

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

PAGE 7

PAGE 8



FIND US ONLINE
BLOOMINGTON MN.gov



Presort Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Twin Cities, MN
Permit
#2293

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
1800 WEST OLD SHAKOPEE ROAD
BLOOMINGTON MN 55431-3027

ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER



Curbside organics recycling service starts the week of March 7. Learn more about the service and how to sign up on page 3.

A FUNDING SOURCE TO IMPROVE VALUED CITY FACILITIES COUNCIL SEEKS AUTHORITY TO ASK VOTERS FOR BLOOMINGTON SALES TAX

On January 24, the City Council passed a resolution asking the legislature to allow the City to put a new local sales tax on the ballot for residents to consider. The proposed Bloomington sales tax would be a 0.5% (one-half of one percent) added tax charged on retail sales in the city. The revenue collected by the sales tax would be used to provide funding to improve aging City facilities. This local sales tax would generate approximately \$11 million each year over 20 years.

It is estimated that 75% of a Bloomington sales tax would be paid for by visitors, and 25% would be paid for by residents, according to an independent analysis by the University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality.

The new tax would only apply to items that are currently taxable, meaning that items such as clothes and staple groceries would not be taxed. Approximately 80 units of government in Minnesota currently have a local sales tax.

HOW WOULD A BLOOMINGTON SALES TAX GET APPROVED?

The legislature will consider the request during the 2022 legislative session. If Bloomington's request is passed by the state legislature this session, then the next step is a ballot question for Bloomington voters. Residents would have the opportunity to vote on a Bloomington sales tax for each project separately, most likely during this year's November general election. If approved by Bloomington voters, the sales tax would go into effect by the second quarter of 2023.

WHAT WOULD THE SALES TAX BE USED FOR?

- Many of Bloomington's most-used assets need significant investment or replacement. Four projects have been identified that could be funded through a Bloomington sales tax (estimated costs do not include interest or financing costs):
- **Bloomington Ice Garden** renovation including a new roof, a new refrigeration system, locker room improvements, and other guest service and ADA improvements: \$32 million estimated cost.
 - A new **community health and wellness center** to replace the Public Health building and Creekside Community Center: \$70 million estimated cost.
 - **Dwan Golf Course** improvements including total replacement of the clubhouse as well as golf course and bunker improvements and on-course restrooms : \$15 million estimated cost.
 - **Bloomington Center for the Arts** expansion that would add a concert hall and Schneider Theater updates: \$33 million estimated cost.

WHAT WOULD THESE PROJECTS COST THROUGH THIS NEW CITY SALES TAX VS. PROPERTY TAX?

Funding these projects with a property tax would cost the average Bloomington homeowner \$210 per year. Because 75% of the sales tax money is paid for by people visiting Bloomington, the estimated cost of the projects spread across the 38,000 households would lower the cost to about \$72 per year.

For more information, visit blm.mn/bst.



MAYOR’S MEMO

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSING SICK AND SAFE LEAVE

By Mayor Tim Busse

The City Council is considering an earned sick and safe leave ordinance for workers at Bloomington businesses. An earned sick and safe leave ordinance would require employers operating in Bloomington to provide some amount of paid sick and safe leave to employees. There’s currently no such requirement in Minnesota state law. Three of Minnesota’s largest cities—Duluth, Saint Paul and Minneapolis—have already adopted similar ordinances.

For the past few years, a number of councilmembers have shared their concern about the inequities experienced by workers who do not have a right to take time off from their jobs when their personal or family circumstances require it. Going through a pandemic only heightened that concern as we’ve seen disparities in how the virus has affected people working in service industries that don’t often have the benefit of paid time off. We know when leave isn’t available workers are more likely to go to work when they or their family members are sick, which is a burden to them and a risk to everyone.

The Bloomington City Council appointed a task force in June 2021 to develop an ordinance requiring the provision of paid earned sick and safe leave to individuals working in Bloomington. Task force members include Bloomington business owners and managers, the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, nonprofits, organized labor and engaged residents. They gathered information, received input from stakeholders and reviewed existing ordinances in other Minnesota cities. The City’s Community Outreach and Engagement staff also performed surveys of Bloomington employers, employees and the public.

The task force drafted a proposed ordinance that protects the well-being of Bloomington’s workforce and residents. It balances the unique needs and circumstances of Bloomington employers while recognizing that the city is part of a regional service and labor market. The proposed ordinance would allow employees to accrue a minimum of one hour of sick and safe leave for every 30 hours worked up to a maximum of 18 hours in a calendar year. In businesses with six or more employees it would be paid time off. In businesses with five or less employees it would be unpaid time off.

The recommended ordinance supports the City Council’s strategic priority of equity and inclusion. It is intended to promote and protect the well-being of the Bloomington workforce and residents; support the City Council’s strategic priority of equity and inclusion; and balance the unique needs and circumstances of employers with a recognition that Bloomington is part of a regional labor and service market.

The City Council discussed this proposed ordinance in January and February. That discussion will continue in March. Visit blm.mn/essl for more information.

PROPERTY VALUATION NOTICES ON THE WAY

Bloomington property owners can expect to see estimated market value notices from the City via the U.S. Postal Service in mid-March. Overall, residential value increased 17%, with some individual property values seeing an increase of 25 – 35% or more. On the whole, commercial property values have increased about 8%, with most properties in the hospitality industry seeing larger increases. Apartment values overall have increased about 13%, depending on the sector. Overall, industrial values increased approximately 18%.

“The Assessing Division encourages property owners to review their 2022 valuations,” Residential Appraisal Manager Jennifer Blumers said. “If you would like to appeal your value, you need to show clear and convincing evidence that your 2022 valuation is incorrect, including private appraisals or comparable property sales search from the Hennepin County website.”

