

BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



MAY 2022

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KITES AND BITES IS BACK

Enjoy a day of kite flying, food trucks and live music from the KidsDance DJ at the return of Kites and Bites on Saturday, June 11, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., at Valley View Playfields, 90th Street and Portland Avenue South. There will also be an array of food trucks and free kite giveaways for kids while supplies last.

“It’s going to be a great family fun day and a kickoff event for summer,” said Recreation Supervisor Mark Morrison.

COUNCIL CONSIDERING EARNED SICK AND SAFE LEAVE ORDINANCE

The City Council reviewed an updated draft of the proposed earned sick and safe leave ordinance for workers at Bloomington businesses in April. An earned sick and safe leave ordinance would require employers to provide some amount of sick and safe leave to employees that work at least 80 hours per year in Bloomington. Three of Minnesota’s largest cities—Duluth, Saint Paul and Minneapolis—have already adopted similar ordinances.

“For the past few years, some councilmembers have shared their concerns about the inequities experienced by workers without the right to take time off from their jobs when their personal or family circumstances require it,” Mayor Tim Busse said.

The City Council appointed a task force in June 2021 to develop an ordinance requiring the provision of earned sick and safe leave to individuals working in Bloomington. Task force members included Bloomington business owners and managers, the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, nonprofits, organized labor and engaged residents.

“The purpose of the ordinance is to ensure that individuals in Bloomington can address their own and their families’ health needs,” Deputy City Attorney Peter Zuniga said. “We found that access to sick and safe leave and the ability to take sick and safe leave is not equally available across populations of different incomes or race and ethnicity.”

The task force drafted a proposed ordinance that protects the well-being of Bloomington’s workforce and residents. It takes into account 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 48 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.

“For the most part, the Bloomington ordinance is consistent with the Minneapolis ordinance given the geographic proximity and the similarities in labor force,” Zuniga said. “One area where we differ is how we treat seasonal employees. The City Council wanted to ensure seasonal employees received the protection of the ordinance as well.”

The City Council discussed this proposed ordinance in January, February and April. Visit blm.mn/essl for more information.



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MAYOR’S MEMO

HOPE ON THE HORIZON

By Mayor Tim Busse

Each year, the Bloomington mayor partners with the city manager and other staff to present a State of the City address. This year, I had the honor of presenting my first State of the City address to a live audience. I can’t begin to tell you how wonderful it was to see so many community members in person. I was sworn in as mayor on January 2, 2020. Now, two years later, I can honestly say there is hope on the horizon. It feels like a long time since we’ve been able to say that.

Back in March 2020, when the effects of the pandemic began to cascade down on us, hope seemed to be in short supply. One of my favorite quotes from a leader who showed the world how to face a daunting challenge is from Winston Churchill who said, “If you’re going through hell, keep going.”

I have no doubt we could go person by person in Bloomington and hear stories of heartbreak and sorrow, of businesses lost and of opportunities missed. But I also know we would hear stories of compassion, and grit and great accomplishment. Stories of people who were going through hell and kept right on going. I salute each and every one of you for your strength, your perseverance, and your wisdom. Thank you for your leadership in this community.

As we are on the other side of another wave of COVID-19 that occurred earlier this year, we have a lot to look forward to. While we expect other waves, we do think this is the beginning of the end of the pandemic phase. I am reminded of another famous phrase from Winston Churchill— “Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”

Now, I would like to offer hope—of renewed optimism, of turning the corner, of expectations that 2022 will be a better year. Why do I feel that hope is on the horizon? Bloomington’s can-do spirit is shaped by strong partnerships and collaborations, confidence in what we have accomplished and what we will achieve, sheer determination and a drive to take care of one another.

Dedication, perseverance and compassion describe those who were responsible for giving us hope for the future during a very dark time and, even still, as we make our way to brighter times. One embodiment of the dedication, perserverance and compassion that got us through the last few years is our hometown Public Health heroes, *pictured above with City Manager Jamie Verbrugge at the 2022 State of the City event*. They provided information, testing sites and vaccination clinics through the pandemic to help keep us all safe. Thank you to those Public Health employees, frontline workers, healthcare professionals, teachers, nonprofit service providers and more, who kept our community going in trying times and as we move forward. Watch this year’s State of the City address online at blm.mn/soc.



