

# BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



FEBRUARY 2023

## ABOUT THE HEADER

This month's special *Briefing* header is in observance of Black History Month. In 1926, Dr. Carter Woodson instituted a week-long celebration of the contributions of Black Americans to history. Dr. Woodson chose the week of Abraham Lincoln's birthday (February 12). In recent years the observance has expanded, and now the entire month of February is celebrated as Black History Month.



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There's "snow" place like Bloomington Center for the Arts to enjoy a show this season.



## WHAT'S DEVELOPING: GYROPOLIS EXPANSION HAS GREEN LIGHT

When you take a family's Greek roots, organic produce grown on their family's farm in Northfield and a fast-casual restaurant setting, you get Gyropolis—one of Bloomington's iconic locally owned businesses. The restaurant is nearly tripling in size next year with a 2,400-square-foot expansion to the existing building at 2325 West 90th Street. The new construction will include the demolition of the vacant gas station next door.

The project includes an expanded kitchen, 74 additional indoor seats and a 58-seat outdoor patio with a garden feel. Customers will also be able to order and pay for their food online and pick it up at a new pickup window.

Construction will begin in spring or summer 2023. Gyropolis will be closed for about a month during the beginning phases of construction. The expansion is projected to be complete in 2024.

Gyropolis was founded in 2005 by brothers Dino and George Contolatis who grew up in Bloomington. You can watch a video feature on the family and Gyropolis on the City's YouTube channel at [blm.mn/gyropolis](https://blm.mn/gyropolis).

### CITY SUPPORTS LOCAL BUSINESS REVITALIZATION

The City of Bloomington partnered with Gyropolis owner, Dino Contolatis, to help him coordinate this project. Staff worked with him to put together the Tax Increment Funding (TIF) district that helped make the project possible. The City also has a grant agreement with DEED. Contolatis is a subrecipient of \$58,400 in grant funding. The City Council also passed several policies in 2022 regarding sewer availability charges, which made it easier to expand indoor and outdoor seating areas.

"We're treating this project as an example to show what the City can do for local businesses when we use the tools at our disposal," Special Projects and Initiatives Manager Barb Wolff said. "The City is partnering with Dino Contolatis to help him expand his business and all it brings to the neighborhood and our community. Dino is making an investment in our community. It will boost Bloomington overall."







# MAYOR’S MEMO

## A LOOK AT THE CITY’S 2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

By Mayor Tim Busse

Each year, the City of Bloomington requests changes to state statutes to benefit the residents of Bloomington. As a regional leader, support from the state legislature helps the City continue to serve residents, businesses and visitors. The City Council adopts key legislative initiatives in January. The top priority this year is legislation allowing Bloomington to put a local option sales tax to a resident vote. The proposed Bloomington sales tax would be a 0.5% added tax charged on retail sales in the city. The revenue collected by the sales tax would be used to fund improvements to 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. Projects that a sales tax could fund include:

- A new Community Health and Wellness Center (replacing the Public Health Center and Creekside Community Center): \$100 million.
- Renovation of the Bloomington Ice Garden: \$35 million.
- Renewal of the Nine Mile Creek Corridor: \$20 million.

The City also supports I-494 reconstruction to increase mobility and improve safety. The project includes reconstruction of a 9.5-mile stretch along I-494 from Highway 169 to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. This stretch provides cross-metro access, local access for businesses and residents, and direct access to major destinations such as the airport and Mall of America.

Lastly, we are requesting continued support for investment in public safety technology. These are costly items, but necessary to support our police and help make the Bloomington community safer. Learn more in my Council Minute video on the topic at [blm.mn/cm-1-11](https://blm.mn/cm-1-11).

## SAVE THE DATE: 2023 STATE OF THE CITY

Mayor Tim Busse and City Manager Jamie Verbrugge will talk about the past year’s accomplishments and take a look at what’s to come with the theme *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.* at the 2023 State of the City on Thursday, March 23, at the Radisson Blu. The event will be livestreamed on the City’s Facebook page and recorded for YouTube and cable TV.



## NEW CITY COUNCILMEMBER TO BE APPOINTED

Former At-Large City Councilmember Nathan Coulter was elected to represent House District 51B by more than 61% of voters last November, cutting short his city council term. He started in his new role as state representative in January. The City Council conducted interviews for an interim councilmember in January after reviewing applications that were submitted in December.

An appointment was expected by late January 2023, after this issue of the *Briefing* went to print. Visit [blm.mn/council](https://blm.mn/council) to see more about the person who was appointed.