If you have questions about appealing your value after collecting supporting documentation, contact the Assessing Division at 952-563-8722. Visit blm.mn/propertyinfo or call 952-563-8722 for more information regarding process and deadlines.

By the time you receive your proposed tax statement in November 2022 or property tax statement in March of 2023, you will no longer be able to appeal your 2022 value. Hennepin County will begin to mail county property tax statements for 2022 in early March. Visit blm.mn/state-tax to find out if you are eligible for a Minnesota property tax refund.



BRIEFING

Volume 30, Number 03

The *Briefing*, published monthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to residents and businesses. Direct your 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

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
Lona Dallessandro
612-231-6824
ldallessandro@BloomingtonMN.gov



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

Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

COUNCILMEMBERS

council@BloomingtonMN.gov

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Jamie Verbrugge, <i>City Manager</i>	952-563-8780 citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov
Michael Sable, <i>Assistant City Manager</i>	952-563-8780 citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov
Karla Henderson, <i>Community Development</i>	952-563-8947 communitydevelopment@BloomingtonMN.gov
Diann Kirby, <i>Community Services</i>	952-563-8717 communityservices@BloomingtonMN.gov
Lori Economy-Scholler, <i>Finance</i>	952-563-8791 finance@BloomingtonMN.gov
Ulie Seal, <i>Fire</i>	952-563-4801 fire@BloomingtonMN.gov
Amy Cheney, <i>Information Technology</i>	952-563-4885 it@BloomingtonMN.gov
Melissa Manderschied, <i>Legal</i>	952-563-8753 legal@BloomingtonMN.gov
Ann Kattreh, <i>Parks and Recreation</i>	952-563-8877 parksrec@BloomingtonMN.gov
Mike Hartley, <i>Police</i>	952-563-8601 police@BloomingtonMN.gov
Karl Keel, <i>Public Works</i>	952-563-8731 publicworks@BloomingtonMN.gov
General phone number	952-563-8700

The City of Bloomington does not discriminate against or deny the benefits of its services, programs, or activities to a qualified person because of a disability. The City will provide a reasonable accommodation or modify its policies and programs to allow people with disabilities to participate in all City services, programs, activities, and employment. The law does not require the City to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services, or impose an undue financial or administrative burden on the City. To make a request for a reasonable accommodation, ask for more information, or to file a complaint, contact the Community Outreach and Engagement Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; 952-563-8733, MN Relay 711.



CURBSIDE ORGANICS RECYCLING NOW IN BLOOMINGTON

Now you can turn your food scraps into something good. Starting the second week of March, residents will be able to recycle organics for composting at the curb. This new service ensures that the City of Bloomington is in compliance with Hennepin County Ordinance 13. The ordinance requires cities with more than 10,000 residents to make curbside organics recycling available in 2022.

Like regular recycling, curbside organics recycling service will be paid for by all residents in the City’s garbage and recycling program. The monthly rate for this service is \$5.50. Organics recycling reduces the amount of trash you produce at home, which could save you money if you reduce the size of the cart you need for trash collection.

Organics collected at the curb will be turned into compost, which will be used to add valuable nutrients back into the soil. When compost is added to soil, it reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides and increases water retention, allowing for more efficient water use. The compost will be used primarily by commercial landscapers, in road construction projects and in gardens. Turning organics into compost is better for the environment than burying or burning it. Composting reduces greenhouse gas emissions at landfills and increases energy efficiency at garbage incinerators.

Residents who sign up for the service will receive a 30-gallon organics cart that will be collected weekly on their garbage day and a welcome packet with information and tips for collecting organics at home. You can find a list of what should be placed in an organics recycling bin online at blm.mn/organics.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH MY ORGANICS IF I DON’T HAVE CITY GARBAGE AND RECYCLING SERVICE?

Drop off organics at one of the City’s organics free drop-off sites. The City will continue to operate the free organics drop-offs for residents in multifamily housing that do not participate in the City’s garbage and recycling program. To start composting now, visit blm.mn/organics.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

To sign up to receive your organics cart, call Utility Billing at 952-563-8726, email utilitybilling@bloomingtonmn.gov or visit blm.mn/organics.

TIME-OF-SALE ENERGY DISCLOSURE ORDINANCE TAKES EFFECT NEXT MONTH

Last September, the City Council adopted an ordinance that will help potential homebuyers know important information about a home’s energy-efficiency before buying. The time-of-sale energy disclosure ordinance leverages the City’s existing time-of-sale inspection to gather and disclose information about a home’s energy assets.

Beginning on April 1, 2022, inspectors will collect energy metrics about a home’s heating and cooling system, water heater, wall and attic insulation, and windows before it is listed for sale. The City will summarize those metrics in an energy disclosure report and require sellers to display that report at open houses. Bloomington is the second city in the state to require energy disclosure at the time of sale.

Learn more about the City’s efforts around its Energy Action Plan at blm.mn/eap.

INTERIM POLICE CHIEF MICHAEL HARTLEY RETIRES

After 25 years with the Bloomington Police Department, Interim Police Chief Michael Hartley is retiring. His last day is March 25.

“I stayed 25 years, because I could not imagine being happier anywhere else,” Interim Chief Hartley said.

Before coming to Bloomington, Chief Hartley began his career in Florida as a police officer. In 1997, he was hired by the BPD.

“I feel honored to have been given the opportunity to work for the best police department in the state,” he said. “I am thankful for the friendships and comradery that I built through the years. Being part of a team that often is referred to as a ‘family’ and being there for each other when times were good and bad is the best.”