POTENTIAL CODE AMENDMENTS FOR ACCESSORY DWELLINGS

The City is considering changes to its regulations of accessory dwelling units, commonly referred to as in-law suites or carriage houses, which are associated with single-family houses.

The City currently only allows accessory dwelling units that are attached to or inside houses. The City began allowing accessory dwelling units in 2009 to expand housing options for residents.

“Because current regulations are fairly restrictive, City staff requested input from the Planning Commission, Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board and City Council regarding possible code amendments to allow more flexibility to create accessory dwelling units,” Planner Shawn James said.

The key change being considered is to allow accessory dwelling units that are physically separate from the main house. Accessory dwelling units will still be subject to many of the same standards required of home additions. Before drafting an ordinance and conducting public hearings, staff would like to receive feedback from residents about concerns or support for detached accessory dwelling units. To learn more, visit the project webpage at blm.mn/adus.

Questions and comments can be submitted online at blm.mn/letstalk or to the Planning Division at planning@BloomingtonMN.gov or 952-563-8920.

BRIEFING

Volume 30, Number 05

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

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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.



This is an aerial rendering of what a renovated Bloomington Ice Garden could look like.

WHY IS THE CITY PROPOSING A LOCAL SALES TAX?

The City Council has put forward a proposal to the Minnesota state legislature to ask Bloomington voters to consider a half-cent sales tax on retail sales in Bloomington to fund four regionally significant projects. “Most of the City’s public infrastructure and facilities were built back in the 1960s and 70s when the city was growing quickly. Many facilities are becoming functionally obsolete,” City Manager Jamie Verbrugge said.

- Bloomington’s request is moving through the legislative process. The Legislature may require some cities to trim their requests. In preparation for that, the City Council prioritized the projects on April 4, as follows:
1. Bloomington Ice Garden improvements
 2. Community Health and Wellness Center
 3. Bloomington Center for the Arts expansion
 4. Dwan Golf Course improvements

Some of the proposed projects, such as the improvements at BIG, are necessary to continue providing effective services. “This project is a high priority for the City because of the need to replace BIG’s refrigeration system, which is needed to make ice. The current system runs on a refrigerant that has been phased out and is no longer being produced or imported,” Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Susan Faus said. “BIG’s roof also has some significant leaks that are an ongoing challenge that must be fixed, in addition to outdated major mechanical systems, such as HVAC. These improvements need to be made. If they are not funded through a sales tax, we’ll need to determine an alternative funding source.”

A revenue source, such as a local sales tax, makes funding the projects possible with less reliance on property taxpayers. According to the University of Minnesota’s Extension Office Study, 75% of a local sales tax revenue would come from nonresidents.

If Bloomington’s local option sales tax request is approved by the state legislature and becomes law, each individual project will go before Bloomington voters in November. For more information about the local sales tax and proposed projects, visit blm.mn/bst.

BUILDING AND INSPECTIONS: TIME-OF-SALE INSPECTION Q&A

The City’s time-of-sale inspection program was updated starting April 1. As part of the home selling process in Bloomington, sellers must apply for a “Time-of-Sale” or TOS inspection to be completed by a licensed inspector. This inspection helps to enhance the supply of safe and sanitary housing and prevent deterioration of the overall housing stock in the city.

- Q:** What are the changes to the TOS inspection program?
- A:** City Council approved bringing the administration of the program completely in-house, within the Building and Inspections Division. This realignment will allow the City to mitigate concerns about past inconsistencies within the program such as, varying fees between independent inspectors, timeliness of reports being processed, and inspection findings. The updated program streamlines the process for the property owner with a one-stop shop approach to schedule an inspection and to make a payment to one entity. These changes also have the potential to help first-time homebuyers navigate a complicated process.
- Q:** What does an inspector look for during a TOS inspection?
- A:** The TOS inspector will examine the dwelling’s visible structural elements, and heating, electrical and plumbing systems. Unoccupied areas such as attics and crawl spaces, if inaccessible, will not be part of the inspection.
- Q:** When should I contact the City for an inspection?
- A:** You should request a TOS inspection as soon as you are thinking about selling your home. The TOS inspection report must be on site and available for any potential buyers when the property is listed, per City code.
- Q:** What is the turnaround time for an appointment?
- A:** City inspectors will provide the inspection within 48 hours of the time the request was made. If City inspectors are unable to meet the 48-hour turnaround time, a list of private licensed evaluators who are contracted with the City will be provided.
- Q:** Will the inspector also provide the Time-of-Sale Energy Disclosure?
- A:** Yes, this is completed at the same time by the same inspector.
- For information on this program and the updates, visit blm.mn/tos or call 952-563-8930.



