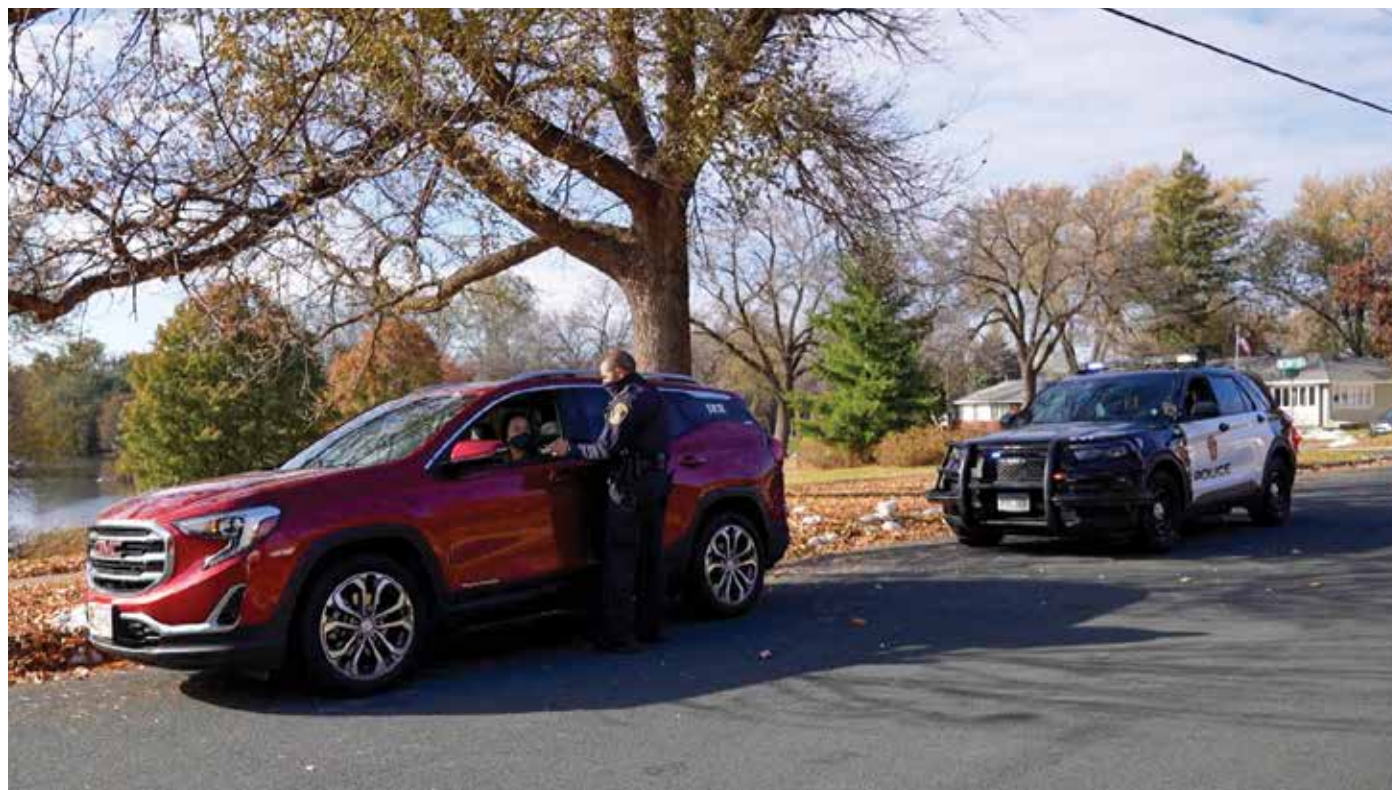
## FREE TAX PREP HELP

The AARP Foundation TaxAide program will again provide free tax preparation assistance beginning in February. AARP does not have specific income guidelines, but taxpayers with complex tax returns are advised to seek other tax services.

This year tax help will be provided by appointment only with a process that is tailored to meet the state and federal guidelines for operating in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beginning January 25, you can make your appointments Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. by calling 612-284-1916.

You can also ask taxpayer questions at the same times and phone number. Directions on the tax process will be provided during your appointment call.