During his tenure at the BPD, Chief Hartley has filled many different roles, including field training officer, SWAT team member, detective and sergeant. In 2013, he was promoted to commander and assigned to special operations where he oversaw the Mall Unit, Crime Prevention Unit and Emergency Response Unit (SWAT, BOMB, and Negotiators). Then, in 2014, he was promoted to deputy chief. Chief Hartley became interim police chief on February 1, 2021, following the retirement of Chief Jeff Potts.

One of the biggest projects he oversaw was planning for Super Bowl LII. That project began 18 months before the actual game was played in Minneapolis. It involved partners at the local, state and federal levels.

“Not only did we have to put operational plans in place for players and visitors who were staying and/or visiting a number of high-profile attractions in Bloomington, but we also had to account for what a simple five-inch snowfall could do to getting people downtown on game day,” Chief Hartley said.

Another memorable experience was serving on the SWAT team deployed to New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. “One takeaway was the resiliency of the human spirit and their will to survive and eventually rebuild,” he said.

Chief Hartley is a longtime Bloomington resident. Both of his children attended public schools and graduated from Kennedy High School.

“Bloomington is a great city with exceptional staff throughout the organization,” Chief Hartley said. “I will miss connecting with members of the community we serve.”



A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

stories of hope, challenges and resilience

CITY RECOGNIZED FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN BUDGET PLANNING

The City of Bloomington was one of seven recipients of the Government Finance Officers Association 2021 Award for Excellence in Government Finance. Bloomington was selected from entries representing a diverse set of nationwide governments. This year’s winners provide inspiration, model examples and implementation guidance for others looking to adopt GFOA’s best practices or to develop creative, innovative solutions to common government challenges.

The Government Finance Review magazine featured the City’s work with an article titled “Transforming public engagement amid a budget crisis.” The article highlights the work of the Community Budget Advisory Committee in 2020 following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Bloomington’s tourism and entertainment industry and the resulting multimillion-dollar shortfall in the City’s budget.

In an effort to ensure budget discussions reflected community preferences, the City Council appointed a Community Budget Advisory Committee in May 2020. In September that year, the committee asked what services mattered most to residents. The following month, the committee presented budget reduction recommendations to the community for comment and presented their findings to the City Council.

“It means a lot to be recognized for engaging residents in budget decisions,” Budget Manager Kari Carlson said. “2020 was a difficult year for many reasons. Through the work of City staff, Council and CBAC we were able to make sure the community had a bigger voice than ever in how we addressed the budget shortfall.”

Along with the City of Bloomington, recipients include the cities of Austin, Texas; Bondurant, Iowa; Jersey City, New Jersey; and Cook County, Illinois; Miami-Dade County, Florida; and Riverside County, California.



A YEAR IN REVIEW: HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority helps provide affordable housing opportunities for those who are not adequately served by the marketplace, coordinates the City’s efforts to preserve existing neighborhoods and promotes development and redevelopment that enhances the city. The HRA had a busy year helping to provide stabilization and housing opportunities across the entire housing continuum. This includes providing support for community organizations working with people experiencing homelessness and housing instability, rental assistance, affordable housing development, single family rehabilitation and homeownership. The HRA is governed by a five-member board, appointed by the mayor with the approval of City Council, that meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. HRA board meetings are livestreamed on the City’s YouTube channel. For more information about the HRA, visit blm.mn/hra.

HOUSING STABILITY AND RENTAL ASSISTANCE

In 2021, older adults, medically fragile people and people experiencing housing instability experienced an increasing need for temporary housing options in Bloomington. The reasons for this included socioeconomic status, health, safety and mental health concerns. To provide social services resources, food, street outreach, shelter referral services and housing assistance to those who needed it, the City of Bloomington leveraged state and federal funding and partnered with Bloomington Public Schools and community organizations such as VEAP, Affinity Care MN, Cornerstone, Oasis for Youth, Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio, and St. Stephen’s Human Services.

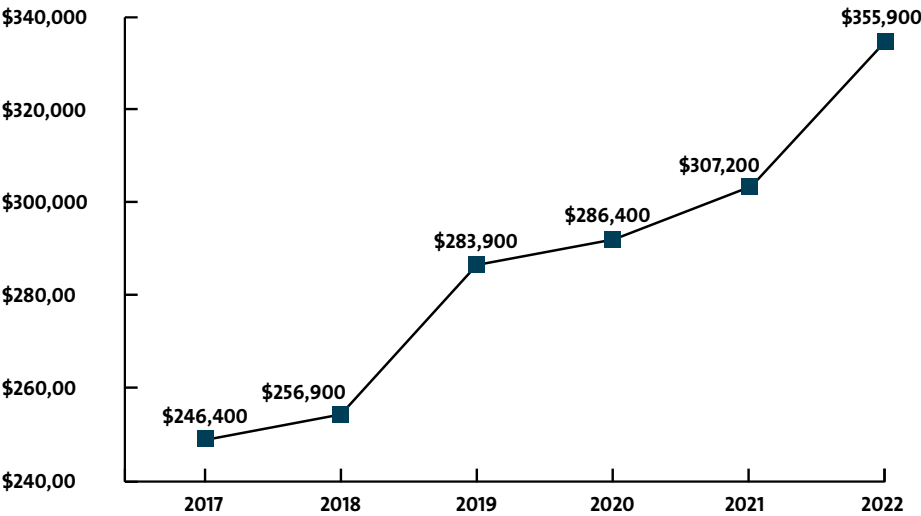
In 2021, more than 650 households were served through rental housing assistance programs administered by the HRA, with the majority served through the federally funded Housing Choice Voucher Rent Assistance Program, more commonly known as Section 8.

