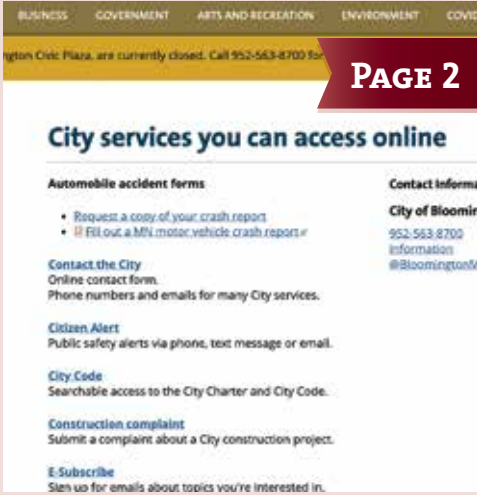


BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



MAY 2020

PAGE 2



PAGE 3



PAGE 4



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Photo courtesy Jason Bates.

MAYOR'S MEMO BLOOMINGTON RISING TO THE CHALLENGE IN FACE OF UNCERTAINTY

By Mayor Tim Busse

I hope you are all doing well and staying safe and healthy. Continuing to adhere to social distancing and other guidelines that are in place will help us flatten the curve of COVID-19. We're really appreciative of the sacrifice and work that it takes to do that.

We're encouraging people to get outside and enjoy our parks and trails safely and wisely, maintaining that social distance. City Council and City staff have modified operations to keep a safe distance. We held our first-ever remote Council meeting last month with councilmembers calling in and taking public comments over the phone.

At its April 6 meeting, the City Council extended the local emergency declaration to June 30 in order to officially authorize continuation of the City's emergency operations plan. The extension of the emergency declaration does not affect decisions about stay-at-home orders or business closures. These are made at the state level.

On March 16, the City Council consented to a local emergency declaration, effective for a 30-day period, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The declaration formally authorizes the City to implement its emergency operations plan. The plan describes the basic strategies the City uses to mobilize resources and conduct activities to guide and support our local emergency management efforts.

Know that during the pandemic, work at the City continues with careful measures in place. Police, Fire and Public Works are out providing essential City services residents would expect to see on a daily basis. Other City staff are working behind the scenes.

If you need City services, you can call the main line at 952-563-8700. Someone will be there to answer your questions. Another option is to visit the City website at blm.mn/covidresources where you'll find a list of sources for reliable COVID-19 information.

While most City services continue to function, some are on hold because the facilities are no longer open to the public. Creekside Community Center, Bloomington Ice Garden, the Center for the Arts, Motor Vehicle and Civic Plaza were closed in March. The decisions to close were based on the most recent set of facts and recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health and Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention.

Bloomington's response to COVID-19 was also the focus of the first-ever State of the Community presentation held in March. I along with other City officials and local

community leaders provided real-time information during the event, which replaced the annual State of the City address.

The State of the Community also included updates from Bloomington Public Schools, Normandale Community College, VEAP, Oasis for Youth and Cornerstone Advocacy Service. Representatives provided updates on how the pandemic has changed their organizations and the need for collaboration.

For some time now, I've been an advocate for aligning the goals, strategies and resources of Bloomington, including all community partners. If we could work in partnership, to identify needs and assets, propose solutions and pilot new approaches, we would be a much stronger community. Sometimes a crisis helps to push talk into the realm of action, and I see that opportunity here.

One thing I know is that Bloomington comes together in times of crisis. While the situation is constantly changing with unprecedented measures in place, we will all get through this because of our strength as a community.

As the situation changes, keep informed through the City's website and social media accounts.

"One thing I know is that Bloomington comes together in a time of crisis."

EVENT CANCELLATIONS AND FACILITY CLOSURES

The City of Bloomington is closely monitoring the situation surrounding COVID-19 to protect the health and safety of the community. Check the list of cancelled events and closed facilities at blm.mn/COVID-info for the most up-to-date information.