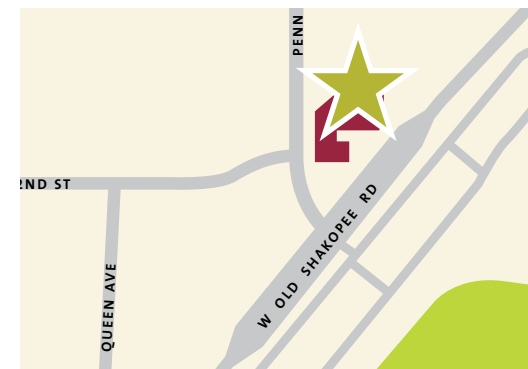
## WHAT TO DO DURING A TRAFFIC STOP

A traffic stop is one way you might interact with a police officer. It can happen for speeding, failing to use a turn signal, equipment violations such as a broken taillight, an expired license plate sticker or even erratic or suspicious behavior. Bloomington police officers are trained on how to safely and fairly run a traffic stop and they want you to know what to expect if you're pulled over.

"We know traffic stops can cause fear and anxiety. The goal of these stops is to ensure traffic safety in the city. Your cooperation helps things go quickly and safely," Acting Chief Mike Hartley said. "We hope by sharing these tips, we can help residents and visitors understand what to expect if they're stopped by a Bloomington police officer."

If you see those red, white and blue lights flashing in your rear-view mirror, stay calm and remember to follow these guidelines:

- Slow down and use your turn signal so the officer knows you're trying to stop. Pull to the right side of the road and stop.
  - Don't block traffic when you stop. Officers will usually wait for a safe spot in the roadway to make a stop.
  - Once you're stopped, put your car in park and stay inside.
  - When the officer is walking up, keep your hands where the officer can see them. Passengers in your car should do the same.
  - Roll down your driver's side window. Don't make any sudden movements like reaching for something or ducking.
  - Officers will ask for your driver's license and proof of insurance right away so they know who they are talking to.
  - Be sure to tell the officer where any documents are before you reach for anything. It's also a good idea to tell them where you're reaching, like your purse or glove compartment.
  - If you don't have your driver's license with you, be sure to tell the officer and provide them with any form of ID you might have. Be sure to tell the officers if you do not speak English.
  - Officers will explain why you are being stopped and ask some basic questions regarding the stop and your travel.
  - Answer the questions politely and honestly. Your answers can help the officer understand the reason for your violation.
  - Don't get out of the car unless the officer asks you to.
  - While the officer is reviewing your license and insurance information in their squad car, stay in your car and refrain from moving or reaching around. Keep your hands where they can be seen.
  - Don't be concerned if a second squad car pulls up during your stop. This is a common practice in Bloomington for safety and to provide assistance to the officer who made the stop.
  - After reviewing your license and registration, the officer will return to your vehicle to discuss next steps.
- Watch a video of these tips online at [blm.mn/pullover](http://blm.mn/pullover). Videos are available in English, Spanish and Somali.



## LOAVES AND FISHES HAS A NEW LOCATION

In January Loaves & Fishes Minnesota opened a new community meal location in Bloomington at Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, 2200 West Old Shakopee Road.

"Serving healthy and free meals in Bloomington remain top priorities of our mission and we are relieved we will continue serving meals to the community in these areas without any interruption," Executive Director Cathy Maes said.

Oak Grove Presbyterian Church will replace Creekside Community Center as Loaves and Fishes Bloomington location. Oak Grove is just a half-mile away from Creekside. Meals will continue to be served Monday through Friday, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

## CALLING ALL SENIORS 55 AND UP!

Did you know the Bloomington Family Aquatic Center has free lifeguard training if you're interested in working in the summer? Hours and positions are flexible. Call or email Parks and Recreation Supervisor David Benson at [drbenso@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:drbenso@BloomingtonMN.gov) or 952-563-8892 for training and position details.



# BLOOMINGTON PIONEERS AND CHANGEMAKERS

**B**loomington pioneers and changemakers is a profile series featuring Black leaders who have a connection to Bloomington. February is Black History Month and a fitting time to recognize the impact the people featured here have made. The people featured in this series have worked to advance civil rights and remove barriers to equity in the fields of faith, education, law, housing, government and more. In this new annual series, the City is honoring pioneers who have done so much to chart the path to where we are today and changemakers who are paving the way for future generations. If you would like to nominate someone to be featured in the 2022 Bloomington pioneers and changemakers campaign, contact Racial Equity Coordinator Faith Jackson at [fjackson@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:fjackson@BloomingtonMN.gov) or 952-563-8779. Extended versions of these interviews and other Pioneers and Changemakers features, including an article about Imam Mohamed Omar, will be posted on the City's Facebook page and website through the month of February.

