

# BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



MARCH 2023

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A rendering of what an Expo 2027 site could look like in Bloomington.

## EXPO 2027 WOULD BRING JOBS AND REVENUE TO BLOOMINGTON

**B**loomington 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.

Minnesota USA Expo 2027 is an independent nonprofit organization that 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.

If the specialized expo is held in Bloomington, the economic impact could be greater than \$2 billion. Learn more about how Expo 2027 will bring revenue, jobs and visitors to Bloomington:



13.3 MILLION



Expo 2027 would help better position the United States on the world stage. With a projected 13.3 million attendees over 93 days in the summer of 2027, the expo will also support future tourism and business investment.

\$103



Expo 2027 would generate tax revenue to support state, local and federal government. About \$103 per nonresident visitor will be collected in tax receipts, \$50 of which will go to state and local authorities to benefit taxpayers in the future.

90%



Expo 2027 would directly benefit national and local businesses. Nearly 90% of expo attendance will come from nonresident visitors to the Twin Cities metro area. International visitors will travel to the Twin Cities and other U.S. destinations during an average trip of 12 days.

33,000



Expo 2027 would promote a healthy job market. Preparation for the expo would support 33,000 jobs (full- and part-time) in the United States, including 17,000 in Minnesota.



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New at-large councilmember Chao Moua and his wife, Shauna, pictured with their sons.

# MAYOR’S MEMO

## WELCOMING A NEW COUNCILMEMBER

By Mayor Tim Busse

The Bloomington City Council voted to appoint Chao Moua to the vacant at-large city council seat at its meeting on January 23. The vacancy was a result of Nathan Coulter’s resignation from his position after being elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives in November 2022. Moua was officially sworn in at the February 6 City Council meeting.

Moua has a strong base of knowledge about City operations and finances from his involvement in a variety of programs. He’s an alum of the Bloomington Leadership Program. He served on the Community Budget Advisory Committee in 2020, which provided the City Council with budget and financial recommendations when the pandemic was significantly impacting City finances. Most recently, Moua was a member of the core planning team for *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.*, the long-range strategic planning effort that will guide the City’s work in the coming years.

Professionally, Moua has years of experience in manufacturing and business management. He has a master’s degree in business administration from the University of St. Thomas and a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse. Moua and his family have lived in Bloomington since 2015.

Moua shared his perspective on the appointment: “I feel extremely honored to have been selected to serve on the Bloomington City Council. When I saw the candidate list of names, I was immediately inspired by the number of people who were ready to help their community. I now have the privilege to carry on building this remarkable community and serving incredible residents. I am determined to ensure that the voice of Bloomington is heard, and I look forward to meeting the needs of my neighbors.”

The City Council interviewed 18 applicants for the at-large seat and brought five finalists back for second interviews. Moua was chosen from a field of remarkable candidates with a wide array of experience and community involvement. It was difficult to narrow the group down to five and then to pick one. It shows the quality and depth of leadership in the residents of this city.

Moua will fill the at-large council seat until the regularly scheduled City elections on November 7. The winner of that election will determine who will fill the remainder of Nathan Coulter’s term, which expires January 5, 2026.



# SOUTH LOOP WATER PARK PROJECT PROGRESSING

Talks about a proposed water park in South Loop began in the 1980s. Then in 2019, the project began moving forward again. The pandemic impacted the tourism industry and slowed discussion of the water park. Now, the water park project is making headway again.

The proposed project would be one of the largest indoor water parks in North America with a building footprint of approximately 250,000 square feet and a total area, including all interior multistory floor areas, around 335,000 square feet. The project would cost approximately \$345 million, plus infrastructure. A portion of the property taxes, via tax increment financing, paid by Mall of America projects would go into the water park to make it financially viable. The water park would be open to the public with Bloomington residents receiving a discount.

“The developer is analyzing the financials to be able to close on the project,” Assistant Port Authority Administrator Jason Schmidt said. “If they are able to secure financing and close the financial gap, they would look to start construction of the water park in the summer or fall of 2023.”