St. Stephen’s Human Services Street Outreach works with people living outside or in places not meant for human habitation. St. Stephens helps people navigate the various crises that occur without stable housing and meet people where they are to address immediate, basic needs for safety and survival outside, and assist them in their journey toward permanent housing.

Contact Street Outreach through its Community Line at 612-879-7624.

BLOOMINGTON HOUSING AT A GLANCE

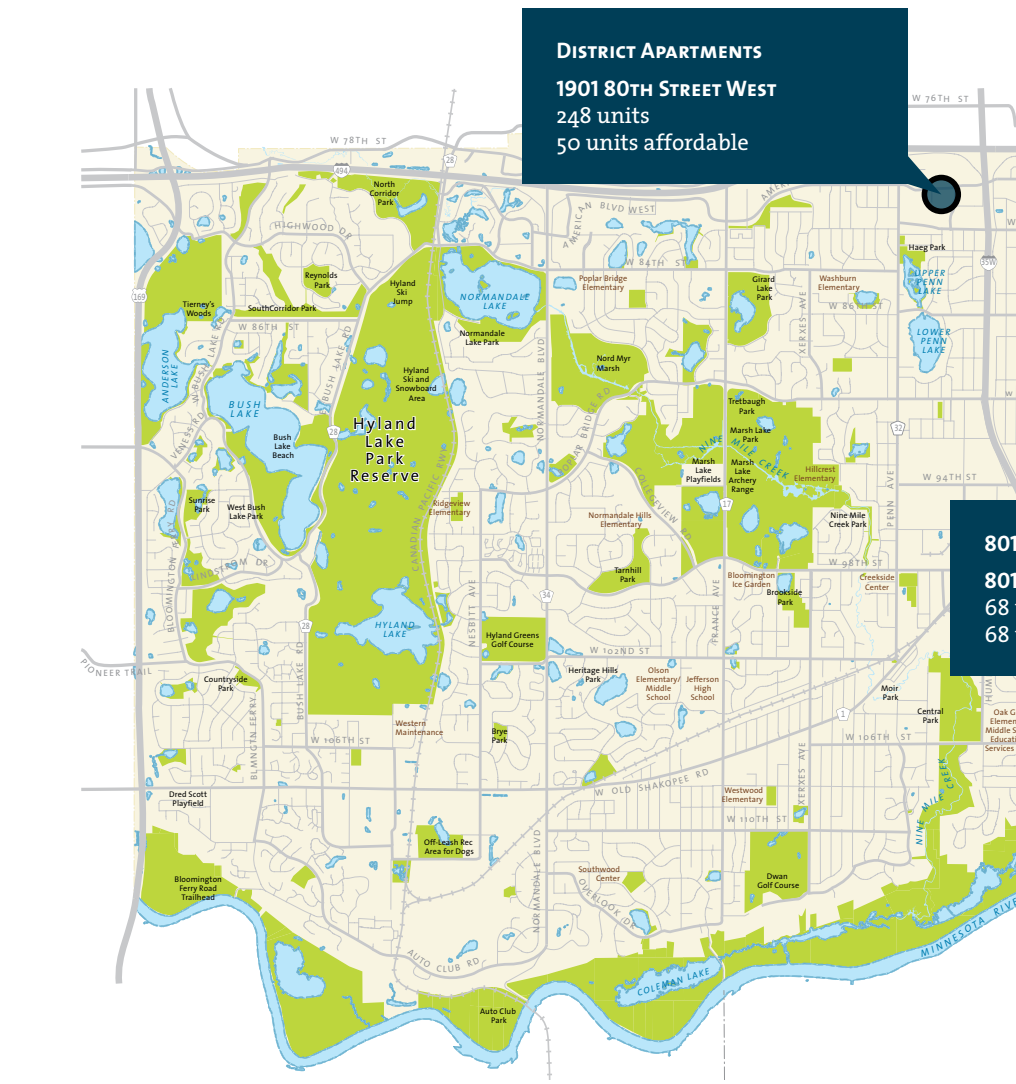
MEDIAN HOME VALUE



MARKET VALUE OF SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

Single family homes in Bloomington continue to be in high demand. The median value home has increased 43.6% since the previous peak in 2007, which was \$280,700.

Source: Bloomington Assessing Division.