The person appointed to the open seat will fill Coulter’s unexpired term until the next regular municipal election on November 7, 2023. The election result will determine who will fill the remainder of the term, which expires January 5, 2026.

**BRIEFING**  
**Volume 31, Number 02**  
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](mailto:jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov)  
**Website: BloomingtonMN.gov**

### BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL



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952-457-7506 (c)  
[tbusse@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:tbusse@BloomingtonMN.gov)



**Councilmember At Large**  
Appointment pending



**Councilmember At Large**  
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612-284-8751  
[jcarter@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:jcarter@BloomingtonMN.gov)



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**Councilmember District IV**  
Patrick Martin  
952-454-6657  
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Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

### COUNCILMEMBERS

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

### EXECUTIVE STAFF

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Booker T. Hodges, <i>Police</i>	952-563-4900
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<a href="mailto:publicworks@BloomingtonMN.gov">publicworks@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
<b>General phone number</b>	<b>952-563-8700</b>

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.





# GET TO KNOW MORE ABOUT EXPO 2027

Bloomington is one of five sites around the world being considered as the location for Expo 2027. An Expo is like a World’s Fair, which is used by countries to showcase and unveil their most remarkable achievements of today and tomorrow. Bloomington was selected as the official bid location for the United States last year with the theme, “Healthy People, Healthy Planet.” The Bureau of International Expositions will make its final decision about the location of Expo 2027 in June 2023.

If the specialized expo is held in Bloomington, the economic impact could be greater than \$2 billion. The bid committee expects more than 7 million unique visitors to attend. The admissions and lodging taxes collected during the three-month-long event would generate direct general fund revenue that would benefit residents. Building the infrastructure needed for the event would also generate jobs in Bloomington.

The international campaign is a joint effort between the Expo 2027 bid committee and the United States federal government. Minnesota USA Expo 2027 is an independent nonprofit organization established for the purpose of coordinating the bid process and, if successful, planning and hosting the event. The organization is not affiliated with or governed by the City of Bloomington. Mayor Tim Busse and City Manager Jamie Verbrugge serve as ex-officio members of the Minnesota USA Expo 2027 board of directors.

## REQUEST AN EXPO 2027 PRESENTATION

Would you like a representative from the City of Bloomington to present about Expo 2027 to your work group or organization? Send an email to [dchristenson@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:dchristenson@BloomingtonMN.gov) to get the process started.



## NOTICE OF PROPERTY VALUE FOR TAXES PAYABLE IN 2024

Each March, the City Assessor’s Office mails a value notice to each property owner. The 2023 valuation is the basis for property taxes payable in 2024. In other words, properties are assessed in one year and taxed on that assessed value the following year. Here is a sample statement:

Property ID number: 00 000 00 00 0000

### Property tax statements schedule

Step	Value & classification
1	Class: RESIDENTIAL
1	Estimated Market Value: \$355,900
2	Homestead Exclusion: \$5,200
3	Taxable Market Value: \$350,700

#### 1 - ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE

Assessor’s estimate of what property would likely sell for on the open market as of January 2, 2023.

#### 2 - HOMESTEAD

Property must be homesteaded to receive the Homestead Market Value Exclusion, a prerequisite for filing for the Property Tax Refund.

Homestead Exclusions decrease as the property value increases. Once value exceeds \$413,800, there is no longer an exclusion.

#### 3 - TAXABLE MARKET VALUE

The property valuation that next year’s property taxes will be based on, after all exclusions.

## GET INVOLVED IN CITY’S NEW INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Bloom in Bloomington internship program offers eight weeks of paid internship experience for youth ages 16 – 24 with local employers, including the City of Bloomington. The City’s Community Development racial equity action team designed Bloom in Bloomington internships to provide youth who face barriers to employment an opportunity to build skills, learn leadership and gain valuable work experience.

“Bloomington is an economic engine for the region, and we want to connect local youth with all the opportunities here,” Community Development Director Karla Henderson said.

In the coming years, Minnesota employment statistics confirm a projected workforce shortage. Conversely, nonwhite populations are growing more quickly than the white population in the Twin Cities region, according to Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer Faith Jackson. To meet future workforce needs, Minnesota employers must attract and retain more workers of all races.

The new internship program will kick off in summer 2023. Learn how to apply as an intern or become involved as an employer on the City’s website at [blm.mn/bloominbloomington](http://blm.mn/bloominbloomington).