More information about the status of the project will be in an upcoming issue of the *Briefing*. Visit blm.mn/agendas to see past or future meeting agendas for Council and Port Authority Commission concurrent meetings.

**BRIEFING**  
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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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Elected officials presented for informational purposes.

### COUNCILMEMBERS

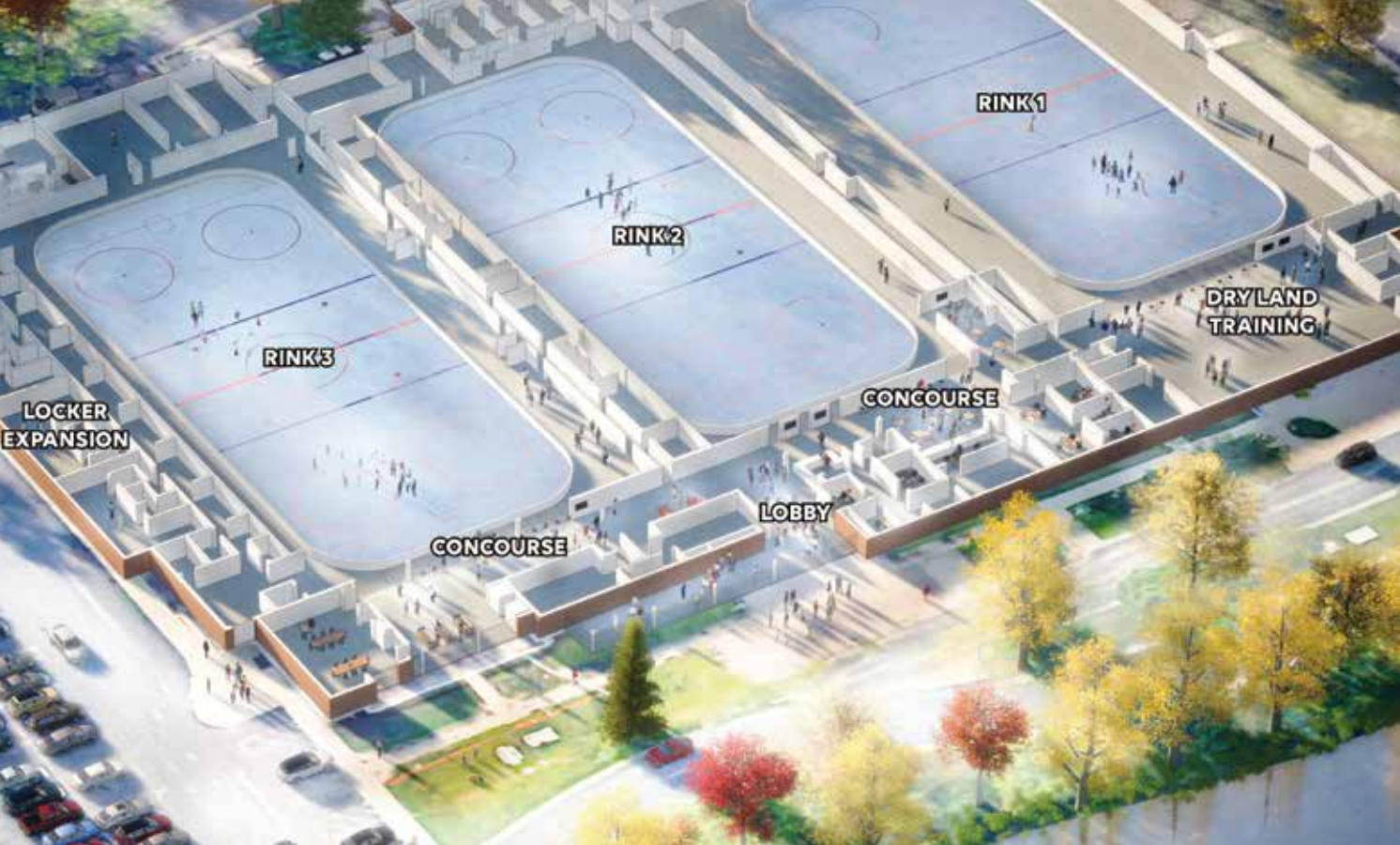
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The City of Bloomington does not discriminate against or deny the benefits of its services, programs, or activities to a qualified person because of a disability. The City will provide a reasonable accommodation or modify its policies and programs 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 rendering shows what an improved Bloomington Ice Garden could look like.

