



# BEST OF BLOOMINGTON

## ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024



VALUE FOR YOUR DOLLAR.

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WORKING TO BETTER BLOOMINGTON.

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BEST OF BLOOMINGTON.

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CITY OF  
BLOOMINGTON  
ORGANIZATIONAL  
CHART

Bloomington’s Charter provides for a council-manager government. The stability of our organization is reflected in the City having only three city managers in the last 50 years.

The City Council and mayor, who serve part time, are elected by the people, exercise legislative power and determine overall City policies. Advisory boards and commissions gather information and advise the City Council on specific issues.

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Port Authority are component units of the City that are responsible for redevelopment, and the full housing continuum.

Policy development and day-to-day operations are directed by the council-appointed city manager. The city manager oversees the 10 departments that carry out the services, activities and policies of the City of Bloomington.



Government Finance Officers Association

Award for  
Outstanding  
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Popular Annual  
Financial Reporting

Presented to

City of Bloomington  
Minnesota

For its Annual Financial Report  
For the Fiscal Year Ended

December 31, 2023

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THE MONTHLY VALUE OF YOUR 2024 TAX  
DOLLARS AT WORK



WHAT THE OWNER OF A MEDIAN-VALUED HOME  
PAID IN 2024

The City Council approved a 2024 property tax levy of \$80,484,270—a 7.97% increase over 2023. Before the Council voted on the budget, staff were out in the community engaging with residents to gather input on what City services were most important to them. Time and time again, residents said public safety was a priority.

The majority of the tax levy increase is an investment in police and fire services. The cost of City services in 2024 for the owner of a median-valued, single-family home in Bloomington

with an assessor’s market value of \$361,800 was \$118.50 per month. Public safety services such as police and fire account for \$59.07 of the \$118.50 monthly cost.

Property taxes also fund services such as environmental health, engineering, park maintenance, public health, arts and cultural events. The tax cost per month of \$118.50 was the amount required for tax support after allocating grants, program fees, lodging and admission taxes and other non-property tax revenue to the appropriate services.



YOUR 2024 PROPERTY TAX DOLLAR

Your single-family residential tax dollar is divided among several governmental entities. As the graphic above shows, for every dollar of taxes paid, 33 cents was spent on City services. The actual amount of taxes owed is based on a property’s market value, tax law and the levy. The levy for all local governmental entities is spread across properties within each entity’s respective boundaries using tax capacity, a function of market value and property type. While the City sets a total property tax dollar amount to be levied, as all local Minnesota jurisdictions do, the portion each property pays is solely a function of the State of Minnesota property tax law based on market value and tax classification. A Bloomington homeowner with a median-valued home paid \$4,311 in property taxes in 2024. Of that, \$1,423, or \$118.50 per month, went to the City for services. The remaining \$2,888 or \$240 per month, went to other taxing districts.



## CITY SERVICES RANK HIGHLY IN SURVEY

Each year, the National Community Survey™ gathers resident feedback on city services. The latest results provide insight into how the community views key areas such as streets, parks and public safety. This feedback helps the City of Bloomington continue to improve services and invest where it matters most to residents.

### STREET MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

Public Works crews maintain 342 miles of streets and 492 cul-de-sacs through snow plowing, street sweeping and pavement repairs. In 2024, 78% of residents rated street repair as excellent or good, a 22% increase from the previous year. Street cleaning received a 78% positive rating and 82% of residents gave high marks to snow removal. Maintenance teams also care for sidewalks and bike lanes and respond quickly to service requests, usually within 24 hours.



### PARKS AND RECREATION

Bloomington is home to 97 parks, miles of trails and a wide variety of year-round recreation programs. The Parks and Recreation Division provides inclusive, accessible programming for youth, adults and seniors. In 2024, 88% of residents rated the quality of parks and recreation as excellent or good. Construction underway at Bryant and Tretbaugh parks will add new amenities including an inclusive playground and a bike skills course. Parks staff also maintain trails, shelters and athletic fields citywide.