## EARNED SICK AND SAFE LEAVE ORDINANCE TAKES EFFECT IN JULY

In 2022, the City Council adopted an earned sick and safe leave ordinance requiring employers operating in Bloomington to provide some amount of earned sick and safe leave to employees. Three of Minnesota’s largest cities—Duluth, St. Paul and Minneapolis—have adopted similar ordinances.

The ordinance protects the well-being of Bloomington’s workforce and residents. Employees working in jobs with lower wages, higher turnover and high rates of public contact typically lack access to paid leave. Businesses with five or more employees must provide paid earned sick and safe leave. Employers with fewer than five employees must provide unpaid leave, but they can choose to provide paid leave. The ordinance would allow employees to earn a minimum of one hour of sick and safe leave for every 30 hours worked up to a maximum of 48 hours in a year.

Sick leave can be used when employees need to care for their health or the health of another member of their household by going to the doctor, resting or healing. Safe leave can be used when an employee is experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. Safe leave hours are also suitable for going to court to get a restraining order, counseling, relocation or talking to a lawyer.

The earned sick and safe leave ordinance takes effect July 1, 2023, but that doesn’t mean employees will be able to begin using leave that day. Staff who are hired July 1 will be able to begin using accrued time on October 1, 2023. Staff that were employed at the organization before July 1 will be able to begin using accrued leave time by August 1. Visit [blm.mn/essl](http://blm.mn/essl) for more information.



## STEPS TO APPEAL

1. Contact the City Assessor’s Office at 952-563-8724 or [assessing@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:assessing@BloomingtonMN.gov).
2. Attend the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting.
3. Attend the County Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting. You must attend the local meeting first.

For details about the City’s valuation process, visit [blm.mn/assess](http://blm.mn/assess).

Each year residents receive three property tax-related statements, two in March and one in November.





## A LITTLE SALT GOES A LONG WAY

Even during the final weeks of winter, it's important to think about salt use. A dash of salt has a lasting impact on the environment. One teaspoon of salt permanently pollutes five gallons of water. Chlorides from road salt make their way into spaces that harm plants, wildlife and fish. "Once salt is in the water, it's not coming out," Senior Water Resources Manager Bryan Gruidl said.

The City is committed to reducing salt use through anti-icing technology (pretreating roads for weather events) and reducing application. Bloomington residents and businesses can help by using a light touch when applying salt (or better yet, by using sand) and sweeping up extra salt when possible.

## WINTER CART PLACEMENT

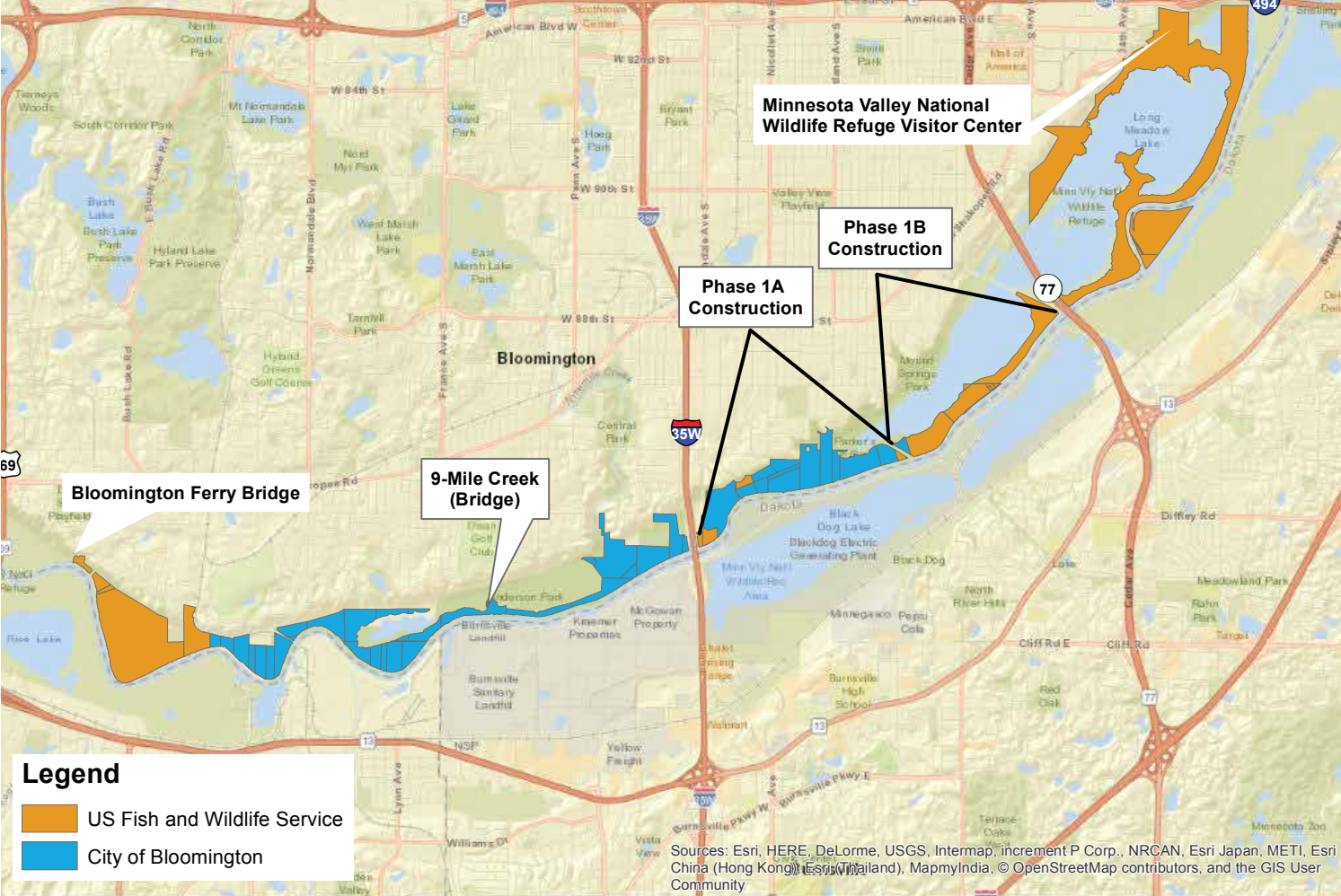
If there is snow or ice, shovel out a safe, accessible space and path for your carts. Place carts at least three to five feet away from other objects such as mailboxes, other carts, vehicles, trees and bushes.