## PROPOSED FUNDING SOURCE FOR AGING FACILITIES

As with many suburbs that were built out in the 1950s and 1960s, many of Bloomington’s facilities need upgrades replacing. The City Council has asked the state legislature to approve a half-percent sales tax to fund \$155 million in projects. If approved, the sales tax proposal would then be up for final approval by voters in November 2023. Residents will also be able to vote on each project separately.

### PROPOSED PROJECTS

- \$20 million: Nine Mile Creek Corridor renewal.
- \$35 million: Bloomington Ice Garden renovation, including a new roof.
- \$100 million: Creekside Community Center and Public Health building replacement.

### SALES TAX VERSUS PROPERTY TAX

Cities have two primary ways to pay for community improvements—sales taxes and property taxes. Here’s how the cost could break down for each funding option:

- If the projects were funded by sales tax, it would require \$72 in additional sales tax for each of Bloomington’s 38,000 households per year. With this option, more than two-thirds of necessary funding would be paid by nonresidents.
- If the projects were funded through property taxes, the property tax bill for a median-value home would increase by \$210 per year.

The sales tax option reduces the share of funding for each median-value home by about \$138 annually. For more information about the proposed Bloomington sales tax, visit [blm.mn/bst](http://blm.mn/bst).

## EARNED SICK AND SAFE LEAVE ORDINANCE TAKES EFFECT JULY 2023

To protect the health and well-being of Bloomington’s workforce and residents, and following the lead of other large cities in Minnesota, the City Council adopted an earned sick and safe leave ordinance that takes effect July 1, 2023.

Under the new ordinance, businesses with five or more employees must allow employees to earn a minimum of one hour of sick and safe leave for every 30 hours they work, up to a maximum of 48 hours annually. Employers with fewer than five employees must provide unpaid leave and can choose to provide paid leave.

Employees can start using their accrued time 90 days after they begin employment. Thus, employees hired July 1 will be able to begin using accrued time on October 1, 2023. Current employees will be able to begin using accrued time as soon as they have accrued it. For more information, visit [blm.mn/essl](http://blm.mn/essl).

## NO CURBSIDE CLEANUP IN 2023

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

In 2021, the City Council approved a plan to reduce landfill waste and provide reuse and recycling options. 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](http://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](http://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](mailto:UtilityBilling@bloomingtonmn.gov) anytime to schedule bulky item pickup for a fee. Visit Hennepin County’s Green Disposal Guide at [blm.mn/green-guide](http://blm.mn/green-guide) for additional tips on how to dispose of, reuse and donate items.



## WIC OFFERS FAMILIES “FUEL FOR THE FUTURE”

March is National Nutrition Month® and the theme for 2023 is “Fuel for the Future.”

Bloomington Public Health helps low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children through age five with access to nutritional fuel through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition program.

“I tend to cook the same few dishes because the kids will eat them. But when I wanted to try new recipes that are kid friendly, WIC staff showed me how to access the ‘Affordable Flavors’ cookbook and menu plan on the WIC website,” said one WIC participant. “The site has loads of great recipes using WIC foods and it helps my family eat well on a budget!”

WIC provides nutritional education and direct food benefits, including a debit card for use at grocery stores. Residents of Bloomington, Edina or Richfield can call the Public Health WIC program at 952-563-8993 to apply for or learn more about the program.

The program has helped many families succeed. You do not need to be a U.S. citizen.

In 2021, Bloomington Public Health provided services and support to nearly 3,100 participants in the WIC Supplemental Nutrition program.

## PAY YOUR UTILITY BILL ONLINE OR SET UP AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS

The City’s online bill pay service provides residents with easy, convenient and secure options to pay their utility bills. Residents can also save time by setting up automatic payments.