COVID-19 LINKS

COVID-19 home

2019 Novel Coronavirus (Hmong)

Koronafayraska Cusub ee 2019 (Somali)

Enfermedad del Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) (Spanish)

City services you can access online

Closures, cancellations and modifications

How to help

City services you can access online

Automobile accident forms

- Request a copy of your crash report
- Fill out a MN motor vehicle crash report

Contact the City

Online contact form. Phone numbers and emails for many City services.

Citizen Alert

Public safety alerts via phone, text message or email.

City Code

Searchable access to the City Charter and City Code.

Contact Information

City of Bloomington

952-563-8700
information@BloomingtonMN.gov

ACCESS CITY SERVICES ONLINE

With COVID-19 causing various event cancellations and facility closures, City staff are still working to provide services to the community. Some staff such as Police, Fire and Public Works are reporting to work as usual to provide essential services. Many staff are able to do their jobs remotely to comply with Governor Tim Walz's stay-at-home order. Even with Civic Plaza and other City facilities closed, you can access many City services by phone or online.

City services available online include: homestead applications, online utility bill pay, pending assessment, building permit applications, various planning applications, pothole repair reports, home improvement loan applications and more. Find a full list with links to resources at blm.mn/online. To be directed to other services, call 952-563-8700.

GET THE CITY NEWS YOU NEED

There's no better time to stay informed about City news. There are a variety of ways you can find the information you want and need about City services, facilities and operations and other resources.

E-Subscribe—Visit blm.mn/subscribe to sign up for email updates on a variety of projects and topics ranging from public health to the pavement management program.

Citizen Alert—Visit blm.mn/citizenalert to sign up for email, call and/or text emergency notifications.

Social media—Follow the City on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Nextdoor to stay informed about what's happening in Bloomington.

Cable TV and YouTube—Watch the weekly news show Bloomington Today, City Council meetings and more on BTV at blm.mn/BTV-live on channel 14 or 859 for HD or on Roku and Apple TV. You can also view these productions on the City's YouTube account at blm.mn/youtube.

Webcast of City Council meetings—All City Council meetings are livestreamed online at blm.mn/btv-live. You can also view them online after they occur at blm.mn/council.

The Briefing—Read this newsletter as it is delivered to your mailbox monthly. You can also sign up to receive the electronic version through E-Subscribe at blm.mn/briefing.



BLOOMINGTON TV



BRIEFING

Volume 28, Number 05

The *Briefing*, published monthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our 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
Website: BloomingtonMN.gov

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Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

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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 FAQ

Knowing the facts about COVID-19 can protect you, your family and your community. The Minnesota Department of Health has online resources which address frequently asked questions.

SLOWING THE SPREAD

In March, Governor Walz issued an executive order directing residents statewide to stay at home and limit movements outside the home beyond essential needs. Activities that are considered essential include health and safety, some outdoor recreational pursuits, purchasing supplies and the care of others, to name a few. See a full list at blm.mn/C-19needs. And if you have to leave your home, practice social distancing to keep at least six feet away from other people.

COVID-19 IN MINNESOTA

Want to find out what is happening with COVID-19 in Minnesota? Find the number of documented cases by county and more at blm.mn/C19situation. You can also sign up to receive email or mobile alerts when data is updated at blm.mn/c-19update.

SYMPTOM SELF-CHECKER

The free coronavirus self-checker is a guide to help you make decisions and weigh considerations about appropriate medical care. Take a COVID-19 assessment at blm.mn/C19check. Note: The self-checker system is not intended for the diagnosis or treatment of disease or other conditions, including COVID-19. If you have symptoms and can manage those symptoms at home, do so. If you are older or have underlying medical conditions, let your health care provider know you are sick. Seek medical care right away if your illness worsens, for example if you have difficulty breathing.

STAY SAFE WHILE GETTING GROCERIES

Even during the COVID-19 outbreak, we all need to get food and supplies. Take a look at these reminders on how to shop for groceries with safety in mind.

- Shop online if possible.
- Write a list ahead of time to make sure you get in and get out quickly.
- Minimize the number of trips you make to the store.
- Check store hours. Some stores are open early for seniors.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when you have to go out in public.
- Practice safe social distancing.
- Use sanitizer wipes on the carts.
- Just buy what you need.
- If possible, use touchless payment (pay without touching money, a card, or a keypad).
- Wash fruits and vegetables with water.

