



# 2024 annual sustainability report

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*Please note: this report is not intended to serve as a comprehensive document of community-wide sustainability actions, nor does it include all of the City's sustainability actions.*



# message from Mayor Tim Busse



During an intensive community engagement process to develop the *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.* strategic plan, you, our community members specified how a healthy environment leads to healthy people and a healthy community. As a result, the City of Bloomington has been focusing on environmental sustainability metrics geared towards reducing greenhouse gases, improving water quality, increasing natural restoration and improving waste treatment to ensure we promote an environment where our residents can thrive. The environmental work we achieved creates an enduring and remarkable community where people want to be. For more opportunities to get involved and more info about programs, visit the Sustainability webpage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Busse". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Tim Busse**  
Mayor  
City of Bloomington

# message from the Sustainability Coordinator



In 2024 the City of Bloomington made significant strides in building a more sustainable community. City staff, in partnership with the community, worked to implement initiatives to improve the health of our natural environment. Although we are far from reaching our sustainability goals, the progress we make each year is encouraging, and a testament to the dedication and hard work of our residents, city leaders and staff, and community partners.

The City's first annual sustainability report highlights actions the City of Bloomington led or supported in 2024 that relate to the *Improved Environmental Health* strategic outcome of the *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.* plan. It is an exciting document that celebrates a year's worth of accomplishments and builds the foundation for continued efforts that will make Bloomington a sustainable community for generations to come.

Thank you to all who helped Bloomington achieve the efforts outlined in this report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emma Struss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Emma Struss**

Sustainability Coordinator  
City of Bloomington



awards and  
recognition

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# AWARDS and RECOGNITION



## GREENSTEP CITIES STEPS 4 AND 5

The City of Bloomington received an award for being a Steps 4 and 5 city in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities and Tribal Nations program. Councilmember Rivas, Mayor Busse, and City Manager Verbrugge received the 2024 steps and certificate at the League of Minnesota Cities Conference in June.



## MINNEAPOLIS REGIONAL CHAMBER'S REGIONAL LEADERS AND INNOVATORS AWARD - NINE MILE CREEK CORRIDOR PROJECT

The City of Bloomington was honored during the Minneapolis Regional Chamber's Leaders and Innovators Awards ceremony on Thursday, October 31. The Chamber recognized the Nine Mile Creek Corridor project in the sustainability category.



## BUSH LAKE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE PUBLIC GOOD AWARD - CITY OF BLOOMINGTON SOLID WASTE PROGRAM

The Solid Waste Program was honored for its public engagement and conservation efforts by the Bush Lake Izaak Walton League in September 2024. The award recognized City of Bloomington solid waste staff for the changes made to the City's Curbside Cleanup program that prioritized waste diversion and the robust community engagement that resulted in a program that reflected the feedback from Bloomington residents.



## LOW SALT DESIGN PILOT CITY CERTIFICATE

In December 2024, the City received a certificate from Bolton & Menk for being a Low Salt Design Pilot City. Being one of five cities to complete the pilot continues to demonstrate Bloomington's commitment to sustainable winter maintenance practices. This recognition from Bolton & Menk further underscores the City's leadership in exploring new methods for environmental stewardship.



2024 by the numbers

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# 2024

by the **NUMBERS**



## how we ENHANCED NATURAL RESOURCES

- City staff and volunteers planted **413** trees.
- Ecological restoration activities took place across **38** acres of City-owned property, increasing native plant diversity, enhancing habitat, improving water quality and reducing invasive species.



## how we CONSERVED WATER

- **99** rebates were issued for water saving devices in Bloomington homes as a part of the water rebate program.
- Over **400,000** gallons of water were saved through the installation of water saving appliances and devices in single family properties.
- Irrigation upgrades at Civic Plaza led to a reduction in use of **556,000** gallons of water.



## how we REDUCED GREENHOUSE GASES

- **164** households participated in the Home Energy Squad program, leading to immediate and longer-term energy saving opportunities.
- The City added **7** Ford Lightning electric trucks to its fleet, reducing the fleet's carbon footprint through elimination of greenhouse gases emitted by formerly gas-powered trucks.
- Record attendance was marked at Bloomington farmers markets, with more than **60,000** people in total attending Saturday markets, signaling a growing local food economy.



## how we REDUCED SOLID WASTE

- Curbside organics recycling participants diverted an estimated **1,835** tons of food scraps and other compostable material from the trash.
- **1,009** vehicles attended the Citywide Recycling Drop-Off diverting **56.39** tons of waste from landfills and incinerators.
- **20** multifamily properties verified recycling service and made improvements through signage, communications, and more.



