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Full-time Bloomington firefighter, Justin Florence, being trained on how to operate a fire hydrant.

## BLOOMINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT EVOLVES BUILDING A STRONGER RESPONSE TEAM

The Bloomington Fire Department (BFD) welcomed 20 new full-time firefighters in April. All of the new firefighters came with the required education and certifications, and most already served as paid, on-call fire firefighters for the BFD. Their first assignment? A month of full-time training.

“We have been training eight hours a day,” said Mallory Vedder, a part-time firefighter who was hired to serve full time. “We learn so much from each other and it builds on the strong sense of teamwork we have, pulling together to serve the community.”

Along with practice using ropes, ladders, hydrants and hoses, saws and tools, engines and trucks, the firefighters trained on structure fires, Emergency Medical Services, rescue, hazardous materials and technical rescue. The 160 hours of instruction also included live structure fire training.

### MEETING THE NEEDS OF PUBLIC SAFETY

In 2021, insufficient staffing resulted in the BFD meeting its response-time goal only 67% of the time. Fire trucks frequently arrived on calls with only one or two firefighters. To better serve the community, the department is now shifting from a paid-on-call, part-time staff to a mix of full-time and part-time firefighters. In 2022, the City recently received a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant that funded 18 additional firefighters for three years.

By July, the department plans to have 24 full-time firefighters on 24-hour shifts. Expect more new recruits. To function at its best and meet the community’s needs, the department has set a goal of 75 – 80 full-time firefighters and 60 – 75 part-time firefighters over the next few years.

For more updates about the BFD, visit [blm.mn/fire](http://blm.mn/fire).

## EMPLOYERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE EARNED SICK AND SAFE LEAVE

A new ordinance requiring Bloomington employers to provide their employees earned sick and safe leave takes effect July 1. Here’s the breakdown:

EMPLOYER SIZE	SAFE AND SICK LEAVE HOURS REQUIRED	PAY FOR SAFE AND SICK LEAVE HOURS
Five or more employees	1 hour for every 30 hours worked	Required
Fewer than five employees	1 hour for every 30 hours worked	Up to employer

Current employees will be able to use accrued time as soon as they have accrued it. New employees can start using their accrued time 90 days after they begin employment. As part of the ordinance, accrued and available hours must be listed on employee pay stubs. For more information about the ordinance, visit [blm.mn/essl](http://blm.mn/essl).



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# BRIEFING

Volume 31, Number 06

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](http://BloomingtonMN.gov)**

## BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL



**Mayor**  
 Tim Busse  
 952-563-8782 (w)  
 952-457-7506 (c)  
 tbusse@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember At Large**  
 Chao Moua  
 763-229-7582  
 cmoua@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember At Large**  
 Jenna Carter  
 612-284-8751  
 jcarter@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember District I**  
 Dwayne Lowman  
 952-270-2377  
 dlowman@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember District II**  
 Shawn Nelson  
 952-479-0471  
 snelson@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



**Councilmember District III**  
 Lona Dallessandro  
 612-231-6824  
 ldallessandro@  
 BloomingtonMN.gov



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

*Elected officials presented for informational purposes.*

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

**EXECUTIVE STAFF**

Jamie Verbrugge, <i>City Manager</i>	952-563-8780
<a href="mailto:citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov">citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Michael Sable, <i>Assistant City Manager</i>	952-563-8780
<a href="mailto:citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov">citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Karla Henderson, <i>Community Development</i>	952-563-8947
<a href="mailto:communitydevelopment@BloomingtonMN.gov">communitydevelopment@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Diann Kirby, <i>Community Services</i>	952-563-8717
<a href="mailto:communityservices@BloomingtonMN.gov">communityservices@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Lori Economy-Scholler, <i>Finance</i>	952-563-8791
<a href="mailto:finance@BloomingtonMN.gov">finance@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Ulie Seal, <i>Fire</i>	952-563-4801
<a href="mailto:fire@BloomingtonMN.gov">fire@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Amy Cheney, <i>Information Technology</i>	952-563-4885
<a href="mailto:it@BloomingtonMN.gov">it@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Melissa Manderschied, <i>Legal</i>	952-563-8753
<a href="mailto:legal@BloomingtonMN.gov">legal@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Ann Kattreh, <i>Parks and Recreation</i>	952-563-8877
<a href="mailto:parksrec@BloomingtonMN.gov">parksrec@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Booker T. Hodges, <i>Police</i>	952-563-4900
<a href="mailto:police@BloomingtonMN.gov">police@BloomingtonMN.gov</a>	
Karl Keel, <i>Public Works</i>	952-563-8731
<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.*