It’s easy to set up an online bill-pay account. Residents create a username and password to get email notifications when the bill is available and just before the due date. Users can also log in as a guest by using the account number and name on their billing statement. The payment portal also offers unique features, such as the ability to pay by text and review past billing statements. You can make payments using your bank routing and account number or by Visa, Mastercard, Discover and American Express. These options can be changed by the user at any time.

For more information, visit [blm.mn/paymybill](http://blm.mn/paymybill).





# Housing and Redevelopment Authority Resource Guide

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 enhance Bloomington.

The HRA performed an assessment of its work in 2022. As a result, it is focusing on policies, programs and services along the housing continuum. Read about some of the services and programs the HRA provides to help renters, homeowners and homebuyers in Bloomington in this two-page spread. For more information about the resources HRA provides visit [blm.mn/hraresources](http://blm.mn/hraresources).



## WORKING ALONG THE HOUSING CONTINUUM

The housing continuum is, at its simplest, the range of housing types available in a community—from emergency shelters on one end, all the way to homeownership on the other. In between lies an assortment of housing options and types, each critically important for different people at different times. *See graphic below.*



## HOUSING STABILITY



### HOMEHELPMN

Homeowners who have fallen behind on their mortgage or other eligible housing-related expenses because of the pandemic are eligible to receive assistance for past-due expenses. MN Housing’s HomeHelpMN program is accepting applications. Call 1-800-388-3226 or visit [HomeHelpMN.org](http://HomeHelpMN.org) for more information or to apply.



### FORECLOSURE PREVENTION AND COUNSELING

The City is partnering with the Minnesota Homeownership Center to offer the Bloomington Homeownership Preservation Program (BHPP). The program provides support to homeowners within Bloomington who are past due on their mortgage or other housing expenses. The BHPP offers foreclosure prevention advising and limited financial assistance. To determine eligibility, visit [hocmn.org/bloomingtonhpp](http://hocmn.org/bloomingtonhpp).

### HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS

In 2022, 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. Learn more at [blm.mn/hra](http://blm.mn/hra).

### HOUSEHOLD AND OUTSIDE MAINTENANCE FOR THE ELDERLY (H.O.M.E.)

The City partners with Senior Community Services to provide housekeeping, handy person tasks, home safety checks, lawn mowing and snow removal, and technology support for Bloomington residents aged 60 or older. For more information, call 952-746-4046 or visit [seniorcommunity.org](http://seniorcommunity.org).

### ENERGY ASSISTANCE

The Energy Assistance Program helps pay for home heating and water costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified households. It is a federally funded program. Grants are paid directly to the utility company for the household’s bill. Grants are available to renters and homeowners, and are based on energy cost, household size and income. Learn more at [blm.mn/hraresources](http://blm.mn/hraresources).

### BRIDGE TO BENEFITS

Bridge to Benefits is a project from the Children’s Defense Fund — Minnesota that aims to improve the well-being of families and individuals by linking them to public work support programs and tax credits. By answering a few questions, you will be able to see if you are eligible. This tool is easy, free, and confidential. Learn more at [bridgetobenefits.org](http://bridgetobenefits.org).







**WHAT TO DO IF YOU’RE EXPERIENCING HOUSING INSTABILITY**

The HRA supports four Bloomington nonprofits, listed below, and refers those who would like to access assistance to these organizations. Find additional resources online at [blm.mn/hraresources](http://blm.mn/hraresources).

**BRIDGING—BRIDGING.ORG**

Bridging’s mission is to empower people to thrive in their homes by providing quality furniture and household goods for those pursuing housing stability.



**OASIS FOR YOUTH—OASISFORYOUTH.ORG**

Oasis for Youth’s mission is the trusted resource committed to elevating youth in their own community.



**HOUSINGLINK—HOUSINGLINK.ORG**

HousingLink’s mission is connecting people to affordable rental homes, increasing choice and access for all.



**VEAP—VEAP.ORG**

VEAP’s mission is: Together we create pathways to stronger, more hopeful communities through access to healthy food, housing stability, and supportive services.