## how we IMPROVED WATER QUALITY

- **3,495** pounds of debris were collected through the Adopt-a-Drain program, protecting lakes, rivers and streams from pollution.
- **26** pond characteristic assessments were completed, helping the City to understand how pond function is influencing water quality.



how we  
reduced  
greenhouse  
gas emissions

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HOW WE

# REDUCED GREENHOUSE GASES

Climate change is primarily caused by air pollutants called greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Greenhouse gases act like a blanket and trap the sun’s heat, causing the earth to warm and weather patterns to change. These changes result in problems for the community such as more extreme heat, freeze thaw cycles, ice storms, and flooding.

Activities such as burning fossil fuels to produce energy for buildings and transportation emit greenhouse gases. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the city focuses on making buildings and transportation more efficient, so less energy is needed. Additionally, fuel switching, or replacing natural gas, diesel, or gasoline equipment with electric equipment is a high priority. This is because electricity can be powered by renewable energy sources such as solar and wind that do not emit greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions helps ensure we do not experience the worst effects of climate change.

## TIME OF SALE ENERGY DISCLOSURE

At the end of 2024, the third year of the Time of Sale Energy Disclosure program, 2,690 homes in Bloomington had received an Energy Disclosure Report. Energy disclosure reports give a basic outline of the conditions of a home from an energy efficiency standpoint at the time of sale. The program also offers free support services to implement recommended upgrades. Residential energy use accounts for one-third of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions, and programs like this help to make residents aware of energy saving opportunities and additionally make energy saving improvements.

## HOME ENERGY SQUAD®

Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy’s Home Energy Squad® program provides direct installations of energy saving products as well as an energy audit to Bloomington homeowners and renters living in one to four-unit dwellings. The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority partners with the program by paying for half the cost of the visit. In 2024 outreach for the program included tabling in parks, libraries, early learning events, and more. One hundred and sixty-four homes participated in Home Energy Squad in 2024.



## Home Profile

Location:

Year built: 1957  
House sq. ft.: 1,066  
Number of stories: 1  
Visit date: 2/26/24

## Energy Score

## Energy Disclosure Report

### How it Works

The energy score measures your home’s energy efficiency. Higher-scoring homes are efficient. Energy efficiency makes homes more comfortable, lowers energy bills, and can lead to 2%–6% greater resale value.\*\*

This report lists practical and cost-effective energy improvements that produce significant energy savings.

Financing and rebates are available. The City of Bloomington and CenterPoint Energy have options to help with upfront costs.

Need more information or advice? Contact the free Energy Advisor service at 651-328-6225 or energydisclosure@mncee.org.



# CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA

## LARGE BUILDING BENCHMARKING

In 2024, the City wrapped up its third year administrating the Large Building Benchmarking program. As a part of this program, owners of commercial, multifamily, and public buildings larger than 75,000 square feet submit energy data to the City each year. The City hosted a reception in October for program participants. Two businesses were recognized at the reception for going above and beyond data reporting requirements by making energy improvements at their properties. In 2024 85% of required participants submitted benchmarking data.

## BUSINESS ENERGY EFFICIENCY GRANT

In September of 2024, the City entered into an agreement with Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) to help administer a grant program. Businesses and organizations that receive free energy audits through CEE's One Stop Energy Efficiency Shop® program and qualify for a utility rebate are eligible for grants covering 20% of project costs up to \$2,500. Four businesses completed preliminary rebate estimates in 2024. Commercial energy use is responsible approximately two-thirds of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

## BRYANT PARK RENOVATION

A new 2,500 square foot park building is under construction at Bryant Park. It is expected to be completed in fall of 2025. Inspired by Minnesota B3 sustainability guidelines, the building includes solar panels as well as geothermal heating, meeting net-zero carbon emissions. The building will incorporate sustainable site design and construction practices, including waste reduction, flood resiliency, daylighting, use of low carbon-embodied materials and low flow plumbing fixtures. Sustainable site improvements include the addition of 10 acres of native plantings, planting 253 new trees, wetland expansion and a more than two-thirds reduction of mowed turf grass area.

## SOUTH LOOP COMMUNITY GARDEN

On June 29, community members gathered to celebrate the opening of the South Loop Community Garden, the newest of four community gardens offered by the City. The South Loop Garden is a partnership between Parks and Recreation and the Office of Creative Placemaking. Parks and Recreation handles the garden logistics and registrations, and Creative Placemaking developed the site plan to include public art installations, sustainable native plantings and other elements. The garden features “Kaškanškan” cyanotype banners by Erin Genia and Sheila Novak, a new park sign, benches, a picnic table and reserved parking. Building local foods systems eliminates transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, prevalent in global food networks.

## FARMERS MARKETS

The Bloomington Farmers Market ran every Saturday morning from June 8 to October 19 in the east parking lot of Civic Plaza last year. The market is one of the largest suburban markets in the metro area, featuring up to 45 vendors most Saturdays. The market includes a diverse mix of products, all of which are grown or made locally. The market is a very important place for Bloomington residents seeking healthy food options, and many people who use the state Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Electronic Benefits Transfer (SNAP EBT) and associated Market Bucks programs enjoy produce and products the market provides.