KNOW THE CODE: PARKING ORDINANCES

When parking in Bloomington, follow these basic rules to enhance the safety of drivers and pedestrians. Avoid getting a parking violation by conforming to Bloomington’s parking ordinances, which includes **no parking**:



On street for more than 24 consecutive hours.



Within five feet of a driveway or mailbox.



Within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection.



Within 10 feet of a fire hydrant.

Residents are reminded that parking vehicles on a sidewalk is prohibited. This includes driveways that extend onto a sidewalk. A blocked sidewalk can be challenging and unsafe for pedestrians who would have to walk onto the street.

Compliance with on-street parking rules contributes to Bloomington’s economic vitality, livability, safety and sense of well-being for residents, visitors and businesses.

For answers to your questions or concerns about parking ordinances, contact the Public Works Department at 952-563-4870. Requests for parking enforcement should be called in to the Bloomington Police nonemergency number at 952-563-4900.



one BLOOMINGTON

STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS



It's been six years since the City started work on the City Council's strategic plan, One Bloomington, which guided the City's work from 2017 to 2021. One Bloomington was written with the goal of strengthening a community that includes all residents, working together to accomplish the same goals. The plan had seven defined priorities: equity and inclusion, environmental sustainability, community amenities, focused renewal, high-quality service delivery, community image and engagement and transparency. Take a look at a brief summary of the projects the City completed from 2017 to 2021 that moved each priority forward. For more information, visit blm.mn/onebloomington.

COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Construction on a new Fire Station 4 is now underway, continuing the work being done to make the City's fire stations suitable for modern equipment and fire service. From 2019 – 2020, a new Station 3 was built at 2301 86th Street East. Construction on many improvements at the Bloomington Ice Garden wrapped up during the One Bloomington plan. This included main entryway upgrades, updated locker rooms, and seating that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Parks and Recreation staff's work crafting the Park System Master Plan paid off in 2021 when the City Council adopted the new plan, establishing a clear, 20-year vision for the Bloomington park, trail, recreation and open space systems.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Bloomington's environmental sustainability efforts have grown over the last six years. The City Council created the Sustainability Commission in 2017. New organic recycling drop-off sites were installed and opened in 2018. Bloomington was recognized as a GreenStep City for the first time in 2018 and achieved GreenSteps four and five in 2020 and 2021. Bloomington also received SolSmart Gold designation in 2019. This recognizes the City's overall sustainability practices and the ease of getting approval to install solar panels. In 2019, the City hired a full-time sustainability coordinator. A time-of-sale energy disclosure ordinance and large business benchmarking ordinance launched in 2021, promoting energy conservation. More recently, the City kicked off curbside organics recycling service.

HIGH-QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY

Delivering high-quality service has always been a priority for the City. From maintaining high-quality tap water to concerts in the park, the number of ways City services enhance the quality of life in Bloomington are many. Over the years, City staff have received positive feedback for their service to the community. In the 2021 National Community Survey™, 88% of respondents rated the overall customer service provided by City employees as excellent or good, the highest rating ever in this category. Many specific work teams were recognized for their work from 2017 – 2020. The City received the Best in Glass title for the taste of Bloomington's tap water for the second time in three years in 2017. Finance received the GFOA award for its annual report to the community from 2017 – 2021. Communications staff were honored from 2017 – 2021 with various awards from state and national contests recognizing the City's work in video, print, on the web and on social media. The City received three triple-A credit ratings every year 2017 – 2021. Parks and Recreation staff were awarded for their work on Project P.L.A.Y., a grant-funded project that provided recreational activities and programs during the height of the pandemic, in 2020.