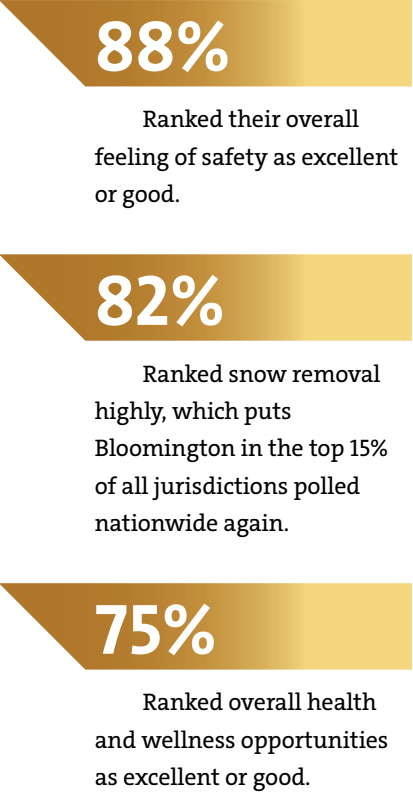


### PUBLIC SAFETY

Bloomington’s Police and Fire departments work around the clock to protect the community. In 2024, 93% of residents rated fire services as excellent or good and 79% gave the same rating to police services. The Bloomington Fire Department is committed to protecting life, property and the environment through prevention, education and emergency response. The Police Department’s core value is respect demonstrated through compassionate and honest service. Emergency preparedness and fire prevention also received high marks with 86% and 75% positive ratings respectively.

### SURVEY SAYS...

Most residents remain pleased with the quality of life in Bloomington, according to the recent National Community Survey™. Here are a few highlights of feedback provided by survey respondents in 2024:



### BEST OF JEFF ZUPFER

For nearly 30 years, Jeff Zupfer has brought music to life for students at Normandale Hills Elementary School. Zupfer shifted from his original goal of becoming a high school choir director to teaching elementary music. “Fate brought me here and I have no regrets,” Zupfer said. Known as Mr. Z by his students, he has made a lasting impact on generations of learners.

Over the years, Zupfer has enhanced his classes by writing original songs focused on social-emotional learning. These songs, which cover themes like mindfulness and gratitude, are performed at monthly school rallies to reinforce important values. His dedication was recently recognized with the Inclusive Educator Award from Intermediate District 917. “I try to make sure every kid feels like they have a place,” Zupfer said. “Inclusion is really part of the DNA at Normandale Hills.”

Outside of teaching, Zupfer works at MetroNOME Brewery in St. Paul where a portion of proceeds supports music lessons for underprivileged children. He also maintains a YouTube channel where students, families and former students can enjoy his projects.



BEST OF  
RYAN YOUNG

**R**yan Young joined the City of Bloomington in 2022 as an equipment operator. His work includes repairing potholes, clearing snow and ensuring proper drainage in the street drains.

Before joining the City, Young had a 20-year career as a pastry chef. He worked with the NFL Texans and MLB Astros, catered for Formula 1 racing teams and baked for World Cup Soccer stadiums in Germany. He also owned a three-store bakery chain in Houston before returning to Minnesota.

Young enjoys contributing beyond his daily work. He serves on the Public Works Leadership Team and is also on the Bloomington Historical Society Board. Notably, Young recently helped secure a grant to digitize important artifacts.

Ryan has a growth mindset and is always eager to learn new skills. He is fluent in Spanish and is currently learning computer coding. He is also developing a GIS-based phone app for Street Maintenance to track maintenance tasks in real time. “The power of GIS data is amazing and the way of the future,” he said.

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**T**he City is continuing to advance the priorities of its community-based *Bloomington. Tomorrow. Together.* strategic plan which has a mission “To cultivate an enduring and remarkable community where people want to be.” And so it is fitting that we celebrate the Best of Bloomington this year and we showcase our wonderful community and its many successes.

Our neighbors, workers, businesses and nonprofit organizations show us their best every day. Read on to learn more about some of the Best of Bloomington.

### SAFER GRANT SUPPORTS HIRING OF NEW FIREFIGHTERS

**T**he Bloomington Fire Department received its second SAFER grant from FEMA in 2024. The grant funds the hiring of 18 additional full-time firefighters to help meet the growing safety needs in Bloomington. After a competitive selection process, 20 firefighters were chosen, including 10 EMT/Firefighters and 10 Paramedic/Firefighters.

These new hires began an eight-week training academy in March. The grant will cover their wages and benefits for the next three years, helping the department improve response times and service for Bloomington residents. This follows a previous SAFER grant in 2022, which also supported the hiring of 18 firefighters.

### BLOOMINGTON LEADERSHIP PROGRAM BUILDS COMMUNITY LEADERS

**T**he 2024 Bloomington Leadership Program provided residents with an opportunity to enhance leadership skills and gain a deeper understanding of local government. This free, two-month program featured educational sessions on topics such as public safety, city services, civic engagement and leadership. Participants also had the chance to connect with City staff, elected officials and nonprofit leaders.

The program is designed to promote civic engagement and increase awareness of how the City operates. Past participants have shared that their involvement has helped them become more informed and engaged in community activities.