**HOMEOWNERSHIP PATHWAYS**

**JOURNEY TO HOMEOWNERSHIP EDUCATION**

The HRA is partnering with Project for Pride in Living to offer educational opportunities about the differences between renting and homeownership throughout the year. Educational sessions are available each month in English, Somali and Spanish. Learn more and view the dates and times at [blm.mn/hraresources](http://blm.mn/hraresources).

**RENTAL HOME FOR FUTURE HOMEBUYERS**

The Rental Homes for Future Homebuyers program provides a five-year track for qualified households to rent a home, owned by the HRA, and escrow a portion of their rent for a down payment in the future purchase of a home. This moves participating families toward homeownership, increases housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income people and preserves existing housing inventory. Learn more at [blm.mn/rentalhomes](http://blm.mn/rentalhomes).

**DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE**

Bloomington’s Homebuyer Mortgage Assistance (HMA) is a pilot down-payment assistance program for income-eligible households. To prioritize disadvantaged communities that experience barriers to obtaining homeownership, applicants must complete financial and homebuyer counseling, provided through partner organizations Minnesota Homeownership Center, Twin Cities Urban League and Minnesota Housing Homeownership Capacity Program. The HMA is administered by NeighborWorks Home Partners, [nwhomepartners.org](http://nwhomepartners.org). The HMA program will help inform a permanent Bloomington down-payment assistance program.

**HOUSING PRESERVATION**

**A BRUSH WITH KINDNESS**

Habitat for Humanity’s A Brush with Kindness program offers weatherization assistance, energy-efficiency upgrades, resources for aging homeowners and more in the seven-county metro area. The program is also accepting applications for a limited time to help homeowners address critical tree care needs, including trees affected by Emerald Ash Borer. Projects will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to homeowners who have received citations from their city requiring tree removal. Learn more at [home.tchabitat.org/home-repair](http://home.tchabitat.org/home-repair).

**HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LOAN PROGRAM**

The Housing and Environmental Loan Program provides qualifying owner-occupied households in Bloomington the ability to access forgivable loan funds for emergency repairs without completing a full-scale rehabilitation project or signing a long-term repayment agreement. Eligible repairs include systems red-flagged by a utility company, orders of violation or requirement for immediate repair of health or safety items by City of Bloomington. Learn more at [blm.mn/loans](http://blm.mn/loans).

**HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS**

The Home Improvement Loan program provides Bloomington owner-occupied households the ability to access funds to maintain, repair and improve their homes. Loans are available up to \$40,000 for eligible home repairs that address health and safety requirements including electrical, heating, plumbing, energy efficiency and exterior improvements. Homeowners do not have to repay the loan until they sell, transfer title, or the property is no longer their principal place of residence. Learn more at [blm.mn/loans](http://blm.mn/loans).

**HOME ENERGY SQUAD**

The City partners with the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) to help residents save energy and money on utility bills through Home Energy Squad Enhanced visits. The CEE’s team of trusted energy consultants will visit homes in Bloomington, evaluate energy savings opportunities, and install energy-efficient materials. The Home Energy Squad Enhanced visit also qualifies homeowners for CEE’s 2.99% energy financing. The City buys down the cost of the visit to \$50 for residents. Learn more at [blm.mn/hes](http://blm.mn/hes).

**HOUSING CREATION**

**HOMES WITHIN REACH**

In partnership with the City, Homes Within Reach—West Hennepin Affordable Housing Land Trust purchases and rehabilitates at least two houses per year in Bloomington to create and preserve affordable homeownership opportunities. Current homeowners may sell their home to Homes Within Reach, if they choose. Since 2016, the City has partnered for the success of 12 first-time homebuyers in Bloomington. Learn more at [HomesWithinReach.org](http://HomesWithinReach.org).

**TWIN CITIES HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

Through partnership with the City, Habitat for Humanity Twin Cities constructs, rehabilitates and finances homes to provide long-term affordable homeownership opportunities to qualified low-to moderate-income households. Since 1997, the City has partnered with Habitat for Humanity to provide homes to 18 first-time homebuyers in Bloomington. Current homeowners may sell their home to Habitat for Humanity, if they choose. Learn more at [tchabitat.org](http://tchabitat.org).





YEAR-ROUND ICE SKATING

Keep those skates sharp! Bloomington Ice Garden offers skating opportunities all year long.