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: BRIDGING TO A BETTER FUTURE

Reduce environmental impacts and empower people by donating quality furniture and household goods to Bridging, located at 201 West 87th Street and bridging.org. Since 1987, the nonprofit Bridging has improved the lives of local families in need and the environment. By accepting donated household items and distributing them to more than 14,000 people annually, Bridging helps people make a home and keeps thousands of usable items out of landfills.

## BRIDGING'S IMPACT IN 2021

- \$4.9 MILLION** Value of items donated (and kept out of landfills).
- 53%** Percentage of total donations from individuals.
- 4,174** Homes filled with hope.



## CITY RECEIVES \$2.35 MILLION FOR MINNESOTA VALLEY STATE TRAIL PROJECT

Bloomington will receive \$2.35 million in federal funds to construct a key section of the Minnesota Valley State Trail that runs along the Minnesota River between Lyndale Avenue and Nine Mile Creek in Bloomington. Funding for the project was included in the 2023 federal budget bill that Congress passed in December. The project will construct a multiuse trail and a bike/pedestrian bridge over Nine Mile Creek. The trail will begin at the Lyndale Avenue trailhead, run to the west approximately 1.6 miles and provide access to Nine Mile Creek via a new bridge. The bridge will provide another access point to the river valley trails via the local trail system. This will be a critical component of the Minnesota Valley State Trail through Bloomington. The City of Bloomington worked with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to prioritize the construction of this segment of the Minnesota Valley State Trail. The DNR will construct the trail. This will be the third segment of the trail construction and will help move toward full implementation and construction of the planned 13.5-mile segment through Bloomington. The DNR has already completed one segment (Phase 1A) of the trail and is working on the final design for the second funded segment (Phase 1B). In addition to the benefits that the Minnesota River Valley Trail brings to the connectivity of the regional system, the trail segment constructed in 2020 has proven to be a huge recreational amenity for the local community. "From the time the first segment in Bloomington opened to users, the usage and demand has exceeded expectations," Mayor Tim Busse said. "This level of use demonstrates the local community and regional demand for the continued development of these high quality, recreational, multiuse trail facilities. We are appreciative of this funding to make this next segment of the trail possible. Many thanks to Senator Amy Klobuchar, Senator Tina Smith and Congressman Dean Phillips for their support of this important project." The Minnesota Valley State Trail was authorized by the Minnesota Legislature in 1969 to run from the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers upstream to the City of Le Sueur, about 72 miles long. The 13.5-mile segment through Bloomington will provide a valuable link in this statewide trail transportation and recreational trail network.