### TRANSPORTATION-RELATED GREENHOUSE GAS STUDY

The City completed a study that analyzed and modeled pathways to reduce carbon emissions from Bloomington's transportation system, helped demonstrate where Bloomington is today in relation to transportation behavior and associated emissions, and identified high-level strategies to achieve the City's 2050 net-zero carbon emission goal. The study also identified ways to align with other City goals identified in strategic priorities including equity and inclusion, and economic growth. Transportation is the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the city.

### SICK PHASE II RAMP ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGER PARTNERSHIP

The Port Authority partnered with SICK, Inc to share in purchasing eight level two electric vehicle chargers that will be available to SICK employees during working hours and open to the public during off hours and weekends. SICK purchased four of the chargers, while the City purchased the other four. The SICK Phase II Ramp is set to open in 2025. Electric vehicles eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles which make up nearly 90% of transportation related emissions.

### PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ENHANCEMENTS

In 2024, construction began on nine pedestrian crossing enhancements at crosswalk locations near schools, parks, and other locations with heavy pedestrian traffic. These enhancements provide increased pedestrian visibility to drivers and also make it easier for pedestrians to see oncoming traffic. Enhancement treatments included pedestrian refuge islands, curb bump outs, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (at some locations), and high visibility signage and markings. Construction is in progress and estimated to be complete by early 2025. Increasing pedestrian infrastructure leads to an increase in walking, biking and rolling, decreasing reliance on emission-heavy passenger vehicles.





how we  
enhanced  
natural  
resources

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# HOW WE ENHANCED NATURAL RESOURCES

Enhancing natural resources improves water quality and increases resilience to effects of climate change such as flooding and extreme heat. Adding to tree canopy can provide crucial shade during hot days and decrease the need for residential cooling. Native vegetation with deep roots can absorb excess water from flooding and better tolerate droughts.

## FORESTRY MASTER PLAN

The City has contracted with Davey Resource Group to develop a Forestry Master Plan. The plan will include a tree canopy analysis, organizational structure and capability assessment, as well as an inventory of street trees. The plan development process includes engagement activities where the public can provide input on plan items, including potential boulevard tree planting. This will be the first time that there is a comprehensive plan related to forestry in Bloomington. Trees make neighborhoods cooler and more resilient to extreme heat events.



## NATIVE LANDSCAPING CODE AMENDMENTS

In early 2024, the Sustainability Commission suggested a change to the environmental control provisions of the City Code to make it easier for residents to plant native plantings on their properties. Increasing native plantings improves water quality and enhances natural resources. Native plants are also more drought-tolerant and will reduce the amount of water usage involved in watering lawns. In May of 2024, the City Council adopted the amendments recommended by the Sustainability Commission. In December of 2024, the City Council adopted corresponding updates to the zoning ordinance. The code amendments were made to be consistent with new statewide requirements in MS 412.925.

## NATURAL RESOURCES RESTORATION PROJECTS

In 2024, staff converted 5.2 acres of turf grass into native vegetation at seven different locations, reducing maintenance costs by approximately \$1,100 per acre. In addition to financial benefits, restoring native landscapes has many other benefits including:

- Reducing the need for mowing, reducing herbicide and fertilizer use.
- Increasing pollinator habitat.
- Increasing plant diversity.
- Improving water quality.

Projects completed this year include tree planting on American Boulevard, enhancing native forest and plant communities at Central Park and in the Minnesota River Valley, as well as the conversion of low-use turf grass areas in city parks to native plant communities. Fun fact: At an event at Wright's Lake Park, volunteers planted 1,300 seedlings!



how we  
reduced solid  
waste

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## how we REDUCED SOLID WASTE

Reducing solid waste is an important part of the City's sustainability efforts. Every item we reuse, recycle, or compost is one less item in the trash, where it gets landfilled or incinerated and releases potent greenhouse gases. Whether it's a milk jug or a computer, reusing and recycling items reduces our need to extract natural resources (i.e. cut down trees, mine metals deposits, and more) to produce consumer goods.

### NEW PAY-AS-YOU-THROW RATES STRUCTURE

The City contracted with Skumatz Economic Research Associates, Inc. (SERA) to study how a Pay-As-You-Throw rates structure can motivate residents to reduce their garbage output and recycle and compost more items. City staff gathered data through a curbside cart survey, online customer surveys, and in-person outreach at multiple events. SERA included additional data from comparable case studies. After reviewing SERA's detailed analysis and multiple options, City Council approved plans to implement a new solid waste rate structure model. The new rate structure will include a higher financial incentive between garbage cart sizes, and the addition of a new garbage service level: every other week garbage pickup. The changes will take effect in 2026.

### ORGANICS OUTREACH

Bloomington celebrated two years of curbside organics recycling service this year with a successful compost giveaway in May, a month-long "Organics Bingo Challenge" that encouraged residents to share their composting success stories, continued outreach citywide, and adding organics recycling at Creekside Community Center. Over 30% of eligible residents now participate in curbside organics recycling. Increased participation in organics recycling results in less waste going to the incinerator. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and instead produces compost, which is used in a diverse array of projects to reduce erosion, increase water retention, and nourish topsoil.