SUPPORTING BLOOMINGTON BUSINESSES: CURBSIDE PICKUP AT RESTAURANTS

Times are uncertain, but meals still go on several times a day. If eating out of your pantry gets stale, consider curbside pickup or delivery from a Bloomington restaurant.

Not sure where to go? The Bloomington Convention & Visitors Bureau lists local restaurants offering takeout and delivery at blm.mn/btakeout. Not all restaurants are listed. If you're wondering if a restaurant is providing curbside or delivery service, give them a call.

Follow Minnesota Department of Health recommendations for social distancing when visiting local restaurants for curbside pickup or delivery. Maintain a distance of six feet between yourself and any other customers and restaurant staff, keep hands clean, and do not go out if you are sick.



PROTECT YOURSELF FROM COVID-19 SCAMS

Bloomington Police wants to help you stay safe from scams. The Federal Trade Commission has noticed an increase in scam calls and emails resulting from the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19. Here are some tips on keeping yourself safe from scammers:

- Hang up on robocalls.
- No one will need to sign up for the stimulus checks coming from the Federal government.
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations and home test kits.
- Don't click on or respond to emails asking for personal information in order to receive an economic stimulus check from the government.
- Don't click on links from sources you don't know.
- Don't click on or respond to emails that claim a positive COVID-19 test within your workplace.

- Don't click on or respond to emails claiming to be from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the World Health Organization.
- Don't give out any personal information, such as your social security number, PayPal account or banking information.

Visit blm.mn/stimulus_scams to find information that will help you distinguish rumor from fact when it comes to COVID-19.



BOOK 'EM CANCELLED

The annual used book sale hosted by the Bloomington Crime Prevention Association, Book 'Em, will not take place in 2020. For a list of City cancellations and closures, visit blm.mn/COVID-info.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE DURING COVID-19

Response to medical emergencies has been adjusted to protect you and first responders during the COVID-19 outbreak. If you have a need for emergency medical response, first responders may be acting differently than in the past. Rest assured, if you call 911 with a medical emergency, first responders will be sent to assist you.

As the first responders approach you, they may stop about six feet away and ask you questions about your medical issue, your symptoms and when they began. If you have flu symptoms, need immediate assistance or are unable to communicate, the first responders will wear a mask, face shield, glasses or goggles, and exam gloves.

BE AN ELECTION JUDGE

Election judges are needed in Bloomington. Election judges are paid for their training and work performed on election days. Interested residents are encouraged to apply at blm.mn/electionjudge. May 15 is the deadline to apply to work in the primary election. For more information, call 952-563-8729.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE DURING THE COVID CRISIS

Are you unemployed or working fewer hours and looking for resources that could help? Find the latest COVID-19 resources at blm.mn/covidresources or call 651-201-3920.

BACK TO BASICS: COVID-19

As the COVID-19 situation continues, it's important to remember things that everyone should be doing: Regularly wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. Keep a distance of six feet or more from others. Stay home when you are sick. Cover your cough.

Following these guidelines could help to keep your family, friends and neighbors safe. For more information, visit blm.mn/COVID-ph or call Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-3920.

WAYS TO REDUCE COVID-19 STRESS

Consider the different ways below to support yourself during this difficult time. Find more help if you need it at blm.mn/C19MDH or call 651-201-5000, or visit blm.mn/CDCcope, or call 1-800-985-5990.

Take a break from hearing about the pandemic. From time to time, distance yourself from news outlets. Aim to eat healthy foods and well-balanced meals, get regular exercise and plenty of sleep. Talk with people you trust about how you are feeling and share your concerns. If stress is hindering your daily activities for several days in a row, call a health care provider. If you or someone you care about becomes overwhelmed with depression or anxiety, or threatens to harm themselves or others, call 911.

GIVING BACK

The City worked with more than 1,000 volunteers in 2019 – 2020. Volunteers contributed an average of 45 hours with an estimated annual dollar value of more than \$1 million. In addition to helping with programs and events, about 81 residents volunteered to serve the City and City Council on boards, commissions, and advisory committees.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are many organizations in the area doing work to help those in need. If you want to get involved by donating money, food or your time if you are healthy, consider the following organizations.