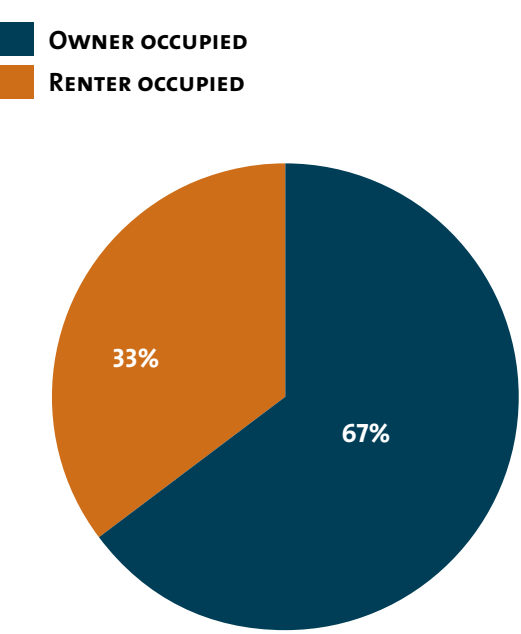


AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



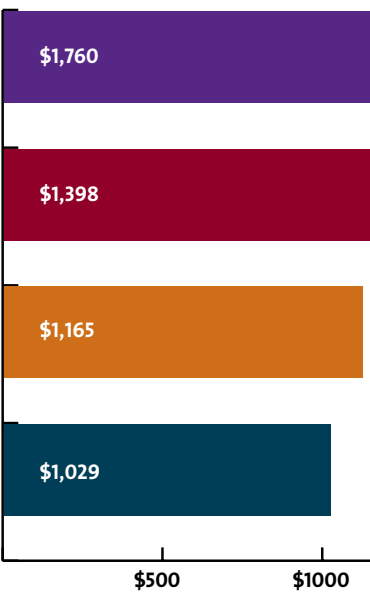
In 2021, 569 units spanning four developments were under construction and at varying stages of leasing. Of these new units, 303 have rents that are affordable to households with incomes that fall between 30% and 60% of the area’s median household income. The remaining 266 units are market rate rents. The map, above, shows where these four developments are in Bloomington.

HOMEOWNERSHIP VS. RENTAL

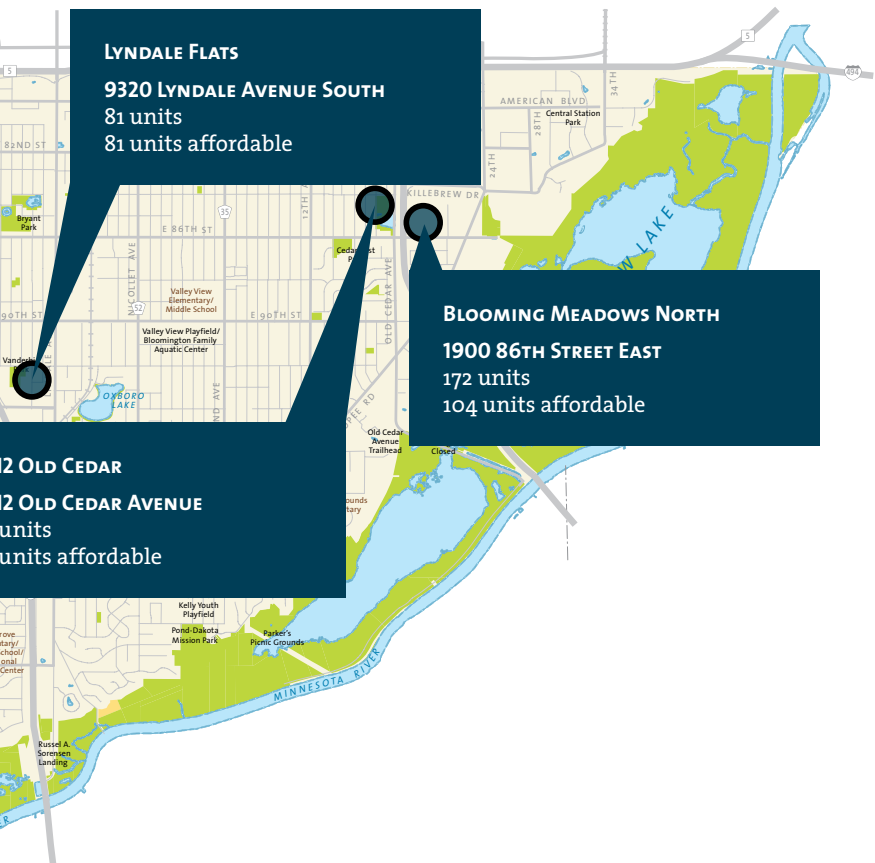


Source: City of Bloomington

COST TO RENT IN BLOOMINGTON



Source: GVA Marquette
Advisors 3Q



Affordable Housing Development



Cost to Buy a Home in Bloomington



Source: Infosparks Northstar MLS.



Homeownership Opportunities

One of the City’s strategic priorities is to increase homeownership opportunities in Bloomington. The City supports this goal by offering education and assistance to first-time and first-generation homeowners. It also prioritizes development of affordable housing stock and offers foreclosure prevention services. The HRA administers the Rental Homes for Future Homebuyers program. This program provides a five-year track for qualified households to rent a home, owned by the HRA, and escrow a portion of their rent to be used as a down payment in the future purchase of a home. In 2021, two households that participated in HRA-administered programs purchased a home.

The Minnesota Homeownership Center, a statewide nonprofit, provided quantitative data and reporting on impacts of down payment assistance, education and counseling services provided to Bloomington households in 2019 – 2020 and housing related impacts of the global pandemic. The Minnesota Homeownership Center provides homebuyer education, counseling, and foreclosure prevention services in Bloomington through its advisor network.



Home Improvement Loans

In 2021, the Home Improvement Loan program was put on pause for several months for a comprehensive assessment and update to its policies, procedures and processes. The program started back up at the end of the year with some revisions. The Home Improvement Loan program provides Bloomington owner-occupied households access to funds to be used for maintaining, repairing and improving their homes. Loans are available in amounts up to \$40,000 for eligible home repairs that address health or safety requirements including electrical, heating, plumbing, energy efficiency and exterior improvements. There are no monthly payments, and the loans accrue interest at an annual rate of 2% for the first 10 years of the 30-year loan term. Homeowners do not have to repay the loan until they sell, transfer title, or the property is no longer their principal place of residence. Program information and electronic application is available online at blm.mn/loans.

Housing Improvement Areas

Town home and condominium homeowner associations that are unable to obtain private financing for improvements to common areas may apply for Housing Improvement Areas financing. Applications are due by March 31, 2022. Program information and application is available online at blm.mn/hia.