COMMUNITY IMAGE

In the last six years, there have been many new ways to enjoy what Bloomington has to offer. The Midweek Music Market series kicked off, bringing fresh produce, food trucks and live music to summer Wednesday evenings. Many creative placemaking projects were completed in the last six years as well, including the WE Mural, the Wright's Lake Park Mural, many utility box art wraps, creative placemaking happy hours, the South Loop songbird sculpture and more. The National Community Survey™ showed excellent community livability scores from 2017 to 2021. Last year, nine in ten residents rated the overall quality of life in Bloomington as excellent or good. Ninety-one percent of respondents are pleased with the city as a place to live. About two-thirds of respondents gave positive scores to the sense of community in Bloomington.



FOCUSED RENEWAL

Renewing existing neighborhoods and commercial centers has been a priority for the City for years. Since the One Bloomington plan began, the City has made progress toward this goal. In 2019, the City Council approved the opportunity housing ordinance, which promotes the development of new affordable housing. It also preserves existing naturally occurring affordable housing. The City also launched a \$15 million Affordable Housing Trust Fund dedicated to preserving and creating affordable housing.

The Gateway Development District was created in 2019, beginning a transformational opportunity in an area of the city where development and redevelopment has lagged for decades. The district is east of I-35W. Encouraging the redevelopment of aging neighborhood commercial centers within the district, such as the Lyndale Avenue corridor, increases the likelihood of more business owners and residents naming Bloomington as their community of choice. More importantly, the district’s focus is to create a quality place for current residents and businesses by building on past successes, present opportunities and future trends.

After the pandemic’s effects on local businesses, the City created the Small Business Emergency Assistance Loan Program. This program assisted Bloomington businesses that were negatively impacted by COVID-19 in 2020. More than 150 loans were distributed.

ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSPARENCY

The City Council added engagement and transparency as a priority in 2019. Since then, many new ways to get involved have rolled out. The new Community Outreach and Engagement Division had its first full year of operation in 2019. After the pandemic took a toll on the City’s lodging and admissions tax revenues, the Council convened a Community Budget Advisory Committee to ensure community voices were at the forefront of budget decisions. The Council moved its start time to earlier in the evening so more residents could participate in 2020. City Council and commission meetings are now available via streaming. Also new in 2020, residents could call in for public comment at Council meetings. A weekly Council Minute video series debuted in 2020. Bloomington Police started a new video series, Q&A with BPD, in 2020 to answer resident questions. BPD also debuted a new, more robust data dashboard on its website in 2021. The City launched a new digital engagement site, Let’s Talk Bloomington, to gather input and feedback on projects online in 2020.

INCLUSION AND EQUITY

Equity and Inclusion is a key component of the City’s strategic plan. The City hired its first-ever racial equity coordinator in 2019. In 2020, the City Council adopted a racial equity business plan, which charts the path for an expansion of the City’s racial equity work in the years to come. One point from the plan was the creation of racial equity action teams (REATs) in each of the divisions of the City. REATs are staff-led teams that provide accountability and capacity-building to ensure staff has a shared understanding of why we lead with race, how we advance the work and how we measure success. The City Council declared racism a public health crisis in 2020.

In 2021, the City created a Racial Equity Strategic Planning Committee (RESPEC) to identify the most impactful policies and practices that the City, in collaboration with partners, could work on to begin to reduce racial disparities in key areas, including economic stability, education, health and health care, neighborhood and built environment and more. The RESPEC proposed investing in public health, supporting small businesses by developing a business resource center, developing new homeownership initiatives, expanding public safety mental health services, and more collaboration with the school district. The City Council unanimously approved the proposal. The City hired an inclusion and equity specialist in 2022 to help implement the work of the racial equity strategic plan.

BLOOMINGTON.

tomorrow. together. ●

CHARTING THE CITY’S FUTURE

The City’s One Bloomington priorities have been embedded in the organization’s work as it moves forward with its new community-based strategic plan *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.* Over the past year, City Council, staff and residents worked together in core planning, action and measurement teams to shape the future of Bloomington. The process included understanding who and what Bloomington is; forming a unifying mission statement and strategic objectives; developing actions for implementation; and identifying measurements for success. The work resulted in a set of core values, mission, strategic objectives and strategies that will guide the organization over the next five years. The mission is “To cultivate an enduring and remarkable community where people want to be.” It describes Bloomington as unique, special and distinct—a noteworthy community with a rich history that stands on its own merits and attracts people because of these attributes. Learn more at blm.mn/btt.