## CITY TO CONSIDER LOWERING SPEED LIMITS

To keep neighborhoods safe and vibrant, the City is considering recommendations to lower speed limits from 30 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour on neighborhood streets.

“Speed limits are one key tool that communities can use to help ensure that Bloomington neighborhoods maintain their safety and livability,” said City Engineer Julie Long.

Having gathered feedback through online surveys and a virtual open house in March, the program team will continue to seek community input electronically, at the Farmers Market and during public meetings before developing final recommendations to provide the City Council later this summer.

### LARGER ROADWAYS

Along with changes to how local roadways are managed, staff is also studying speed limit changes for larger City-owned corridors, including Lyndale Avenue, American Boulevard, and 86th and 90th streets, among others. Those recommendations will also be brought to the City Council following extensive conversations with the public. For more information, or to join discussions about speed limits, visit [blm.mn/letstalk](http://blm.mn/letstalk).



## ROAD REPAIRS COMING TO I-35W AND I-494 IN BLOOMINGTON

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) will be working in Bloomington this summer on I-35W and I-494 projects.

### I-35W

From May through September 2023, I-35W will get some upgrades.

Bloomington residents will see pavement resurfacing between 82nd and 106th streets, the addition of lanes in both directions between 98th and 106th streets, and improvements to ramps, sidewalks and signals at four intersections (90th, 94th, 98th and 106th streets).

Motorists can expect lane, ramp and weekend directional closures while crews do work on I-35W and the four intersections. To sign up for email updates for this project, visit [blm.mn/35w](http://blm.mn/35w).

#### BENEFITS OF I-35W IMPROVEMENTS

- Extended pavement life.
- Improved traffic flow and congestion.
- Improved accessibility and safety.

### I-494

This summer, multiple phases of improvement on I-494 from the Minneapolis – St. Paul International Airport to Highway 169 will begin between East Bush Lake Road in Edina and 12th Avenue North in Richfield. Crews will construct E-ZPass lanes on I-494 from Highway 100 to I-35W in each direction, replace the bridges over I-494 at Portland, Nicollet and 12th avenues, and add a new pedestrian bridge at Chicago Avenue to provide an additional pedestrian and bicycle connection across I-494.

To sign up for email updates for this project, visit [blm.mn/494](http://blm.mn/494).

#### BENEFITS OF I-494 IMPROVEMENTS

- Improved congestion, safety, traffic flow, drainage, and accessibility.
- Restored pavement.
- Rebuilt and repaired bridges.
- Improved pedestrian and bicycle networks.



## MONTHLY PICK-UP OF REUSABLE AND RECYCLABLE BULKY ITEMS HAS BEGUN

The City has partnered with Better Futures to collect certain bulky reusable and recyclable items curbside with the goal of reducing the amount of waste going to landfills. Piloted in 2022, the service is now available citywide and items will be picked up on regular garbage days during the first full week of each month.

### Who is eligible?

All residential City solid waste customers can take advantage of the program.

### How to schedule a pick-up

Pick-up must be scheduled at least two days in advance of your garbage day. To schedule, call Better Futures at 612-353-5400 or visit [blm.mn/better](http://blm.mn/better).

### What can be picked up?

In good working condition only: furniture, rugs, toilets, sinks and certain building materials. Furniture must be free of tears, stains and pet hair. These items will be reused.

Any condition: grills, bicycles, large appliances and mattresses. These items will be reused or recycled, depending on their condition. Quantity limits apply. Get all program details and a full list of items accepted at [blm.mn/bulkies](http://blm.mn/bulkies).