American Red Cross—Eligible, healthy donors are urged to make an appointment to donate. Visit blm.mn/redcross.

Cornerstone—Donate cleaning sprays, wipes, paper towels, hand soap, dish soap and sponges at 1000 East 80th Street Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Call 952-884-0376 and press 7 to donate.

Good In the Hood—Donate shoes, money or nonfood items, such as household cleaners and soap. For more information, call 612-217-4003 or email info@goodinthehood.org.

Hennepin County—Staff, including first responders, public health workers and hospital/clinic staff, are running low on protective gear. Donate protective face wear, Nitrile gloves, Tyvek coveralls and foot covers, eye protection at Southdale Library in Edina, 7001 York Avenue.

Meals on Wheels—There is an increased need for on-call volunteers to continue meal service to people who depend on them. Healthy people can sign up to be on call at blm.mn/mealsonwheels.

Normandale Community College—Donate to fund student emergency grants for food and other basic needs. Visit blm.mn/nccfoundation for more information.

Oasis for Youth—This organization empowers youth at risk of homelessness. If you wish to donate, you can do so online at blm.mn/ofy.

Presbyterian Homes—Seeking youth and adult volunteers to make connections with older adults. Volunteers should be interested in becoming a pen pals, sending small crafts, making phone calls, sharing stories and more. Apply at blm.mn/phv.

St. Bonaventure Catholic Community—The food shelf remains open with curbside pickup for clients. Funds are running low for shelf-stable items. Donate shelf-stable food or household items at St. Vincent de Paul Society, 901 East 90th Street.

VEAP—Help VEAP continue to provide healthy foods, social services, housing stability and support services by donating money, toilet paper, cleaning supplies and shelf-stable food items. If you are healthy, you could also volunteer in VEAP's warehouse or as a van driver.

You can find more information at blm.mn/giveback.

YARD WASTE SERVICES

Yard waste subscription service will be available through November 30, weather permitting. Subscribers will be billed \$82.71 on their utility bills.

Regular weekly yard waste collection includes garden, shrub and tree waste, along with grass clippings, leaves, weeds, wood chips and prunings. Branches and twigs must be approximately three feet in length and no more than three inches in diameter. Place in compostable bags, containers, or on the ground tied in bundles weighing 50 lbs. or less.

Residents may also opt for on-call services with a \$4.16 per bag fee. To arrange on-call yard waste service, call 952-563-8757. Residents will prepay for on-call stickers and they will be mailed to your home address. Call a few days prior to your collection day to allow time for processing and mailing.



DON'T FLUSH WIPES

Did you know that flushable wipes are really not flushable? While marketing labels would lead us to believe otherwise, the truth is flushable or disposable wipes do not break down even after standing in water for days, weeks or months. Wipes clog pipes and pumps.

Always discard wipes in a garbage can. Do not flush your disposable wipes. Improper disposal of wipes and other household items is a common cause of sewer service line backups for homeowners and municipal systems. Little wipes can cause big issues, which are costly to fix.

"We understand that there's probably an increased use of disinfecting and personal wipes. Despite what the labels may say or how they're advertised, they're not flushable and only cause us problems in the wastewater collection system, primarily by plugging lift station pumps," Utilities Superintendent Scott Anderson said.

Do your part, and toss wipes into the garbage can. For more information visit blm.mn/pw or call 952-563-8760.

PUBLIC WORKS OPEN HOUSE CANCELLED

The City's sixth annual Public Works open house is cancelled due to COVID-19 recommendations. Watch for another open house coming in 2021. In the meantime, celebrate National Public Works Week, May 17 – 23, by giving Public Works staff a wave or a smile when you see them out on the job in Bloomington. For more information, visit blm.mn/pwoh, email amarohn@bloomingtonmn.gov or call 952-563-4532.

AROUND THE COMMUNITY

SOCIAL DISTANCING: ALIVE & KICKIN

With times as they are, organizations in the Bloomington Center for the Arts are looking to find ways to engage their communities in absence of events and performances. The senior rock group, Alive & Kickin, keeps performers, volunteers and fans in touch with each other online.