JOIN BLOOMINGTON POLICE FOR AN OPEN HOUSE

Have you ever wanted to learn more about the Bloomington Police Department? Attend BPD’s open house event Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. You can take a tour of the department or enjoy equipment displays from the the SWAT Team, Bomb Squad and K9 unit. You can also meet staff from patrol, crime prevention, animal control, the police reserves, chaplains, explorers and more. The event will take place rain or shine.



PROTECT YOURSELF FROM PHONE SCAMS

The Bloomington Police Department reminds you to always to be skeptical of callers asking for personal or banking information. Whether it’s someone claiming to be with the Internal Revenue Service or saying they’re a grandchild asking for bail money, when in doubt, don’t give your banking information out.

If you receive a scam phone call and do not suffer a financial loss or loss of personal information, there is no need to report the incident. Bloomington Police can only take action if there has been a loss.

If you receive a scam phone call from someone impersonating the IRS, call the agency to report it at 1-800-366-4484 and choose option 8. The IRS does not demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as prepaid debit card or wire transfer. Generally, the IRS will first mail you a bill if you owe any taxes.



From left to right: Kortnie Crayford, EMS operations supervisor/paramedic at Allina Health EMS, Jeffrey Lanenberg, south metro division manager, Allina Health EMS, Firefighter Eric Peterson, Sergeant Erik Norling.

FIRE AND POLICE CELEBRATE NATIONAL EMS WEEK

Bloomington Police and Fire work in partnership with Allina Health Emergency Medical Services to provide emergency medical services to people across Bloomington. The week of May 15 – 21 is National EMS Week.

A surge in medical incidents, particularly in the past two years, resulted in more than 14,000 EMS calls in 2021.

Jeffrey Lanenberg, south metro division manager for Allina Health EMS and City liaison, was also a paid-on-call firefighter with the Bloomington Fire Department and retired as a district chief. With close to 35 years of service in fire and EMS, Lanenberg said it’s cliché to say they want to help people, but it’s the truth.

“The intent is always to give exceptional care. And that’s the intent of BPD, BFD and Allina Health EMS. So that it doesn’t matter who shows up,” Lanenberg said.

For nearly 30 years, Allina Health EMS has provided three paramedics to the SWAT Team. Paramedics and ambulances are stationed at Bloomington fire stations daily and ready to respond at any time.

The teamwork begins with Allina Health EMS providing emergency care training to police and fire personnel. While the pandemic created new challenges, this already existing partnership between the City and Allina Health EMS strengthened.

“We strive to provide exceptional care, and that is care that meets the medical needs of citizens and provides them the means to get to a hospital for more intensive medical diagnosis and care,” Police Deputy Chief Jeff Giles said. “Every day we work with Allina paramedics to provide exceptional emergency care to the citizens we serve.”

RECOGNIZING AND REMEMBERING POLICE

This year, National Police Week and Peace Officers Memorial Day will be recognized May 15 – 21 and May 15, respectively . The first National Police Week and Peace Officers Memorial Day were suggested by President Kennedy in 1962. It was resolved by Congress that May 15 be designated Peace Officers Memorial Day and the week in which it falls be designated as Police Week.

The service and sacrifice of all officers killed in the line of duty is honored annually during the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund Candlelight Vigil. The candlelight vigil will honor those who lost their lives in 2021. It takes place in Washington D.C. on the National Mall Friday, May 13, 7 p.m. To watch a livestream of the event, visit [NLEOMF.org/vigil](https://www.nleomf.org/vigil).

A proclamation recognizing both events will be read at the May 3 City Council meeting along with a proclamation on behalf of the Bloomington Optimist Club. The proclamation, recognizing Respect For Law Week, is meant to increase public awareness of the importance of law enforcement officers and to show appreciation for the role they play in the community.