## 2024 BUDGET PLANNING UNDERWAY

Summer is the season for grilling out, lake weekends and municipal budget planning. During the summer and fall, City staff will be going to different community events to find out what the residents think is really important. They want to know what residents want to help them plan the budget for the year 2024. Learn more and share your priorities at these upcoming events:

**Monday, June 12, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**, at Arts in the Parks at Valley View Playfield, 9000 Portland Avenue South.

**Thursday, June 15, 6 – 8 p.m.**, at the Reggae Fest at Normandale Lake Bandshell, 5901 West 84th Street.

**Saturday, July 8, 9 – 11 a.m.**, at the Farmers Market at Civic Plaza in the east parking lot, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

**Monday, July 10, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**, at Arts in the Parks at Moir Park 10320 Morgan Ave South.

**Wednesday, July 19, 5 – 7 p.m.**, at the Paul Holland Blues Band show and Midweek Music and Market at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

**Thursday, July 27, 6 – 8 p.m.**, at Latin Night with Salsa Del Soul at Normandale Lake Bandshell, 5901 West 84th Street.

**Sunday, July 30, 4 – 6 p.m.**, at the Bob & the Beachcombers show at Bush Lake Beach, 9140 East Bush Lake Road.

Learn more about the budget planning process on the City's website at [blm.mn/budget](http://blm.mn/budget) or call 952-563-8790.

## BE GREEN: SAVE WATER AND MONEY

In 2020 alone, Bloomington residents and businesses used 3.4 billion gallons of water.

To help conserve water and save money, Bloomington water customers can apply for rebates on their water bills for purchasing WaterSense labeled toilets, irrigation smart controllers and sprinkler bodies; Energy Star-qualified dishwashers and clothes washers; and water-saving rain barrels.

For program details and how to apply, visit [blm.mn/waterrebates](http://blm.mn/waterrebates) or contact Public Works at [ebiales@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:ebiales@BloomingtonMN.gov) or 952-563-8730.



Southgate Apartments residents enjoy Zumba at a summer event cohosted by Public Health.

## HEALTH SERVICES CLOSE TO HOME

Did you know that Bloomington Public Health offers free or discounted services to eligible Bloomington, Edina and Richfield residents all year round? Some of the services offered include:

- Follow Along Program: Safe, confidential assessment of growth and development of children through age three.
- Breastfeeding and chestfeeding: Information and support.
- Health screenings: Free blood pressure checks and low-cost tuberculin skin tests.
- Immunizations and flu shots: For uninsured or underinsured individuals.
- Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home-visiting program: Promotes healthy pregnancy, childhood development and parenting until a child's second birthday.
  - Prenatal, postpartum and parenting: Education and support for health care, food concerns, connections to resources, parenting skills and more.
  - Older adult health: Health concerns assessments, connections to resources and more.
  - Sexual and reproductive health: Counseling, education and resource information to individuals and groups.
  - Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Program: Nutrition education, breast/chestfeeding support, and food benefits for eligible people who are pregnant, postpartum or have children up to five years of age.

For more information or to access services, visit [blm.mn/ph/services](http://blm.mn/ph/services) or call 952-563-8900.

## ADAPTING TO CHANGING HEALTH NEEDS

Bloomington Public Health saw many changes in 2022, including moving out of the emergency response phase of COVID-19, transitioning to a new family home-visiting model and preparing to roll out a mobile health hub to increase residents' access to health services.

Throughout all this change, Public Health staff remained focused on the division's mission: to engage the community in promoting, protecting and improving the health of all. Staff adapted throughout the year to provide the community with locally based support and services. Check out the highlights in Public Health's 2022 annual report at [blm.mn/health2022](http://blm.mn/health2022).



## OUTDOOR FARMERS MARKETS ARE BACK

Enjoy a wonderful summer of fresh food, crafters, music and community with Bloomington's farmers markets. The weekend market is open **Saturdays, June 10 – October 14**, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Start your Saturday exploring fresh plants and foods and crafts, ready-to-eat foods and community tables with live music at 11 a.m.

Need some weekday freshness? Midweek Music and Market takes place **Wednesdays, July 12 – August 23**, 5 – 8 p.m. This annual series offers food trucks, live music and a mini farmers market.