"We are focused on how we can keep our seniors engaged during this time," Executive-Artistic Director and Founder Michael Matthew Ferrell said.

In March, Alive & Kickin launched a new more user-friendly website. You can check it out at blm.mn/AndK. Visitors will find a blog, picture and video galleries, current cast biographies, video tributes to commemorate members who have passed and more.

A recent public service announcement on the Alive and Kickin Facebook page reminds readers to "Rock out ... Stay home, and stay healthy ... Because we need to see you at our next Alive & Kickin show."

SPREADING CHEER

If you've been taking walks through your neighborhood during this time of self-quarantine and social distancing, you may have noticed art popping up around you. Many parents and kids are creating and posting encouraging signs and other decorations in windows for passersby. There are also many encouraging messages written on sidewalks throughout the community to lift spirits.

Have you seen something cool happening in the community? Let us know! Upload a photo on the City's website at blm.mn/photo.



Members of Alive & Kickin keep in touch virtually.



Bloomington resident Crosby decorates her windows with homemade art.

PARKS PROVIDE NATURE BREAKS

Bloomington's trails, parks and many park amenities remain open. To ensure everyone's safety, park visitors should follow all CDC precautionary guidelines: Stay home if you're sick. Practice social distancing—keep six feet or more between you and others. Avoid large group gatherings and sports activities. Wash hands frequently. Avoid touching surfaces.

"We encourage residents to use playgrounds and other park facilities responsibly. We are working to make sure our community has the right information to use facilities safely," Director of Parks and Recreation Ann Kattreh said. "We want everyone to enjoy being active outside during this time, provided they practice safe social distancing."

If you have comments or concerns about park use from 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. call 952-563-4773, email PRT@BloomingtonMN.gov or fill out the online form at blm.mn/park-form. Between 7 p.m. and 11 a.m., call 952-563-8811. For more information, visit blm.mn/prt.



PARK SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

Let us know what you want to see in the future of Bloomington parks at blm.mn/projectbloom.

HELP PROTECT WATER, ADOPT A DRAIN

Want to help preserve and protect Bloomington's water? It's easy with the adopt-a-storm-drain program. Make a commitment to clean out a storm drain at least once during the spring and fall or other times as needed, then sign up for the program online. Twice a year, report your debris removal online or by returning a postcard. Program participants receive a yard sign to show they are protecting our waters. Last year, 275 Bloomington participants collected nearly 5,000 pounds of debris from their adopted storm drains. Adopting a storm drain is a fun, cost-free project the whole family can do. For more information or to sign up, visit adopt-a-drain.org.

YOU CAN COUNT ON BLOOMINGTON'S WATER

Take water off your list of worries. Bloomington still has great-tasting, high-quality water on tap. City water services continue uninterrupted, and your water is safe to drink. Bloomington's water treatment process physically removes, disinfects and chemically inactivates contaminants, bacteria and viruses. Staff is on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week operating the plant and monitoring water quality to ensure reliable, safe and great tasting water. Additionally, staff collects samples throughout the distribution system to ensure water quality standards are met. For more information, visit blm.mn/watertreatment or call 952-563-8777.

ORGANICS RECYCLING CONTINUES

With International Compost Awareness Week taking place May 3 – 9, it's a great time to think about how you can get involved. Did you know that you can recycle your food scraps and non-recyclable paper in Bloomington? The City-operated organics drop-offs at Valley View Park, 201 East 90th Street; and West Bush Lake Park, 95th Street and West Bush Lake Road, remain open to the public at this time. The Hennepin County-operated organics drop-off site, at the South Hennepin Recycling and Problem Waste Drop-off Center, at 1400 West 96th Street, is temporarily closed.

All residents are eligible to participate in this free program. Follow Minnesota Department of Health recommendations while bringing organics to the drop-off sites. Maintain a distance of six feet between you and any other organics drop-off users and do not use the drop-offs if you are sick. Wash your hands before and after use. To get started, sign up at blm.mn/organics, or call 952-563-8760.