BLOOMINGTON YESTERDAY: GARDEN CLUBS “BLOOMING”

Seventy years ago, Bloomington was sprouting with neighborhood garden clubs. As the City was blooming, homeowners were eager to beautify their properties and their community.

The Bloomington Affiliated Garden Clubs was formed in 1952. Original members were wives of farmers or truck gardeners. Within five years, the BAGC listed 50 member clubs with over 700 members. Most garden clubs were organized within a neighborhood. Members met once a month to learn and socialize in a member’s home. They discussed house plants, floral arrangements, and the latest in flower, fruit, vegetable, and shrub growing.

Many of the garden clubs participated in community projects to beautify the city such as contributing flowers to the veterans hospital and planting gardens at the city hall. Members raised money with an annual plant sale. The BACG organized flower shows, and sponsored programs featuring holiday floral arrangements, decoration and ideas.





EARTH ACTION HERO: GREENCORPS MEMBER JANE PEUSER

As a Minnesota GreenCorps member placed in Bloomington, Jane Peuser has kept busy on her project area—waste reduction. Peuser has worked closely with the Public Works Department assisting with the rollout of the organics recycling program. She has helped with community outreach and social media as well as some education for residents. She was involved in researching compostable bags. Most recently, she has worked with some apartment complexes in the city to improve recycling accessibility for residents at these properties.

Peuser led the poster contest for Bloomington when the Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield all worked together to host a poster contest about organics recycling. “It was fun to engage some residents in a creative, fun contest all about composting,” Peuser said.

When Jane Peuser realized she wasn’t passionate about law school, she found new opportunities and interest in the sustainability industry. After moving from Kentucky to Minnesota, she learned about the MN GreenCorps, applied, and started working on sustainability.

“I am so grateful for this program and opportunity to further my career,” Peuser said. “Serving Bloomington has been a wonderful experience, and I am really excited to continue helping out!”

Members of the MN GreenCorps serve a community, address critical environmental issues, and develop green job skills. Every year, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency places approximately 50 members with host sites throughout Minnesota. Members receive quarterly training from the MPCA. Additionally, members are paired with a mentor whose role is to provide support and resources throughout the service year.



NINE MILE CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT OFFERS HABITAT RESTORATION GRANT

Engaging in habitat restoration of any kind helps ensure the future of healthy ecosystems. Nine Mile Creek Watershed District offers habitat restoration grants to residents, associations, nonprofits, schools, and businesses within the District’s boundaries.

Habitat restoration refers to installing projects meant to restore an ecosystem’s natural resources following natural or man-made damage. Replenishing wildlife habitat and native plants is critically important to the survival of native species, the integrity of soil or water, and the existence of a healthy natural ecosystem. Example projects include native prairie plantings and native woodland plantings.

Attend a grant information session on May 11, to 6:30 p.m. on Zoom to find out about projects, how the program works, and how funding is awarded.

Grant application deadlines are May 16 and August 11. Verify which watershed you live in by visiting blm.mn/watershed.

If you are not interested in committing to a big project right now, check out other ways to get involved with the District at ninemilecreek.org/upcoming-events. Have questions about a project idea or need help with the application process? Contact Program and Project Manager Erica Sniegowski at 952-358-2276 or esniegowski@ninemilecreek.org.

SIGN UP FOR YARD WASTE SERVICE

Yard waste collection season is underway. A maximum of 20 bags or bundles of yard waste can be set out each week in addition to your cart. If you have more than 20 bags, save the extra bags for the following week. Participants receive a yard waste cart and can request one extra cart for a one-time fee of \$38.26.

What’s accepted? Garden waste, grass clippings, leaves, weeds, soft garden materials, shrub and tree waste, and prunings. Twigs and branches must be three feet or less in length and three inches or less in diameter. Bags or bundles cannot be heavier than 40 pounds.

What’s not accepted? Dirt, sod, rocks and wood chips.

To sign up for yard waste, contact Utility Billing at utilitybilling@BloomingtonMN.gov or 952-563-8726. The service costs \$86.90 per season. Residents can pay per bag for on-call service by purchasing yard waste stickers for \$4.37 each. Call the Finance Department at 952-563-8757 and the stickers will be mailed out. Limit of 20 on-call bags per week. For more information, visit blm.mn/yardwaste.