## NEW BULKY ITEM DISPOSAL OPTIONS FOCUS ON REUSE AND RECYCLING

In 2021, the City Council approved a plan to make reuse and recycling more effective. The plan, rolled out in 2022, includes changes to the spring Curbside Cleanup and the addition of several new programs. The Curbside Cleanup now happens only on even years. The next Curbside Cleanup is in 2024. The City has partnered with Better Futures Minnesota to collect certain reusable and recyclable bulky items curbside. Currently offered as a pilot program to 4,000 homes, this service will go citywide in 2023. To learn more, visit blm.mn/bulkies.

An annual, recyclable materials drop-off event will be held each fall. This event is open to all Bloomington residents. The first drop-off event, held in September 2022, drew 1,000 vehicles and removed 61 tons of material from the waste stream. To learn more, visit blm.mn/drop-off. Material Swap events will be held again this summer. The City held its first swap event for gardening tools in May 2022, and intends to hold another swap event or two this coming summer. Contact Utility Billing at 952-563-8726 or UtilityBilling@bloomingtonmn.gov anytime to schedule bulky item pickup for a fee. Visit Hennepin County's Green Disposal Guide at blm.mn/green-guide for additional tips on how to dispose of, reuse and donate items.



REMINDER: THE NEXT CURBSIDE CLEANUP IS IN 2024





## MEET A FIREFIGHTER

Meet Simon Peterson, a Bloomington paid-on-call firefighter for the past year. Peterson graduated from Richfield High School before attending college at Winona State. He started a career in sales in Winona before returning home. He knew he wanted to follow his passion for public service and do something that would make his four-year-old daughter Leni proud.

“When I looked around, firefighting was a good match for me,” Peterson said.

Wanting to remain close to family and friends, Peterson and Leni have settled in Bloomington, and he is grateful for the chance to serve his community.

“My work as a firefighter combines two things I want to do: be very hands-on and make a significant positive impact on peoples’ lives.” he said. “And people are often very happy to see us, so that’s a bonus, too.”

## BLOOMINGTON YESTERDAY: THE FIRST FIRE CHIEF

A community relies on resident participation for its success, and Bloomington residents are among the most engaged. Arnold Friendshuh, pictured on the right, is one such example. In 1947, when Lyndale Avenue was still a dirt road, community members gathered to plan for a volunteer fire department and elected Friendshuh as Bloomington’s first fire chief.

Born and raised on a farm in Bloomington, Friendshuh worked at the C.H. Carpenter Lumber Company at 94th Street and Lyndale Avenue for 59 years. He served as the fire chief for 25 years. He also served six years on the Bloomington City Council, and was a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Bloomington Lions Club and the Bloomington Businessmen’s Association.



Friendshuh’s, *above right*, community contributions are highlighted in a 2021 project spearheaded by Bloomington resident Don Heinzman and supported by Bloomington Historical Society. The project showcases more than 100 notable Bloomington residents. The book may be viewed at the Bloomington Historical Society during regular hours or by appointment.



## WHAT’S DEVELOPING: THE NEW FIRE STATION 4

The Fire Station 4 reconstruction continues at 4201 West 84th Street. With the outside of the structure, foundation, roof, curb and gutters completed, crews are inside framing walls, setting bricks and installing electrical, mechanical and plumbing.

The new station will include three truck bays, office space, a training room, living accommodations and firefighters’ health and safety amenities. The entire structure is more than 25,000 square feet. Construction is expected to be complete in summer 2023.

In 2020, the station responded to more than 850 calls. In 2021, that number jumped to 843 calls between January and March alone. To provide continuous fire coverage to the area serviced by Fire Station 4, Stations 1 and 6 have been staffed with 24-hour, three-person crews.

The old fire station served the community for more than 50 years, but it lacked adequate space and no longer met health and safety needs. For more information about this and other stations, visit [blm.mn/stations](http://blm.mn/stations).

## CRIME PREVENTION RELIES ON ALERT RESIDENTS

Residents are essential to preventing and reducing crime. Programs like Neighborhood Watch decrease neighborhood crime by 16 – 20%, but individual actions are essential.

“I tell people, if something seems suspicious, they should trust their instinct and report it,” said Katie Zerull, Bloomington’s crime prevention specialist.

Suspicious activities? Stay calm and call 9-1-1 or 952-563-4900 for nonemergencies.

Be ready to share details about location, people, vehicles, etc. and remain on the phone to answer follow-up questions.