### ADDITIONAL WASTE REDUCTION EFFORTS

Recycling and waste reduction continue to be City priorities. At the Annual Recycling Drop-Off in September alone, over 56 tons of material were collected for recycling. The City held several other waste reduction events, including the second annual Baby Gear Swap, a partnership with Hennepin County to support the Plastic-Free and Stop Food Waste Challenges, and more. More details on these efforts can be found in Appendix A.





how we improved water quality

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# how we IMPROVED WATER QUALITY

Human activities in urban environments, including construction, road salting in the winter, and lawn fertilization, can impact water quality. These practices alter the chemical composition of water bodies, which in turn affects the types of vegetation and species that thrive in these ecosystems. Such changes not only disrupt the natural balance but also pose risks to human health by contaminating drinking water sources and making recreational waters unsafe. To address these challenges, the City actively participates in initiatives and partnerships aimed at reducing the negative impact of human activities on water quality, protecting water resources, and restoring the health of impaired water bodies.

## MASTER VEGETATION MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

In 2024, a request for quotes was issued for a master vegetation management contract. The goal was to develop a pool of contractors, to facilitate the process for invasive species removal and vegetation management following construction projects, especially those near ponds or other water features. The contract was finalized in July 2024. The contractor pool is available to departments throughout the city. Easy access to vegetation management services ensures minimal construction-related disruption to water features and ecosystems, improving water quality and natural resources.



## WINTER CHLORIDE (SALT) REDUCTION

In 2024, City staff and consultants from Bolton & Menk produced a document that outlined city standards, tools, and procedures for winter chloride reduction. This work was a follow-up to the previously created salt reduction plan that investigated policy changes, alternate technologies, landscape design, and other mechanisms to reduce salt usage. The City has been working for many years to reduce salt use to address the growing concerns of chloride pollution in water bodies. In recognition of this work, the City received a Low Salt Design Pilot City Certificate from Bolton & Menk in December of 2024.

## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA POND CHARACTERISTIC AND AQUATIC VEGETATION STUDY

In 2024, the City completed a pond characteristic and aquatic vegetation study in partnership with the University of Minnesota. The project team sought to answer two questions:

- How do stormwater pond plant communities affect the functioning of stormwater ponds?
- How can pond design, maintenance and management be adapted to promote conditions that maximize water quality benefits in urban and road-impacted areas?

One major activity that was part of the study was investigating whether manually removing duckweed could encourage other beneficial plants to grow. The study was completed at the end of 2024, and the report is expected to be published in mid-2025.



how we  
conserved  
water

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## HOW WE CONSERVED WATER

Freshwater is a finite and essential resource that is increasingly vulnerable to overuse and pollution. As environmental challenges evolve, it is crucial to manage water resources in a responsible and sustainable manner. The City is committed to preserving water resources by implementing conservation strategies in municipal operations and encouraging residents to adopt water-saving practices. By fostering a culture of sustainability, we can ensure that future generations have access to clean, safe water.

### WATER REBATE PROGRAM

On July 2, the City entered into a new contract period, renewing the water rebate program for another two years. The water rebate program helps Bloomington residents conserve water and save money through installing water-saving devices, such as irrigation systems, toilets, clothes washers and dishwashers. Ninety-nine rebates were issued in 2024.

### RAIN BARREL SALE

In 2024, the City of Bloomington partnered with the City of Richfield and the Recycling Association of Minnesota to provide rain barrels to residents at a discounted cost like they did in 2023. On May 4, almost 150 residents picked up rain barrels at the Richfield Farmers Market. In addition to conserving water, the use of rain barrels decreases stormwater runoff and improves runoff water quality.

### IRRIGATION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS AT CIVIC PLAZA

2024 was the first year that the new Rain Bird LXME2 irrigation controller and accompanying sensors were in use for a full summer season on the Bloomington Civic Plaza lawn. The Rain Bird LXME2 allows staff to schedule irrigation in advance and monitor and adjust the system remotely, promoting sustainable irrigation practices. Compared with 2019, the City used 556,000 less gallons of water and saved \$369 in 2024, a year with only a one-inch difference in total rainfall and a 35% increase in water use costs.