CREEKSIDE PLANT EXCHANGE

Whether you’re an expert gardener or just beginning, the free plant exchange at Creekside is an opportunity to donate, exchange or adopt indoor, outdoor and vegetable plants. The plant swap takes place Saturday, June 4, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m., in the Creekside Community Center parking lot, 9801 Penn Avenue South. For more information call 952-563-4944 or email Creekside@BloomingtonMN.gov.

GARDEN TOOL SWAP AND COMPOST GIVEAWAY

Do you have any garden tools just laying around collecting dust? Interested in picking up some free compost? Join Bloomington’s Solid Waste Team for a Garden Tool Swap and Compost Giveaway on Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., at Moir Park, 10320 Morgan Avenue South.

Garden tool swap

Bring your garden tools, pots, garden decorations, bird feeders and houses, gardening and plant books, and any unopened seed packets to swap them for something new. Make sure these items are in working condition and thoroughly cleaned before bringing them to the swap.

You may bring items to swap, but you can also just come and pick up items if you’re in the market for some garden tools. All items are meant to be given and taken freely; they are not for sale. This event will repurpose old, unused garden tools and other outdoor items and give them new homes, helping to divert waste from going to landfills or incinerators. Do not bring any chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, weed killers, broken or unusable items, or any used soil from your garden.

Compost giveaway

When you participate in the City’s new curbside organics recycling program, your food scraps are taken to Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community’s Organics Recycling Facility and turned into nutrient-rich compost. To kick off the new organics recycling program, residents can pick up three bags of finished compost provided by SMSC at the Garden Tool Swap Event on May 21, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., at Moir Park. For more information, visit blm.mn/organics.



BLOOMINGTON CHORALE ANNOUNCES NEW DIRECTOR

Lowell Prescott, pictured above, brings more than 30 years of choral conducting experience to his role as music director of the Bloomington Chorale. A graduate of the University of Minnesota, he gained advanced training through individual study with Dr. Larry Fleming, founder of the National Lutheran Choir. In addition to conducting, Prescott is a composer of vocal, instrumental, and choral music. His work has been performed by groups across the country. Prescott has designed numerous large-scale choral events and produced many audio recordings and public radio broadcasts of choral music.

Learn more at bloomingtonchorale.org.

BLOOMINGTON CHORALE PRESENTS “EVERYTHING’S COMING UP ROSES”

Celebrate spring with the Bloomington Chorale as they perform a variety of delightful spring and summertime music that is sure to put a smile on your face! This concert will be conducted by Bloomington Chorale’s new director Lowell Prescott. Two nights only: May 20, 7:30 p.m. and May 21, 4 p.m. at the Schneider Theater, Bloomington Center for the Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. Tickets can be purchased online at blm.mn/artistry-tickets.

SIGN UP NOW FOR SUMMER ARTS CAMP

Registration for Summer Arts Camp at Artistry is now open to young people in grades 1 – 9. Give your child’s creativity a boost with a broad array of arts and crafts programs: painting, drawing, clay, glass, and fiber arts, and everything in between. Participants have half-day and full-day camp options this summer at Bloomington Center for the Arts. New for 2022: Shrek Camp, which will include on-stage and off-stage theater skills as well as arts and crafts options. Summer Arts Camp at Artistry begins June 13 and runs through August 5. Register now at artistrymn.org/education.



BLOOMINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ART SHOW

The annual Bloomington Elementary Schools Art Show returns to the Atrium Gallery of the Bloomington Center for the Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, now until May 26. Come see colorful and amazing creations by Bloomington elementary students. Every year, young artists are hands selected by their art specialists at the 11 Bloomington public elementary schools. This year, 165 young artists’ work will be on display May 2 – 26. A reception and award ceremony will take place in the Center for the Arts’ Schneider Theater on Monday, May 9, and Tuesday, May 10, 6 – 7:30 p.m. The reception is free and open to all. This show is one of Artistry’s most popular exhibits and a favorite in the community. For information, visit blm.mn/upcomingexhibitions.