## CELEBRATE BLACK EXCELLENCE ON JUNETEENTH

Join the City of Bloomington Black Employee Network for its first-ever Juneteenth celebration on **Monday, June 19**, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., at Kennedy High School activities field, 150 East 98th Street. There will be food trucks, local business vendors, music and art performances, and a DJ. Learn more at [blm.mn/juneteenth](http://blm.mn/juneteenth).



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE SUMMER EVENTS

### NEIGHBORHOOD FUN: REGISTER NOW FOR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Connected and engaged neighborhoods are safer neighborhoods. National Night Out (NNO) is an annual event designed to strengthen communities by encouraging neighbors to engage in stronger relationships with each other and local law enforcement partners. The 40th annual National Night Out will be **Tuesday, August 1**.

"National Night Out is one of the highlights of the summer for many neighborhoods," said Crime Prevention Specialist Katie Zerull. "From ice cream socials, potlucks and games to photo boards, themed events and viewing the chalk art contest, it is a highlight for the neighborhoods and for us in public safety as well. We hope every neighborhood will join the fun."

If you would like a Bloomington Police Department or Fire Department visitor at your party, your neighborhood must be registered. **Registration is open now and closes on July 23**. For more details or to register, visit [blm.mn/nno](http://blm.mn/nno) or call 952-563-4900.

### READY, SET, SUMMER FETE

Join your neighbors to ring in Independence Day in the Twin Cities. Bloomington's annual Summer Fete festival is set with music, food and a grand finale fireworks show that is one of the largest in Minnesota. The festival will take place **Monday, July 3**, 5 – 10:30 p.m. at Normandale Lake Bandshell, 84th Street and Normandale Boulevard. Learn more at [blm.mn/summerfete](http://blm.mn/summerfete).

### JUNE IS NATIONAL HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH

June is National Homeownership Month—a fitting time to note the Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority's ongoing commitment to help families and individuals achieve their dream of homeownership.

"We continue to focus on our commitment to accessible, affordable and equitable homeownership opportunities," HRA Administrator Aarica Coleman said.

The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority's mission is to help provide affordable housing opportunities for those who are not adequately served by the marketplace. The HRA coordinates the City's efforts to preserve existing neighborhoods and promotes development and redevelopment that enhances Bloomington. Here are some upcoming events for those who are looking for resources. Questions? Call 952-563-8937. Or visit [blm.mn/hraresources](http://blm.mn/hraresources) for more information and the 2022 Annual Housing Report.

#### HOME STRETCH WORKSHOP

Buying a home is a big financial decision—one that you don't have to make alone. Get prepared to make an educated, confident financial choice with the help of Project for Pride in Living. Attend the Home Stretch workshop **Saturday, June 10**, 8:45 a.m. – 5:15 p.m., in the Bloomington Center for the Arts Rehearsal Hall, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. Register online at [blm.mn/homestretch](http://blm.mn/homestretch).

#### JOURNEY TO HOMEOWNERSHIP

Bloomington HRA, in partnership with Project for Pride in Living, presents monthly Journey to Homeownership workshops. These workshops are designed to create successful first-time homebuyers. Workshops are free and are available in English, Somali and Spanish. A workshop will be hosted in Spanish on **Thursday, June 15**, 6 p.m., Somali on **Tuesday, June 20**, 6 p.m. and English on **Wednesday, June 21**, 6 p.m.

Attendees will learn the basics of the homebuying process, be able to speak with real estate professionals and homeownership advisors and have the chance to register for financial and homeownership counseling.

#### RENTERS RESOURCE FAIR AND EVICTION PREVENTION SERVICES

Bloomington renters are invited to attend the renters resource fair and receive support to avoid eviction on **Saturday, June 24**, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., in the Black Box Theater at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. Resources include help applying for rental assistance, legal aid, landlord dispute mediation services and support services regarding food, health care and more. This event is free and food will be served while supplies last.

This event is hosted by Bloomington HRA, Community Mediation & Restorative Services, Inc. and Sakan.

Scan to register  
English:



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