Open skating is available through May 24 on Mondays – Wednesdays, 9 – 10:30 a.m.; and Sundays, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. From June 4 – end of August, open skating is available, Sundays, 5:30 – 7 p.m. Cost: \$5 per person. Skate rentals cost an additional \$5 per pair.

Developmental hockey is for hockey players who want to skate with a stick and puck. It takes place Mondays and Fridays, 6 – 7 a.m. and costs \$11 per person.

Adult open hockey is for adults looking for a pickup hockey game. Now through May 21, adult open hockey happens Sundays, 8 – 9:30 p.m. June 4 – August 27, the schedule changes to Sundays, 6:30 – 8 p.m. Cost is \$11 per person. Goalies are free.

Pro’s ice is for figure skaters working on their advanced skating skills, choreography, and jump and spin techniques. This is for individual skaters or private lessons from a coach. This is available year-round and dates and times vary from week to week. Cost is \$11 per hour per person. Contact BIG for more information.

Group skating lessons are structured ice-skating lessons to learn or improve skills. Lessons for all ages run seven weeks. Cost is \$95 for each seven-week session with a 30-minute class each week.

Ice rental rates vary throughout the year. BIG rents ice to individuals and groups year-round for corporate events, special gatherings and birthday parties.

For more information about these skating opportunities, visit blm.mn/BIG, call 952-563-8841 or email BIG@bloomingtonmn.gov.



Ice skaters gather after performing at Bloomington Ice Garden.

CHECK OUT THESE EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

ENJOY BIG’S ANNUAL ICE SHOW

Have a friend or family member in the show, or just love a good show? Local skaters will showcase their skills at the 2023 annual Ice Show titled “Skating the Enchanted Forest.” This show features spotlights, colorful costumes, fun choreography and great, custom-recorded music.

Catch the show on Friday, March 17, 7 p.m., or Saturday, March 18, at 1 p.m. The dress rehearsal Thursday, March 16, 6 p.m., is open to everyone. Rehearsal tickets are \$5 in advance and at the door. All tickets are nonrefundable.

To order tickets over the phone with a credit card, call 952-563-8841. Tickets are also available at the Bloomington Ice Garden main office.

For up-to-date information, visit blm.mn/big or email to Rene Gelecinskyj, BIG Skate School Coordinator, at rgelecinskyj@bloomingtonmn.gov.

SAVE THE DATE: NEW PARENT RESOURCES

The City of Bloomington will host a free educational event for expecting and new parents in partnership with Early Learning Services. Participants will learn about infant CPR, what to look for in a daycare, breast and bottle feeding and more. The event will take place on Saturday, April 15, 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., at Pond Early Learning Center, 9600 3rd Avenue South. For more information, contact Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator Amanda Crombie at acrombie@bloomingtonmn.gov.

STORYFEST 2023 COMES TO BLOOMINGTON

Story Arts of Minnesota, in partnership with the Bloomington Center for the Arts, will present StoryFest 2023: Shared Stories, Shared World on April 29.

The Bloomington Center for the Arts is a versatile venue that will allow StoryFest to host workshops, story concerts and story circles for tellers and listeners from all over Minnesota. StoryFest introduces new audiences to the wonders of storytelling and will showcase stories from communities whose voices are often underrepresented or silenced.

The day includes opportunities for adults and youth to sharpen their storytelling skills and develop relationships with other storytellers. Activities conclude with an afternoon youth concert and an evening adult storytelling concert.

For a complete schedule and information, visit Story Arts of Minnesota at storyartsmn.org.

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 that will 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, visit 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.

ARBOR DAY TREE SALE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. Trees are bare-root and approximately one-inch in diameter. They cost \$50 each. Trees are viable at the time of sale. No refunds will be issued. All trees on this form are native to Minnesota, except the Japanese tree lilac.

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

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.





## SUMMER FUN IS ON THE WAY!

Bloomington Parks and Recreation is gearing up for another exciting season of summer programs for people of all ages, abilities and interests. Fee assistance is available for qualified participants. Find details on youth camps, adult programs and more in the full 2023 Summer Experience catalog at [blm.mn/parksrec](https://blm.mn/parksrec) or [blm.mn/youth-programs](https://blm.mn/youth-programs).