“It’s helpful if residents note the person’s sex, age, race, height and weight, hair color and style, complexion, scars, tattoos and clothing,” Zerull added.

For suspicious vehicles, the license plate number, make, model, year, color, characteristics like marks and dents, the direction of travel and occupants are all useful details.

For information about crime prevention and an upcoming crime prevention workshop on February 18, visit [blm.mn/crimeprevention](http://blm.mn/crimeprevention).



Police Chief Booker T. Hodges delivers gifts through Bloomington Police Department’s Santa Cop program.

## SANTA COP WAS BUSY THIS SEASON

The Bloomington Police Department had a busy holiday season. Santa Cop is just one of the programs BPD coordinates to spread joy during the holiday season. Crime Prevention Specialist Katie Zerull coordinated community donations and present wrapping with volunteers. Then officers delivered toys and gifts. The success of the program is only possible due to the generous support of the community.







### ENJOY THE ANNUAL SPRING ICE SHOW

Experience skaters gliding through an enchanted forest in a professional ice show complete with spotlights, colorful costumes, fun choreography and great music.

The annual ice show offers a great opportunity for registered Bloomington Ice Garden Skate School skaters and Figure Skating Club of Bloomington members to showcase their skating skills for their friends, family, and the public.

Dress rehearsal is Thursday, March 16, 6 p.m. Dress rehearsal tickets, in advance and at the door, are \$5. Everyone is welcome.

Catch one of the performances on Friday, March 17, 7 p.m., or Saturday, March 18, 1 p.m.

Advance tickets are available through March 16. They cost \$8 for adults, \$6 for youth and seniors (under 17 and over 65), and are free for children five and under.

Tickets are available at the door on March 17 and 18. They cost \$10 for adults, \$8 for youth and seniors (under 17 and over 65), and are free for children five and under.

### CONTINENTAL BALLET PRESENTS “CINDERELLA”

The Continental Ballet Company presents “Cinderella,” a classic tale with fairies, beauty, a little comedy and true love at the Schneider Theater on Saturday, March 18 and 25, 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, March 19 and 26, 3 p.m.

This original three-act ballet by founder/director Riet Velthuisen was recognized by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$19 for seniors, \$19 for students and \$13 for children under age 13. Tickets are available at Brown Paper Ticket: [bpt.me/5639926](https://bpt.me/5639926), and through Continental Ballet Company at 952-563-8562 or [cbcinfo@continentalballet.com](mailto:cbcinfo@continentalballet.com).



## AFRIQUE OFFERS WELCOMING SPACE TO AFRICAN COMMUNITY

Afrique, located at 1701 American Boulevard East, is set to open with broad community offerings, specially targeted toward supporting the East African community in Bloomington.

Along with a restaurant specializing in East African foods, the Afrique cultural campus will also offer an event center, office space, a multiuse space, a makerspace (collaborative work space) and a business incubator. The business incubator will serve to educate, train and develop African and African diaspora entrepreneurs.

By focusing on supporting the East African community and business community, Afrique also supports the City’s equity and inclusion initiatives by building a diverse skilled workforce, growing diverse businesses and eliminating barriers to equity.

“Bloomington wants community members to feel connected with their neighbors and welcome in the city,” said Glen Markegard, City planning manager. “Cultural facilities like Afrique help do exactly that.”

For more information about Afrique, visit [www.eatafrique.com](http://www.eatafrique.com).

### VISIT AN INDOOR MARKET FOR FRESH PRODUCE, LOCAL GOODS

Take a break from the cold and enjoy Bloomington’s Indoor Farmers Market. Shoppers will find root vegetables, cheeses, baked goods, canned goods, handcrafted apparel, jewelry, gifts and more. Visitors can also enjoy a beverage, try samples and meet local vendors.

Visit the Indoor Farmers Market on Saturday, March 11, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. For more information and details on vendors, visit [blm.mn/market](http://blm.mn/market) or call 952-563-8877.

### PLANT A TREE AND GROW THE URBAN CANOPY

You can help build Bloomington’s urban canopy by ordering a tree for your yard through the City’s annual Arbor Day tree sale. Bloomington residents can pre-purchase affordable bare-root trees to be delivered during the first week of May.

Now in its 16th year, this program helps the City maintain its Tree City USA designation and has added more than 3,000 trees to Bloomington’s urban forest. Residents may purchase a maximum

of five trees per household. To place a tree order, go to [blm.mn/treesale](http://blm.mn/treesale), mail in the order form below or call 952-563-8760.

Find more information on the trees and how to plant them at [blm.mn/forestry](http://blm.mn/forestry).