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appendix A:  
additional 2024  
sustainability  
accomplishments

# APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL 2024 SUSTAINABILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## HOW WE REDUCED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TIMELINE
<b>Bloomington Affordable Homeownership program</b>	<p>The Bloomington Affordable Homeownership program will create 27 new construction homeownership opportunities throughout Bloomington. The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency granted the Housing and Redevelopment Authority \$3,199,500 to assist with this project. The focus will be on creating affordable homeownership opportunities and includes green communities criteria that establishes a threshold for sustainability and health characteristics for each new development. By aiming to integrate energy-efficient designs and renewable energy sources, we are striving to reduce the environmental impact while making homeownership accessible. This project addresses the need for affordable housing, promotes healthier living environments and creates long-term cost savings for residents.</p>	<p>Project planning and design occurred in 2024. Working on request for proposals, land acquisitions, and a pilot program in 2025.</p>
<b>Community gardens</b>	<p>The Bloomington community garden program expanded to four sites in 2024 with the addition of the South Loop Community Garden. The three other community gardens are located at Smith Park, Harrison Park and Brookside Park. For the past several years, all of the gardens have been rented at 100% capacity. This made for a total of 210 garden plots being used to grow fresh produce in 2024. The goal of the community garden program is to provide affordable safe spaces for people to grow their own fresh and healthy foods sustainably.</p>	<p>Community gardens are open for planting in mid- April and are open through the end of the gardening season in late October.</p>
<b>82nd Street project</b>	<p>With the 2024 project to replace the watermain on East 82nd Street between 12th Avenue and Old Cedar Avenue, the City took the opportunity to make this area more green and safe for not only vehicle traffic, but also for walking, biking and rolling. The south curb line was moved resulting in a narrower roadway—less impervious surface—and a grass boulevard. A new six-foot sidewalk was installed to improve pedestrian safety and create a better user experience. The marked and signed on-street bike lanes were also reconstructed, connecting users between Smith Park, the 12th Avenue bike route and the Nokomis Minnesota River Regional Trail.</p>	<p>Construction started spring 2024 and completed fall 2024.</p>

<p><b>Transportation improvements for park projects</b></p>	<p>There were many improvements made to the active transportation network in 2024 to support the park improvement projects at Tretbaugh and Bryant parks. New trails and sidewalks were installed to more safely connect users to the parks. Additionally, curb bump outs were installed at park sidewalk entrance points to improve visibility of the pedestrians to the drivers and to reduce driver speeds. Enhanced crosswalks were also installed at three locations to improve safety along the routes to approach the parks. These improvements help promote walking, biking and rolling to the parks by making the active transportation network better and easier to use.</p>	<p>The transportation projects around the parks were started summer 2024 and completed in fall 2024—with one pedestrian crosswalk enhancement still awaiting equipment installation. The park improvement projects (separate projects from the Engineering transportation project) will continue into 2025.</p>
<p><b>Mobile Health Hub</b></p>	<p>New batteries have been ordered for the City’s Mobile Health Hub. They will be installed in 2025, replacing the old gas generator. The batteries will be able to supply air conditioning and lighting to the trailer for a full day. This will eliminate the need for fossil fuels to power a generator. Additionally, it will prevent users of the trailer, sometimes suffering from conditions like asthma, from being exposed to exhaust fumes.</p>	<p>The batteries, control panel, and other required parts have been ordered and will be installed prior to 2025 spring outings.</p>
<p><b>New paint truck</b></p>	<p>An electric-powered paint sprayer will be installed on the Public Works paint truck. It will be powered by batteries and an inverter. The batteries will be able to be charged overnight by plugging into a wall outlet. The new batteries will eliminate the need for a gas-powered engine to run the paint sprayer.</p>	<p>The paint sprayer is currently being built and will be put into service in the spring of 2025.</p>
<p><b>Artboxes</b></p>	<p>Artboxes—vinyl wrapped utility boxes—were installed in summer of 2024 in eight new locations throughout the South Loop District and in the Old Cedar/Old Shakopee Commercial Node. Artbox designs are by local artists and often highlight local amenities and assets. Artboxes are located close to sidewalks, trails, and transit, and are a popular way for cities to add to walkability and add vibrancy to pedestrian areas.</p>	<p>Summer 2024</p>
<p><b>Commuter Services</b></p>	<p>In 2024, Commuter Services worked to connect commuters with resources and inspire those who drive alone along the 494 corridor to switch to more sustainable transportation methods. They did this through hosting commuter fairs, speaking to drivers, and meeting with employers. They also worked to advertise and enroll multifamily properties in the Residential Transit Pass program, and encouraged teleworking and biking through marketing and communications efforts.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p><b>School zone speed limits</b></p>	<p>In summer 2024, the City of Bloomington reduced speed limits on local streets from 30-25 miles per hour. In October 2024, the City activated a 20 mph school zone speed limit around Jefferson High School, Olson Middle and Elementary Schools, Poplar Bridge Elementary School and Oak Grove Middle and Elementary schools. The 20 mph speed limit is in effect when the yellow beacons are flashing or when students are walking to/from school in the morning and afternoon. More school zone speed limits will be rolling out at the more than 20 public and private schools throughout Bloomington in the future.</p>	<p>Summer 2024, ongoing</p>
<p><b>Lower Lyndale Avenue reconstruction</b></p>	<p>Lyndale Avenue south of 106th Street is a key access point to recreation opportunities in the Minnesota River Valley for boaters, bicyclists and pedestrians. The roadway provides access to one of the few bicycle and pedestrian crossings over the Minnesota River. It also provides access to the Sorenson Landing boat ramp, the Minnesota River Valley State Trail, and numerous single track trails along the valley that are popular with runners, hikers and mountain bikers. Since the roadway crosses through environmentally sensitive areas, the footprint could not be expanded. City staff coordinated with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to develop a design with dedicated on-road shared bicycle/ pedestrian lanes in each direction.</p>	<p>Work completed in fall of 2024, with minor restoration and landscape touch ups to be done in spring 2025</p>
<p><b>Bike rack map</b></p>	<p>In summer of 2024, staff begin collecting data for a GIS map of bike racks throughout the city. This map will be used to inform decisions related to sustainability goals. Additionally, it can be set up to share information with riders, track improvements over time, and identify gaps and barriers to use of alternative transportation methods.</p>	<p>Work began in 2024 and will be ongoing.</p>
<p><b>ADA Public Right of Way transition plan update</b></p>	<p>As part of the ADA Public Right of Way transition plan, City staff inspect pedestrian ramps for compliance as they are installed or replaced. There were nearly 75 pedestrian ramp inspections completed in 2024. Upgrades will continue to be made to pedestrian ramps that are not ADA compliant as part of construction projects like the Pavement Management Program. There were a total of 48 new pedestrian ramps installed and 152 removed and replaced to ADA compliance in City right-of-way in 2024.</p>	<p>The Bloomington ADA Public Right of Way Transition Plan was approved by City Council on November 7, 2016 and is a living document that will receive routine updates. Updates were made to the plan in early 2022 and the updated plan was approved by City Council on February 28, 2022.</p>