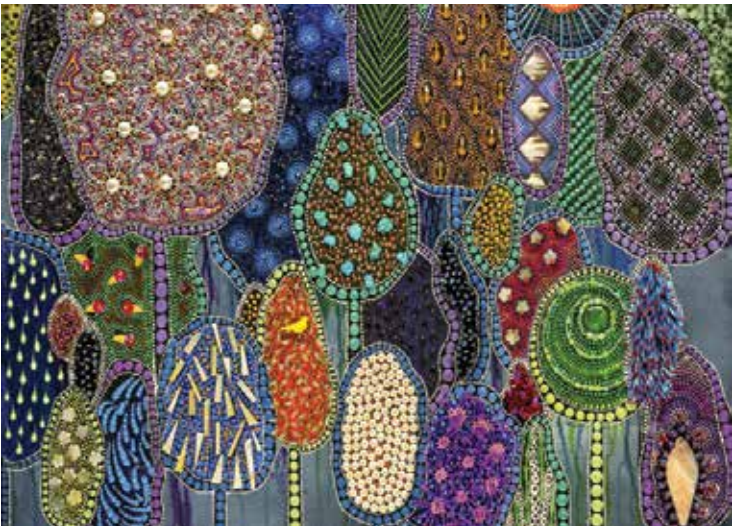
ARTISTRY PRESENTS “MEMPHIS”

A musical inspired by actual events in the turbulent south of the 1950s, “Memphis” will have you dancing in your seat with irresistible music and lyrics by David Bryan, founding member of Bon Jovi. Based on the story of a Memphis disc jockey, one of the first white DJs to play black music in the 1950s, this is the thrilling tale of forbidden love of Huey Calhoun and Felicia Ferrell. Calhoun is a white radio DJ whose passion for music transcends race lines. Ferrell is a Black singer, talented and determined to share her voice. As their love of music and each other grow, their lives and communities intersect, causing encounters with prejudices that challenge them to reconsider their relationships, priorities, and dreams. The show runs April 23 – May 15, at the Schneider Theater at the Bloomington Center for Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. For exact show dates, times and tickets, visit artistrymn.org/memphis.

ART EXHIBIT: “WHAT WILL THE NEIGHBORS THINK?”

Intricate, graceful, thought-provoking, and profound are all words that have been used to describe the elaborate masterwork of Leah Yellowbird. Using precision, pressure, and symmetry, Yellowbird’s pointillistic style leaves viewers humbled and curious. She draws inspiration from the traditional art forms of her ancestors while adding a modern voice to the imagery, the result of which evokes a sense of nostalgia and wonder. Her work is a visual manifestation of time—each dot embodying a moment and a prayer. Yellowbird describes her progress in the context of survival; painting and beading are like breathing to her.

Originally a traditional bead-worker, Yellowbird identifies strongly with her First Nations Algonquin-Metis and Anishinaabe heritage. At a young age, she learned from her aunt how to follow traditional beading patterns and has been working in this medium her entire life. This knowledge, combined with her creative eye and exploration of color, has spilled over into the realm of painting, and she is now well regarded for her work in all mediums. The solo art exhibition is on display now until May 20 at the Inez Greenberg Gallery at the Bloomington Center for Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. For more information about the artist and exhibit, visit blm.mn/upcomingexhibitions.



MEDALIST CONCERT BAND PRESENTS “INTERNATIONAL PASSPORT”

Get your passport ready! Journey around the world in 80 minutes with the Medalist Concert Band in this musical travelogue on Sunday, May 22, 4 p.m., in the Schneider Theater, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. Among the featured stops, travel with the band to the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Award-winning composer Omar Thomas wrote “Of Our New Day Begun” to honor nine African Americans who were murdered in the sanctuary of this church on June 17, 2015. Based on the time-honored “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” Thomas uses blues harmonies, singing, stomping, and clapping to express the range of emotions coming out of this tragedy. After an engaging residency with the composer, the Medalist Concert Band looks forward to sharing “Of Our New Day Begun,” in addition to honoring the winner of the 2022 Earl C. Benson Concerto Competition. Tickets are on sale now at blm.mn/artistry-tickets. Adults \$17; students and seniors \$15. For more information about the concert and the residency with Omar Thomas, visit medalistband.com.