A New Look: HRA Gets Fresh Logo in 2021



2022 CURBSIDE CLEANUP

To prepare for your Curbside Cleanup day, set your materials at the curb before 7 a.m. Be ready. Collection trucks pass by one time only. Large appliances and brush are collected for recycling in separate trucks and any remaining items are collected and disposed of in a landfill. Please consider only setting out items that can't be reused or recycled elsewhere. The Curbside Cleanup program is only available to residents in the City's garbage and recycling program, and certain townhomes and apartments that have opted into, and pay for, Curbside Cleanup services.



2022 CLEANUP SCHEDULE

- EAST OF PORTLAND (MONDAY HAULING DISTRICT) APRIL 2
- PENN TO PORTLAND (TUESDAY HAULING DISTRICT) APRIL 9
- FRANCE TO PENN (WEDNESDAY HAULING DISTRICT) APRIL 16
- NORMANDALE TO FRANCE (THURSDAY HAULING DISTRICT) APRIL 23
- WEST OF NORMANDALE (FRIDAY HAULING DISTRICT) APRIL 30

FOLLOW QUANTITY LIMITS AND KNOW WHAT IS AND WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTED AT THE CURB

New in 2022, small items like clothing, bedding, broken toys and garden hoses will not be accepted during Curbside Cleanup. They should be disposed of throughout the year in your regular garbage cart. Regular garbage is sent to the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center in downtown Minneapolis, which is a waste-to-energy facility. Garbage picked up during Curbside Cleanup is taken to a landfill.

See the item quantity and size limits listed below. Items surpassing specified limits will not be picked up and will remain on the curb; residents will need to arrange for bulk material disposal. Excess materials could increase your costs. By disposing of small items throughout the year in your regular garbage, you will reduce the amount of material sent to the landfill and the annual disposal costs associated with this program.

WHAT IS ACCEPTED AT THE CURB



Appliances: Limit of two. 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: Limit of two items. Tie down or disassemble hide-a-way sofa beds so they cannot open when handled.

Mattresses or box springs: Limit of two items.

Other bulky items: Limit of four "other" items. This includes any other bulky item not listed in categories above that cannot fit in a small garbage cart, including:

- Doors, windows, screens, cabinets.
- Large metal items like bikes, grills, lawn mowers, snow blowers, swing sets, treadmills; drain all fluids and remove tires.
- Carpet and pads: Roll and securely tie with twine. Keep under five feet in length and one foot in diameter.
- Garden furniture and décor that cannot fit in a small garbage cart.
- Home décor items like mirrors, lamps.
- Children's items like toys, sporting goods, car seats, strollers and furniture that **cannot fit in a small garbage cart**.

Household building materials: Pile size is limited to what fits in one level, standard size pickup truck bed. Includes building materials such as flooring, drywall, sheetrock, siding and untreated lumber. Lumber must be stacked and no longer than five feet.

Bundled brush: Branches must be smaller than three inches in diameter and three 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.

WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTED AT THE CURB



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. Take these items to the South Hennepin Recycling and Problem Waste Drop-Off Center, 1400 West 96th Street.

Certain building items: Contractor materials, bricks, concrete, railroad ties, shingles (asbestos) or treated wood.

Organic materials: Food waste, grass clippings, leaves, logs, sod and stumps.

Loose cardboard: Extra cardboard that can't fit in your recycling cart can be bundled and placed next to your recycling cart for pick-up.

Recyclable materials: Boxboard, cans, newspapers and plastic bottles.

NEW! Small items that can fit in a small garbage cart: These items should be disposed of throughout the year in the regular garbage that is processed at a waste-to-energy facility instead of landfilled during curbside cleanup.

This includes:

- Clothing, textiles, linens, bedding and pillows.
- Broken toys.
- Books and other entertainment.
- Other home and garden décor that can fit in a large garbage cart.

Small appliances like radios, clocks, coffee makers, and hair dryers.

Small metal items. Take smaller items to the South Hennepin Recycling and Problem Waste Drop-Off Center, 1400 West 96th Street.

FOR MORE CURBSIDE CLEANUP INFORMATION

For questions or other information about Curbside Cleanup, visit blm.mn/curbside or call 952-563-8760. Want to report illegal dumping or people making a mess of your curbside pile? Call the nonemergency number for Bloomington Police 952-563-4900.

To find more tips about how to properly dispose of items not accepted at the curb, visit the Green Disposal Guide on Hennepin County at blm.mn/green-dispose or call 612-348-3777.



Bloomington Fire Department 75th Anniversary: Women in Fire

Women have played an integral role as volunteers, firefighters and officers for much of the Bloomington Fire Department’s history. At the start of the Bloomington Fire Department in 1947, Bonnie Smith was the dispatcher. When there was a fire, she would call Margaret Friendshuh, Evelyn Furuli and Ev Kelley—wives of firefighters at that time—who would then call firefighters to respond to the scene. Over the years, women have served in the fire service in various roles. After 20 years of service as a volunteer firefighter, Kathy Meyer was the first woman firefighter to retire from the BFD. Assistant Fire Chief and Fire Marshal Laura McCarthy has been with the BFD for 32 years.