#### ARBOR DAY TREE SALE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. All trees are bare-root and approximately one-inch in diameter. They cost \$50 each. *Trees are viable at the time of sale and no refunds will be issued. \*Trees with an asterisk next to them are native to Minnesota.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email (needed to arrange deliveries) \_\_\_\_\_

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

_____ Autumn blaze maple*	_____ Black Hills spruce*	_____ American Linden	_____ Japanese tree lilac
_____ River birch*	_____ Serviceberry*	_____ Snowdrift crab apple*	_____ Prairie Fire crab apple*

Total trees	_____	X \$50 ea. = \$	_____	Total cost
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Trees will be delivered to the address listed on the order form in the first week of May.  
Send check and this form to City of Bloomington, Park Maintenance,  
1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027.







Pictured left to right: Edina Mayor James Hovland, U.S. Representative Dean Phillips, Bloomington Mayor Tim Busse, U.S. Representative Ilhan Omar, Hennepin County Commissioner Angela Conley and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey.

## D LINE BUS RAPID TRANSIT OPEN FOR SERVICE

Construction of the Metro D Line bus rapid transit (BRT) project is complete and will substantially replace Route 5 with faster, more frequent all-day service.

The 18-mile line connects neighborhoods and destinations from Mall of America through Richfield and Minneapolis to Brooklyn Center.

The D Line was constructed to deliver more equitable service in a corridor that has the region’s highest ridership. To learn more about transportation projects in Bloomington, visit [blm.mn/roadprojects](https://blm.mn/roadprojects).

### D LINE STATS

- Twenty-five percent of households using the D Line don’t own a vehicle and rely on transit.
- The service is 20% faster due to fewer stops.
- Signal priority allows buses to move through traffic lights faster.
- Riders need to pay for their fare prior to boarding, similar to the light rail transit system. There are four stations in Bloomington: MOA Transit Center, American Boulevard at Thunderbird Road and Bloomington Avenue at Chicago Avenue.

### PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

For safety, the City has installed a new HAWK signal system for pedestrian crossings in the American Boulevard at Chicago Avenue station near Walmart. Below, note the signal indication and action for drivers that correspond with the signal and action for pedestrians using the crosswalk.



DRIVERS		PEDESTRIANS	
INDICATION	ACTION	INDICATION	ACTION
	PROCEED WITH CAUTION		PUSH THE BUTTON TO ACTIVATE BEACON
	SLOW DOWN PEDESTRIAN HAS ACTIVATED THE BEACON		DON'T CROSS
	PREPARE TO STOP		DON'T CROSS
	STOP PEDESTRIAN IN CROSSWALK		START CROSSING WATCH FOR VEHICLES
	STOP AND THEN PROCEED WITH CAUTION IF CLEAR		FINISH CROSSING
	PROCEED IF CROSSWALK IS CLEAR		PUSH THE BUTTON TO ACTIVATE BEACON



### SNOWFALLS, SNOW EMERGENCIES AND PARKING BANS

It’s still the season for snow and, any time conditions warrant it, City staff may need to call a snow emergency. Once announced, a snow emergency remains in effect for 48 hours or until the street has been plowed full width, whichever happens first.

#### PARKING DURING SNOW EMERGENCIES

Once the City calls a snow emergency, a parking ban is also in effect.

During a parking ban, all vehicles must be moved from city streets. By moving vehicles quickly once a snow emergency is declared, you can help avoid a vehicle covered in plowed snow and the possibility of a ticket or being towed.

Watch the weather and stay informed about snow emergencies by signing up for texts at [blm.mn/snow](https://blm.mn/snow) or by visiting the City’s Facebook page and Twitter feed.

#### STAY IN THE KNOW: E-SUBSCRIBE

Bloomington has a variety of free email updates to keep residents, business owners and community members in the loop on City news, projects and events.

There are 81 topics to choose from for updates. The top five topics, in number of subscribers, are: snow emergency alerts, farmer’s market, Curbside Cleanup, Bloomington *Briefing* and seasonal Parks and Recreation jobs.

To sign up, visit [blm.mn/](https://blm.mn/) and subscribe. Many pages on the City website include an E-Subscribe box when there’s a topic related to the information on the page.



# BLOOMINGTON PIONEERS AND CHANGEMAKERS

**B**loomington pioneers and changemakers features Black leaders who have a connection to Bloomington. February is Black History Month and a fitting time to recognize the impact the people featured here have made. The people featured in this series have worked to advance civil rights and remove barriers to equity in the fields of education, faith, government, housing, law and more. In this annual series, the City honors pioneers who have done so much to chart the path to where we are today and changemakers who are paving the way for future generations.