### NEW THIS YEAR! REGISTRATION LOTTERY FOR POPULAR YOUTH PROGRAMS

One big change this year is a random lottery registration system for the popular Camp Kota, Playground Littles and Summer Adventure Playgrounds programs.

“In the past, registration was on one day at a certain time, and programs filled up within minutes,” Recreation Supervisor Jenna Smith said. “The random drawing lottery system aims to increase access and fairness, so everyone has an equal chance of getting a spot in a program.”

Lottery registration opens March 29, at midnight, and closes April 5, at 4 p.m. The lottery drawing will happen on April 6. Randomly selected registrants will be emailed on drawing day and have one week to complete the registration process. Participants pay only when selected. Complete lottery details can be found in the 2023 catalog.



### YOUTH AND INCLUSION PROGRAMS

- Camp Kota** immerses kindergarten through seventh grade kids in activities like swimming, arts and crafts, paddleboarding, log rolling, camping skills and more, July 10 – August 4.
- Playground Littles** helps preschool and kindergarten aged children develop friendships and enjoy structured activities with peers. Morning, afternoon and full-day options, June 12 – August 10.
- Summer Adventure Playgrounds** engages first through seventh grade kids in summer games, sports, arts and crafts, special events and field trips, all arranged and supervised by trained instructors, Monday – Friday, June 12 – August 10.
- Adaptive Softball** offers recreational and competitive adult softball and recreational youth softball opportunities for people with disabilities. Youth play Mondays and adults play Tuesdays, mid-June through early August.
- Mobile Recreation** offers youth 18 years old and younger fun, free programming such as kickball, spikeball, arts and crafts, pop-up disc golf, slacklining and parachutes in parks around the city. No registration required.

### ADULT LEAGUES AND SPORTS

Get into the game this summer by joining one of Bloomington’s adult sports leagues and programs. There is a sport for everyone from beginners to serious players. Check out kickball, pickleball, softball, tennis and volleyball. Register online, in person, by mail or email or fax. Visit [blm.mn/adultsports](https://blm.mn/adultsports) for more details or to sign up.



### SIGN UP TODAY! GLEE CLUB MUSIC CLASSES START APRIL 29

It’s back! The Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs’ popular eight-week Saturday morning Glee Club music class for youth with special needs in grades 4 – 12 begins April 29. Space is limited so sign up soon.

Held at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South, the class is tailored to meet the varying physical, social, emotional, and intellectual abilities of participants while helping them grow musically.

Programming includes rhythm and Orff (barred percussion) instruments, singing and creative movement. The program’s goals are to encourage self-esteem and pride, improve emotional well-being and share the joy of music in a fun and safe environment.

For additional information visit [angelicacantanti.org](https://angelicacantanti.org) or call 952-563-8572.

### GET YOUR GAME ON AT CREEKSIDE

Creekside Community Center is the place to be for a friendly card game. Open to adults age 50+ and adults with a disability, Creekside welcomes card players of all levels.

Come on your own or bring a friend. Groups gather one or more days each week for duplicate bridge, cribbage, euchre, hand and foot canasta, pinochle and 500. Pre-registration is not required.

Ready to play? Get the schedule for the dates and times of games by calling Creekside at 952-563-4944 or visiting [blm.mn/cc](https://blm.mn/cc).

### FIND FUN WORK FOR SUMMER

Parks and Recreation is looking for staff for seasonal positions in youth, inclusion and adaptive programs, recreation facilities and more. Having enough staff is critical to the success of programs like Camp Kota and Summer Adventure Playgrounds, and facilities like Dwan Golf Course and Bloomington Center for the Arts. Without a dedicated and engaged team of seasonal employees, the department cannot ensure a full schedule of programs this summer.

There are options for applicants as young as 15. Pay ranges from \$15 – \$23 per hour. Apply today at [blm.mn/prjobs](https://blm.mn/prjobs).