MEET RETIRED FIREFIGHTER KATHY MEYER

Meyer is a third-generation Bloomington firefighter. Her grandfather, Clarence Hecht, was Captain of Engine Company No. 1. He served on the BFD from April 1948 to August 1969. Her father, Ken Hecht, and her uncle, Wyeth Hecht, were also on the BFD. When she joined the BFD in 1993, her father had one year until retirement, so they served one year together. “At the time, I was working in Bloomington and going home for lunch one day when Engine 1 drove by me. At that moment I thought I could become a firefighter,” Meyer said. “I’m sure some of wanting to become a firefighter came from growing up and watching my dad. That same day I talked to my dad about the requirements of being a firefighter.” She recalls her father told her two things. “One: When there was a fire call, that I better always beat him out of the house. And two: Since I was the first person to arrive at the station, to be sure to open the garage doors right away so it was easy for everyone else to come in,” she said. Meyer said her family was very proud of her and definitely her biggest supporter. “I was the third woman to join the BFD. There was definitely doubt that I wouldn’t be able to do the job even though I had passed the same tests and requirements that everyone else had taken when they joined,” Meyer said. “One way to remove doubt is to show others you can do the job, and that is what I did. I dedicated myself to the job.” For Meyers, firefighting was definitely rewarding, because she was able to help others when they were in need. “People were always so grateful for the service we provided even in the midst of their bad day,” Meyer said. Meyers retired in 2013. “Firefighting is a team effort. Each individual has a role and we all work together,” Meyer said. “I stayed 20 years because of the camaraderie. Everyone always had each other’s back.”



MEET ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF AND FIRE MARSHAL LAURA MCCARTHY

McCarthy was hired in 1989. “I found out about Bloomington Fire Department from a coworker’s boyfriend (later husband) who was a volunteer for Eden Prairie Fire Department. His passion for the department and the fire service was infectious,” McCarthy said. “One Saturday, I stopped in and picked up an application. One month later, I was a member of the BFD and have never regretted it.” McCarthy started as a paid-on-call firefighter. Through the years, McCarthy has held positions of firefighter, driver, captain, fire inspector I and II, fire marshal, district chief and deputy chief of training. In 2015, she was promoted to a full-time position as the assistant chief and fire marshal. Pursuing a male-dominated career in the fire service meant that running into challenges was inevitable. Even finding gear, uniforms and equipment to fit her size was incredibly difficult. “They didn’t have ‘women’s sizes’ or custom-measured gear. You had to find ‘standard’ sizes that would mostly work,” McCarthy said. “I learned to become very creative with duct tape.” The challenge of doing something few women had a chance to do was motivating. “The other was the stigma that women couldn’t do the job,” McCarthy said. “Lucky for me, the BFD was not that way, and the command staff didn’t tolerate that. They made sure I was treated like anyone else and given every chance to succeed.” McCarthy finds fulfillment in making a difference in people’s lives. “The BFD makes a difference,” McCarthy said. “I enjoy the camaraderie with my firefighters. And I get to ride in a fire truck.”

SEE “SWAN LAKE” BALLET

Continental Ballet will present “Swan Lake” at the Schneider Theatre, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, for two weekends in March. “Swan Lake” is set to one of Tchaikovsky’s most ravishing scores. Director and founder Riet Velthuisen has restaged this ballet to fit into a two-hour format, complete with beautiful costumes and sets. The story begins on Prince Siegfried’s 21st birthday celebration, he must choose a bride from the guests. Upset that he is not being allowed to marry for love, Siegfried escapes into the night where he becomes smitten with the swan princess, Odette. Will the two be able to break the curse that made Odette into a swan or will the conniving sorcerer’s daughter, Odile, crush their plans to be together? To find out, you will have to come to the ballet on March 19, 20, 26 or 27. Tickets will be sold online at Brown Paper Tickets or through the ballet box office by calling 952-563-8562. Cost: \$25 – Adults, \$19 – Senior citizens, \$13 – Children ages 13 and under.



Bloomington Fire Department History A Timeline Story: 1970 – 1980

- Throughout the year, the City will present a timeline of Bloomington Fire Department history. Here are highlights from this era.
- 1970** Fire Station #4 built.
 - 1975** Fire Station #5 built.
 - 1979** A new Fire Station 6 was built. It cost \$210,000.
 - 1980** Fire department answered 1,172 calls; the highest number of calls in one year.
 - 1984** BFD hired first female firefighter.
 - 1985** BFD had 132 active members and a class 3 fire insurance rating.

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: BIG’S ANNUAL ICE SHOW

No better way to wrap up the winter season than being at the spectacular ice skating show. The annual ice show is an opportunity for skaters to exhibit their creative skating skills, have fun and work with others to put on an exciting and wonderful show at Bloomington Ice Garden, 3600 West 98th Street. The theme for this year’s ice show is “Night at the Museum.”

Dress Rehearsal Date: Thursday, March 10, 6 p.m.
Dress Rehearsal Ticket: \$5 Adult/Senior/Student.
Show Dates and Times: Friday, March 11, 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 12, 1 p.m.

Advance tickets go on sale March 3 – 10.
Adult \$8
Senior (age 62+) and students (age 6 – 18) \$6
Child (age 5 and under) Free
At the door ticket sales:
Adult \$10
Senior (age 62+) and students (age 6 – 18) \$8
Child (age 5 and under) Free
All tickets are nonrefundable. Tickets can be purchased at the main office at the BIG. To order tickets over the phone with a credit card, call 952-563-8841. For up-to-date information, visit blm.mn/big or blm.mn/annual-ice-show. You can also send an email to Rene Gelecinskyj, BIG Skate School Coordinator, at rgelecinskyj@bloomingtonmn.gov.

MAKE THIS SUMMER AN EXPERIENCE TO REMEMBER

Summer 2022 will be an experience to remember in Bloomington. Parks and Recreation offers a variety of engaging, inclusive, and entertaining experiences that are educational and competitive for people of all ages, abilities and interests. Registration for many programs begins April 18, 12 p.m. Fee assistance is available for qualified participants. You can find all of the details in the full 2022 Summer Experience! catalog online at blm.mn/parksrec.