## DR. JOSIE JOHNSON

**D**r. Josie Johnson has been a leader in the civil rights movement for decades. At nearly 90 years old she has an impressive history. She campaigned against poll taxes as a teenager, fought for equal housing and employment, worked as a community activist in Mississippi in the era of Martin Luther King Jr., voted as the Minnesota delegate to confirm Barack Obama as the Democratic presidential candidate in 2008, and was the first Black woman on the University of Minnesota Board of Regents. Dr. Johnson is an author of *Hope in the Struggle: A Memoir*, a lobbyist and was a campaign manager or chief of staff to numerous elected officials. She's also worked with the Minneapolis NAACP, the Urban League Twin Cities and the state's African American DFL caucus. When she moved to Bloomington in the 1960s, Dr. Johnson remembers being only the second Black family in the city. Her children were some of the first Black children to attend Bloomington schools. Dr. Johnson has three daughters, three granddaughters, three great-granddaughters and a great-grandson.

"To live long enough to see that our young people today have expressed their pride in who they are and have continued the struggle of their ancestors for freedom and justice makes me and my generation of activists so proud," she said. "We hope we have made them proud and given them the strength to continue."



## DINNA WADE-ARDLEY

**A**s Bloomington Public Schools' office of educational equity director and office of educational equity Leadership Academy founder and director, Dinna Wade-Ardley serves students and families that are underrepresented, helping them find resources to address individual challenges or barriers to success. She began her career in social work, then went into the corporate world and shifted back to public service more than 20 years ago when she came to work at BPS.

Wade-Ardley has volunteered as program director for the NAACP's Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACTSO). She served as the director of the young people department at her church and has been the director of its youth and adult choirs. She also volunteers to mentor youth every Saturday.



## NUR MOOD

**L**ongtime Bloomington resident Nur Mood serves as Hamline University's assistant director of social justice programs and strategic relations and does extensive work in the community. In his work, Mood advances social justice, equity and inclusion. For example, Nur's work led Hamline University to achieve the highest student-voter participation rate of all four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. in the 2018 midterm election. He also serves on Bloomington Police Department's Multicultural Advisory Committee where his work has strengthened the connection between the Somali community and the City. Mood was part of the community engagement process over the last year to find budget solutions to challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.



## JASMYN GREEN

**J**asmyn Green is a program manager at local nonprofit Oasis for Youth. She is a fierce advocate for youth, with 15 years of direct service and leadership work in youth services. Green started her career as an outreach worker with District 202 StreetWorks. She then went on to work at Lutheran Social Services, Salvation Army and Face 2 Face. Green is part of several community efforts that focus on the importance of racial equity and how inequalities create youth homelessness in Minnesota. She is also a teacher. Green continues to share her knowledge and skill with the youth-serving community as a trainer and advisor, especially on the topics of parenting and working with youth who are commercially sexually exploited.



## JERRY W. BLACKWELL

**J**erry W. Blackwell is the founding partner and chair of Blackwell Burke P.A. He serves as national and trial counsel in complex litigation cases around the country and has recently accepted an appointment to serve as a special prosecutor in the State v. Chauvin et al. prosecution involving the death of George Floyd. Blackwell is a founder of the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers and served for eight years as an at-large member of the Minnesota Commission on Judicial Appointments during the Governor Mark Dayton administration. He collaborated with the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial and other supporters to secure the posthumous pardon of Max Mason, who was wrongfully convicted of raping a white woman in 1920. The posthumous pardon was the first ever in Minnesota history.

He is the recipient of numerous recognitions for community service and excellence in the practice of law, including being ranked by Chambers and Partners; named a Minnesota Attorney of the Year; recognition by BTI as a Legal Mover & Shaker; being named a Client Service All-Star, and also being named a Client Service MVP. He has also been recognized as a Minnesota Super Lawyer continuously since 2003.



*Photos courtesy of Dr. Josie Johnson, Dinna Wade-Ardley, Nur Mood, Jasmyn Green and Jerry W. Blackwell.*