HOW WE ENHANCED NATURAL RESOURCES

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TIMELINE
<b>Latino Nature Fest</b>	On July 20, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, the City of Bloomington, Indigenous Roots and Huellas Latinas hosted Latino Nature Fest, an event to celebrate the cultures that make up Latino community and the nature that connects us all. This free, family-friendly event provided an opportunity to educate and celebrate natural assets through cultural performances, wildlife and nature presentations and activities, food trucks, music and more.	July 20, 2024
<b>West Hennepin Affordable Land Trust</b>	West Hennepin Affordable Land Trust and Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity are partnering to construct two single-family homes at 9030 Park Ave. S. to maintain property values and enhance economic well-being of the city and its residents. An ongoing project is dedicated to preserving the existing trees on the property to enhance natural resources. By maintaining the urban canopy, we aim to create a greener, more resilient community for current and future residents.	Project planning in 2024, construction in 2025
<b>Pond-Dakota oak woodland enhancement</b>	2024 marked the second year of a 20-acre oak woodland restoration project in the Minnesota River Valley. In addition to enhancing natural resources through removing invasive species and re-establishing native vegetation, the restoration will improve the water quality of two groundwater streams that flow into the Minnesota River and enhance habitat for wildlife and pollinators.	Fall 2023-Summer 2025
<b>Central Park oak woodland restoration</b>	City staff have been collaborating with Hennepin County to enhance 13 acres of oak forest, oak savanna, and prairie communities in Central Park. This project aims to enhance natural resources by stabilizing soil, removing invasive species and re-establishing native vegetation to create a healthier and more resilient ecosystem. Work up until now has included buckthorn removal, selective tree thinning, dormant seeding, and garlic mustard treatment. Fun Fact: Kittentails, a state threatened plant species, can be found on the project site.	November 2023-Fall 2025

<p><b>Ecological Landscape Initiative</b></p>	<p>City staff began work to convert several acres of low-use turf areas in parks into diverse plant communities. Park Maintenance staff performed seeding this summer at Wright's Lake, Fenlason, West Bush Lake, Dred Scott, and Countryside this summer and plant communities will be established next summer. The project also includes a prairie restoration at Brookside to establish difficult-to-grow native species by planting seedlings throughout. Benefits of this work include reduced maintenance inputs, improved water filtration and greater habitat connectivity for pollinators.</p>	<p>Summer 2024</p>
<p><b>Minnetonka partnership</b></p>	<p>As a part of an oak regeneration project at West 106th Street and Humboldt Avenue South, many cedar trees were removed. City forestry staff were able to use a mill recently purchased by Minnetonka forestry staff to repurpose the wood. The milled wood was shared between Bloomington and Minnetonka. The wood will tentatively be used for decking, fencing, or benches at City parks.</p>	<p>Wood milled in 2024 will be used in 2025.</p>