Video interviews with the following 2022 Pioneers and Changemakers are available on the City’s YouTube account at [blm.mn/youtube](https://blm.mn/youtube). New videos featuring the 2023 honorees will also be posted on the City’s YouTube and Facebook accounts starting in February.



## MARVIS KILGORE

Marvis Kilgore coordinates the Sirtify program, formerly known as the Black Men in Teaching program, at Normandale Community College in Bloomington. Sirtify has a mission of recruiting and supporting Black, African American and African people who identify as male into elementary and secondary education pathways.

“I’ve often been accused of wanting to change the world,” Kilgore said. “And I think I found a position in which I actually can.”

The program started in 2021. Sirtify offers professional support, academic support and leadership training, as well as social or cultural experiences and cultural competency training. Less than 1% of all teachers in the state of Minnesota identify as male and Black. Normandale President Joyce Ester found this to be a fitting program to help address that. Kilgore was teaching English in Qatar when he saw the job posting for Normandale and decided to apply.

“I honestly felt unsettled watching all of the social issues and the social unrest that was happening in America, particularly with people who look like me,” he said. “I just felt a call to action. I felt that I needed to move from being a passive bystander to someone more active in ensuring that things became better in the U.S.”



## PATRICIA RILEY

For more than 20 years, Patricia Riley has lived in Bloomington with her husband and two sons. Riley started mentoring girls of color at Kennedy High School in 2012.

“Everyone was saying ‘Mrs. Riley, you’re mentoring a girl, you don’t have any girls!’ I said ‘I know, but I am a girl,’” she said. “Some of the girls were homeless. I didn’t know that. So I went up to the school to find out what we could do about this.”

Riley felt that a person could be a part of the solution or a part of the problem. She took action to build a sisterhood. Older girls mentored younger girls who then mentored the younger girls coming in. Riley advocated for the students with teachers to ensure that the girls were on track. Out of the 18 – 20 students in the group, 16 graduated.

“The students saw that I was fighting for them and I still am,” she said. “There’s still a lot of work to be done and a lot we don’t see. So I find areas, like the Office of Educational Equity with Ms. Wade. She’s always finding things that need to be done. And I pack it up and I go wherever it is. I am volunteering. I love it. When you give your time, you give your all. Sometimes when you do things in the community, people forget. This award means people are watching and they didn’t forget. It’s nice when someone says thank you. That’s what this is to me, a thank you.”



## NIJA LAWRENCE-PORTER

Nija Lawrence-Porter has been supporting and guiding students at Normandale College as an academic advisor for about 10 years. An academic advisor helps students enter college, get acclimated, and navigate programs and transfers. Many students are first-generation college students, have low income, or come from immigrant backgrounds.

“A lot of students are in survival mode in a way. They don’t think it’s possible to do what they really want to do,” Lawrence-Porter said. “We represent the diversity within the city of Bloomington and provide that space where students can really grow and become even more than what they thought.”

A first generation college student herself, Lawrence-Porter describes her journey through education and into a career, as a “curvy road, not a straight line.” She started out in business and accounting and realized after a couple of years that wasn’t a good fit. She went back to get her master’s degree in Africana studies at Cornell University. She credits the adults who helped her along the way with helping her reach her goal.

“I was raised to use my education in service of my people and all the people I get to impact,” she said. “One of the reasons I’m passionate about education, higher education in particular, is because it really allows me to help students to plan and strategize about how they’re going to get from where they are to where they want to be.”



## LUIS VERSALLES

Some may think discussions about race are uncomfortable. Luis Versalles is the director of strategic partnerships with Courageous Conversation. A big part of his work is helping people understand that race is something we can and should talk about.

“At the heart of this work is rediscovering that in our essence as human beings what is supposed to differentiate us is our ability to have a conversation. And yet so many people have been led to believe that the issue of race is just this thing that is there that I can’t really talk about. So we really shift that on its head and offer the perspective that we all have a racial story. We’ve all been racialized in this society and when you actually have the courage to talk about what’s going on for you, that’s quite powerful,” he said.

Courageous Conversation is committed to achieving racial equity in education. Before he worked with Courageous Conversation, Versalles taught at Kennedy and Jefferson high schools. In that role, he saw a full-circle of evolution from being a student who often felt “otherized” to seeing students receive support he needed as a young bilingual student.