### SPRING MEANS STREET SWEEPERS ARE COMING

To maintain streets and keep Bloomington looking good, all city streets are swept in the spring and fall. Spring sweeping typically begins in early April and takes approximately four to five weeks to complete.

#### HOW YOU CAN HELP

First, give the street sweepers space. Just as with other large equipment, drivers often move slowly and may have an obstructed view. Play it safe and give street sweepers a wide berth.

Second, don't put grass clippings or any other waste in the streets. Grass, leaves, and lawn waste are a major problem for storm sewer systems. They can clog grates and pipes and contribute to backups and potentially flooding.

For more details and a map of the street sweeping schedule and progress in Bloomington, visit [blm.mn/maint](http://blm.mn/maint).

### POTHoles ENTER PEAK SEASON

Potholes are depressions in the pavement surface that require continual monitoring and repair.

They most commonly develop when water seeps into tiny cracks in the street's surface. In winter, the water freezes, weakens the pavement, then thaws and leaves a hole under the pavement. Once vehicles pass over it, the pavement starts to crumble and a pothole begins. This is why spring is the peak season for potholes.

Even without water seeping in and freezing, traffic can cause the materials beneath the pavement surface to move and create a weak spot. Then, every time that a vehicle rolls over it, the damage increases until a new pothole appears.

The City's Maintenance Division maintains and improves 342 miles of roadways and repairs potholes using materials such as a hot asphalt and cold asphalt patches when hot material is not available in winter months. To report a pothole in Bloomington, visit [blm.mn/pothole](http://blm.mn/pothole) or call 952-563-8760.



### THE APPRECIATED PROFESSION OF SNOW PLOWING

Residents from around Bloomington reached out to thank the 75 Public Works staff who hit the streets to plow and treat surfaces over the winter season. Each in their own way (phone, email, social media, visit) expressed gratitude for the City crews who kept drivers and pedestrians moving through the snow, freezing fog and rain that made winter 2022 – 2023 one for the records.

By January 5, 2023, crews had already dealt with snow totals of up to 48.1 inches in Bloomington, nearly reaching what they move in a full snow season that averages 51.1 inches. Work shifts were long and grueling as staff responded to 21 snow and ice events and three snow emergencies, including the one on January 3 – 5 that spread 15.3 inches of snow in Bloomington alone, and nearly shut down the state.

The average cost for these services per household is about \$44 per year. To learn more, visit [blm.gov/mn/maint](http://blm.gov/mn/maint).

**THE SCOOP ON SNOW PLOWING**

Bloomington staff plow an average of 25 times per year. A full plow of the city means:

<b>2,016</b>	Lane-miles of road. (The distance from Bloomington to Mazatlan, Mexico!)
<b>270</b>	Miles of sidewalks.
<b>525</b>	Cul-de-sacs.
<b>20</b>	Skating rinks.

### SHOVEL OUT FIRE HYDRANTS, MAILBOXES AND GARBAGE BINS

Help protect your neighborhood from house fires. Accessible hydrants reduce the time it takes firefighters to extinguish a fire. Keep your mailbox clear of snow. Mailboxes should not extend past the curb and should have sturdy four-by-four timber posts. The bottoms of mailboxes should be no less than 45 inches off the ground and located on the left side of your driveway.

If it snows on or near garbage collection day, keep garbage and recycling bins behind the curb and away from the end of the driveway. Place containers off sidewalks to leave room for plows.



### NEW WASH STATION HELPS CITY VEHICLES STAY READY FOR ACTION

To protect its vehicle fleet, the City has replaced its old unreliable and ineffective vehicle wash station with a new one. The new wash system has several new features such as a low-pressure option to protect the vinyl wrap on Police vehicles and end-of-wash air blowers.

Another major improvement is the addition of a salt neutralizer in the underbody wash that reduces component failures due to rust issues, saving money and helping the City meet environmental goals. With the old wash, the City was spending on average \$25,000 per year on rusted snowplow truck springs.

The wash system investment was \$228,832. An additional \$854,467 was allotted for other facility improvements such as new power system, ventilation, garage doors and a heated slab to prevent water from freezing and forming an impromptu skating rink at the exit.