HOW WE REDUCED SOLID WASTE

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TIMELINE
<b>Plastic-Free Challenge</b>	<p>Bloomington participated in the Twin Cities Plastic-Free Challenge. The Plastic-Free Challenge is a month-long challenge between cities, counties, and other organizations to reduce single-use plastic through individual actions.</p> <p>Thirty-eight team members participated on the Bloomington team, committing to taking actions such as picking up litter, and reducing use of cutlery, plastic water bottles, and to-go containers. The Bloomington team collectively earned 5,082 points, placing ninth out of 225. Go team!</p>	February 2024
<b>New organics drop-off signage</b>	New signs were installed at the Valley View organics drop-off to reduce contamination and make the drop-off more easily identifiable to users.	March 2024
<b>Added Organics Recycling at Creekside Community Center</b>	During Earth Month, Solid Waste and Creekside staff collaborated to install organics recycling bins in every activity room and educate residents at Creekside about how organics recycling works.	April 2024
<b>Baby gear swap</b>	<p>Over 90 residents attended the second annual Baby Gear Swap at Smith Park and swapped over 578 pounds of gently used baby gear.</p> <p>The Minnesota Toy Library and Baby Gear Group Twin Cities attended with informational tables. Strollers For Health assisted in distributing leftover items, and two WIC peer counselors from Public Health attended to assist with the swap and provide information to attendees.</p>	May 2024
<b>Low-waste event policy</b>	With the help of our Bloom in Bloomington summer intern, research began on a policy to ensure that staff are hosting low-waste City events. Staff hope to bring recommendations to City Council in 2025.	Summer 2024
<b>Support for the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act</b>	The City wrote letters of support for the passage of this bill. The legislation passed in the 2024 legislative session and will bring statewide changes to reduce packaging waste and support recycling infrastructure and end markets.	June 2024

<p><b>Stop Food Waste Challenge</b></p>	<p>Bloomington participated in the month-long Twin Cities Stop Food Waste Challenge. The challenge encourages participants to commit to reduce food waste, with actions such as cooking the right amount of food for your family, creating an “eat first” shelf in the fridge, and finding creative ways to eat up leftovers. As part of the challenge, Solid Waste staff held a pickling workshop with 15 attendees that was organized and taught by our Bloom in Bloomington intern.</p> <p>At the end of the month, the 16 participants on Bloomington’s team prevented an estimated 36 pounds of food waste. Small actions add up.</p>	<p>August 2024</p>
<p><b>Citywide Recycling Drop-off Event</b></p>	<p>The City organized a Citywide Recycling Drop-off Event at Western Maintenance on Saturday, September 28. More than 1,000 vehicles brought items for recycling.</p> <p>Staff collected 56.39 tons of material at the event, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper for shredding: 12.05 tons</li> <li>• Mattresses: 2.23 tons (81 mattresses)</li> <li>• Electronics: 16.38 tons</li> <li>• Bikes: 1 ton (81 bikes)</li> <li>• Tires: 1.32 tons (132 tires)</li> <li>• Scrap metal: 8.34 tons</li> <li>• Appliances: 15.08 tons (201 appliances)</li> </ul>	<p>Saturday, September 28, 2024</p>
<p><b>Created a Translated Services Guide</b></p>	<p>With assistance from Utility Billing staff and Hennepin County, Solid Waste staff produced a new guide to residential solid waste services, available in English, Spanish, Somali and Vietnamese, which is mailed to new residents and upon request. Utility Billing staff mail the guide with a half-page insert that reflects the latest Solid Waste rates and collection schedule.</p>	<p>October – December 2024</p>

<p><b>Multifamily recycling field survey</b></p>	<p>City staff conducted a visual inspection of recycling service at all multifamily properties in Bloomington. The survey data established a baseline understanding of which properties have recycling, and which properties need to add recycling for their tenants. An estimated 10% of properties did not provide recycling, and an additional 30% had recycling that wasn't accessible by City staff.</p>	<p>October 2023 – February 2024</p>
<p><b>Multifamily recycling outreach and engagement</b></p>	<p>Based on the survey findings above, Solid Waste staff worked to reach properties without recycling, inform them of requirements, and assist them in adding recycling service.</p> <p>In 2024, 20 properties responded to City staff and verified recycling service during an in-depth recycling site visit. A total of 17 properties requested and received free recycling resources and/or informational presentations. An estimated 90% of multifamily properties in Bloomington meet minimum requirements by providing recycling service to tenants.</p> <p>City staff recruited and supervised one Hennepin County Apartment Recycling Champion. The champion conducted door-to-door outreach with translated resources and monitored her apartment community's recycling for contamination during her 6-month term.</p>	<p>Year-round</p>
<p><b>Bulky Item Management</b></p>	<p>Bulky Reuse and Recycling service continued to be offered during the first full week of every month. In 2024, the City's contracted service provider, Better Futures Minnesota, picked up 1,856 items from 853 households, resulting in a total of 55.55 tons of material diverted from landfills. All items collected through the Bulky Reuse and Recycling service are reused or recycled.</p> <p>Curbside Cleanup took place on Saturdays in April and May of 2024, and will be offered again in spring of 2026.</p> <p>Learn more about how to manage bulky and hard-to-recycle items at <a href="http://blm.mn/bulkies">blm.mn/bulkies</a>.</p>	<p>Year-round, monthly pickup</p>