YOUTH AND INCLUSION PROGRAMS

Camp Kota returns in 2022. This longtime favorite features traditional camp activities like swimming, arts and crafts, and basic outdoors skills, along with paddleboarding and log rolling. Four weekly Camp Kota sessions will be held July 11 – August 5, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. The camp welcomes kids in kindergarten through seventh grade. It takes place at East Bush Lake Park. Registration fee is \$190 – \$275 depending on participant age and city of residency.

Summer Adventure Playgrounds offers a summer of classic fun in a local neighborhood park. Kids in first through seventh grade will enjoy games, sports, arts and crafts, special events and field trips, all supervised by instructors trained in recreation and working with children. The fun takes place Monday – Friday, June 20 – August 11, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., at Brookside (new in 2022), Kelly, Poplar Bridge, Running, Smith, Sunrise and Westwood parks. The fee for an entire summer of fun is \$250 for residents, \$375 for nonresidents.

Playground Littles Program (new in 2022) allows preschool and kindergarten aged children to develop friendships and enjoy structured playtime and activities with peers in a local neighborhood park. Morning, afternoon and full-day options are available June 20 – August 11 at Bryant Park. Fees are \$125 for residents, \$180 for nonresidents per session.

Mobile Recreation (new in 2022) brings fun, free programming to parks around Bloomington on Tuesdays, June 28 – August 2, 1 – 3 p.m. Activities include kickball, spikeball, arts and crafts, pop-up disc golf, slacklining and parachutes. No registration required. Open to anyone 18 years old and younger. Locations currently scheduled include Wright’s Lake, Brye, Bryant, Tarnhill and Valley View parks.

Adaptive Softball offers both recreational and competitive adult, and recreational youth softball opportunities for persons with disabilities. All leagues play from mid-June through early August, with games starting at 6:30 p.m. at Tarnhill Park. Youth play on Mondays. Adults play on Tuesdays. The season culminates with the annual “Under the Lights” game at Red Haddox Field. Registration fee is \$70 for all players and includes a team shirt and photo.

Registration begins April 18, 12 p.m. Details at blm.mn/youth-programs.



ADULT AND YOUTH RECREATION AND SPORTS

Adults looking for competitive sports have come to the right place! Bloomington’s leagues offer a wide variety of traditional and unique activities including tennis, sand volleyball, softball, pickleball, kickball and even bags (or cornhole or baggo or whatever you choose to call it). Visit blm.mn/adultsports to find the summer sports league that is just right for you!

Soccer Shots is a high-energy program that introduces kids to the fundamentals of soccer and builds on the basics. The program highlights respect, teamwork and appreciation. There are three levels for kids age 2 – 8 offered at three different Bloomington Parks at a variety of times. The cost for Summer Soccer Shots is \$136.25 and all equipment, including a jersey, is provided. Registration begins April 18, 12 p.m. Details at blm.mn/youth-programs.

Amazing Athletes helps children build motor skills through non-competitive sports, and inspires a lifelong appreciation of physical activity. Offered in two levels for children ages 1.5 – 6. The curriculum teaches fun, patience, teamwork and self-confidence. The registration fee is \$83. Sessions take place on Thursdays, May 5 – August 11 at Moir Park. Start times vary. For details, visit blm.mn/youth-programs.



ARTS

Forest Bathing (Shinrin Yoku) is an immersive, meditative experience during where you can slow down and connect your senses to the healing beauty of Bloomington’s green spaces. Sessions are offered on Thursdays, 7 – 9 p.m., at Moir Park (April 21), Tierney’s Woods (May 19) and Richardson Nature Center (June 16). Cost is \$45 per person and restricted to adults age 18 and older. Maximum number of participants per session is 24. Registration opens April 1. Details at blm.mn/rec-online.

Artistry has a summer arts camp that is just right for your age, interests and skill level. Aspiring young painters, potters, crafters, illustrators, glass artists (and more) in grades 1 – 9 have half-day and full-day camp options this summer at Bloomington Center for the Arts. Registration opens March 15. Learn more and register online at blm.mn/artistry.

Shrek is coming to Summer Camp 2022. This summer, two weeks of the summer camp program at Artistry will be devoted to all things “Shrek.” There will be opportunities to learn on-stage and off-stage theater skills. Participants will also create pictures, sculptures and all kinds of crafts of Shrek characters. Shrek Camp will be the weeks of July 25 and August 1, the last two weeks of Artistry’s Summer Camp which will run from June 13 – August 5. Registration for Summer Camp will open on March 15. To learn more visit blm.mn/artistry.



FACILITIES

Dwan Golf Course features an 18-hole layout that provides a fun and challenging experience for players of all skill and experience levels. Annual patron, senior and junior loyalty programs make this already value-packed course even more affordable. In 2022, lessons return to **Hyland Greens Golf Course**, which is now managed by Three Rivers Park District. Learning opportunities await for adult and youth beginners in May, June and July. Visit blm.mn/golf for the latest updates.

Creekside Community Center offers programs for older adults such as fitness classes, wood working, crafts, card and music groups and more. The Fare For All discount food sale returns each month. You can even rent space at Creekside for events, meetings and activities of all kinds. Find out more at blm.mn/Creekside.

The Bloomington Ice Garden Skate School is the perfect place to learn and improve your skating skills. There are classes for kids and adults at all experience levels. Details at blm.mn/big.

Bloomington Aquatics offers a pool, a beach and a splash pad for cooling off this summer. **Bloomington Family Aquatic Center** has season passes, aqua exercise classes and much more. The **FREE Cedar Crest Park Splash Pad** is open 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week in the summer. **Bush Lake Beach** is open June 1 – August 31 and offers free parking. Visit blm.mn/aquatics for the latest information.