HOW WE IMPROVED WATER QUALITY

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TIMELINE
<p><b>Penn Lake Management Framework</b></p>	<p>The Penn Lake Management Framework sets clear goals and provides a process for adapting and improving management over time with the goal of improving the quality of the Penn Lake ecosystem.</p>	<p>2024; Adopted by City Council, 2025; Implementation</p>
<p><b>Pond and storm sewer maintenance project</b></p>	<p>City staff performed stormwater pond maintenance and restoration activities last year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of accumulated sediment: This helps maintain the ponds’ functionality and water quality.</li> <li>• Infrastructure repair: This ensures that any structures in or around the ponds, such as pipes or outflow systems, remain in good working order.</li> <li>• Shoreline erosion restoration: This work helps protect the edges of the ponds from eroding, which can degrade water quality and habitats.</li> </ul> <p>Stormwater pond maintenance and restoration work is performed during the winter months to decrease the projects’ impact on the environment and minimize risk from heavy rainfall. In winter 2023-2024, pond maintenance was completed at Paramount Plaza Pond and Tarnhill West Pond.</p>	<p>2023 design and bidding; 2024 construction</p>
<p><b>98th Street median and iron enhanced sand filter</b></p>	<p>An ecosystem enhancement project took place to re-establish the native plant population in the stormwater filtration pond within a portion of the 98th Street median. Additionally, turf grass area was converted to meadow lawn. Ongoing management of the area in 2024 consisted of mowing, spot spraying, plug planting and overseeding. At its conclusion the plant community will be self-sustaining, requiring only minimal maintenance activity.</p>	<p>2021–2022 site prep and turf removal, 2023 restoration, 2024 Maintenance period and project completion</p>
<p><b>Bogen pond buffer</b></p>	<p>A wetland buffer was established on a portion of Bogen Pond. Native plant communities are currently becoming established as a result of previous invasive species removal and selective tree thinning. In 2024, ongoing maintenance activity occurred to prevent recolonization by invasive species and to ensure successful establishment of the native vegetation.</p>	<p>2021–2022 site prep and invasive removal, 2023 restoration, 2024 Maintenance period and project completion</p>

<p><b>Bush Lake cattail</b></p>	<p>The City is working to manage non-native, narrowleaf and hybrid cattail areas around Bush Lake. The distribution and dominance of non-native cattail on Bush Lake has been increasing and expanding. The City is managing cattail populations around Bush Lake with the goal to eradicate all cattails from all non-dominant locations, with the ultimate goal of reducing the dominance within existing cattail beds and increasing plant diversity in all management zones.</p>	<p>2022 cattail management on north half of lake; 2023 south half of lake; 2024 spot treating restoration,; 2025 project completion</p>
<p><b>Water Quality Report</b></p>	<p>Staff issued an annual Water Quality Report in the spring to communicate with the public how the City ensures safe drinking water. The City performs testing every year to ensure standards are met, including PFAS. The City does not have any lead service lines and has confirmed that there are no lead hazards for water service.</p>	<p>June 2024, annually</p>

HOW WE CONSERVED WATER

PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TIMELINE
<p><b>Design and specifications for pump replacement at 82nd Street and Poplar Bridge Road</b></p>	<p>Project staff along with consultants are completing the redesign of the high service pumps that distribute water from storage facilities to the public. The original pumps were inefficient and oversized, so the design includes rightsizing, elimination of one pump and installation of variable frequency drive motors. Next steps include bidding the project and construction. Updating this critical infrastructure will ensure sustainable water delivery in the City of Bloomington for years to come.</p>	<p>Design in 2024, bid and construct in 2025 and 2026.</p>
<p><b>Drought management</b></p>	<p>Through the droughts that have occurred in the past three years, the City has followed statewide drought plans to ensure source water protection and availability. The City follows an approved water supply plan that has water reduction strategies pertinent to City operations. Staff also conduct water conservation education and outreach and administer a water rebate program.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Automated metering infrastructure</b></p>	<p>In 2024, City staff began budgeting and planning for the replacement of water meters with smart meters. Currently, water meters are manually read every eight weeks in residential properties. New smart meters can be read remotely and could allow for recording down to the 15-minute mark, providing customers with real time usage information and enhancing the City’s ability to detect leaks or odd use patterns. Installation is expected to begin in 2025, beginning with commercial properties.</p>	<p>2024 – budgeting and planning, 2025 – installation</p>
<p><b>New water supply well</b></p>	<p>The City has begun work to build a new water supply well to replace a non-functional well that reached its end of life. The new well construction will involve sealing the old well that pulled from the Mount Simon Hinckley aquifer, a protected resource; and building a new well that pulls from the Jordan aquifer. Well design is complete and a contractor has been selected. Construction is set to begin in 2025.</p>	<p>2024 – design and bid, 2025 – construction</p>