### CITYWIDE CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

**I**n 2024, Bloomington continued its creative placemaking efforts to enhance public spaces and engage residents in the city’s cultural development.

#### SOUTH LOOP COMMUNITY GARDEN AND ARTFUL LANDSCAPING

The South Loop Community Garden opened in 2024. The site includes native landscaping, a community garden and seating areas. Cyanotype banners by artists Sheila Novak and Erin Genia were installed, reflecting elements of the natural world and Dakota culture. These additions aim to connect visitors with the history of the area while providing a space for reflection and engagement.

#### HOMETOWN POETRY

Hometown Poetry expanded in 2024, with poems by Bloomington residents integrated into public spaces through sidewalk stamps and creative signage in local parks. This project continues to highlight the work of local writers and offers residents a chance to engage with art in everyday settings.



## BLOOMINGTON’S GROWTH THROUGH REDEVELOPMENT

In the last year, Bloomington continued to see significant redevelopment, with new projects and renovations shaping the city. Schneiderman’s Furniture converted an office building into a showroom and retail space. Luther Hyundai expanded its operations and Walser Toyota completed construction on a combined dealership and corporate headquarters. Industrial expansions include Seagate growing its facilities and Sick Sensors building a new office in the South Loop district.

Multifamily housing also grew. Three major complexes—Noble, Ardor and Oxboro Heights senior apartments—opened in 2024. Construction began on The Knox, Rosalyn and Ever apartments, all with affordable units. Since 2020, Bloomington has added nearly 2,900 new multifamily units, with another 1,200 under construction or in planning. Of these 4,100 units, 875 are affordable. In 2024, new construction added more than \$128 million in assessed value to the city.



BEST OF

ELISE BALDERRAMA



### BLOOM IN BLOOMINGTON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM TO LAUNCH YEAR THREE

The City of Bloomington is set to launch the third year of its Bloom in Bloomington internship program. The initiative connects young people, ages 16-24, with paid summer internships across various local sectors, including government, nonprofits and businesses. This program aims to help participants build work experience, explore career options and develop leadership skills.

The City matches interns with employers based on their interests for 8-12 week internships. Employers, including the City of Bloomington and local businesses, provide mentorship and valuable work experience to interns, helping them develop skills for their future careers.

Elise Balderrama has called Bloomington home since 1993. After moving from Minneapolis and the western suburbs, she has stayed in the same house where she raised her children and recently remarried. Her dedication to the community is clear through her involvement in City initiatives.

With more than 30 years working for the City of Minneapolis, Elise has held roles in multiple departments and now manages projects in Information Technology there. Her passion for public service extends to Bloomington, where she became more active after the City established the Office of Racial Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. Inspired by the City’s commitment, she began attending City Council meetings and participating in strategic planning.

Elise is a strong advocate for the Welcome to Bloomington program, launched in January 2024 to help new residents connect through meetups across the city. Elise regularly attends, welcoming newcomers and helping them feel at home.

She values the City’s outreach efforts, saying, “Trust and belonging are foundational to our lives as humans.” Elise encourages others to get involved. “Showing up makes a difference.”

### THREE BLOOMINGTON FORWARD PROJECTS REACH NEW MILESTONES

During the 2023 election, Bloomington voters approved a new half-percent sales tax to provide \$155 million for renovations to the Bloomington Ice Garden, construction of a new community health and wellness center, and enhancing and protecting the Nine Mile Creek corridor and Moir and Central parks. We’re now looking to the next phases of these projects and moving Bloomington forward.

#### BLOOMINGTON ICE GARDEN

The Bloomington Ice Garden renovation is currently underway. The facility is currently closed, with a goal of reopening at the end of 2025, in time for the next hockey season. The experience for skaters and spectators will be improved by new accessibility improvements, new concessions area, renovated locker rooms and more.

#### COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

After collecting community feedback through a survey, focus groups and multiple community events, City staff and HGA, the architecture firm working on the project, completed the schematic design of the new community health and

wellness center. Now in the final design phase, we know the new center will have aquatics, fitness and indoor play components in addition to many community gathering rooms. On June 1, the Creekside Community Center closed to the public and 95% of the senior programming that took place there shifted to Logan Lodge. Programming will continue there through the construction of the new center. The end goal is for the new center to open by 2027. Visit [bloomingtonforward.org/chwc](https://bloomingtonforward.org/chwc) to learn more.

#### NINE MILE CREEK CORRIDOR

Spanning 240 acres, the Nine Mile Creek corridor is a beautiful slice of nature, featuring trails and many outdoor amenities that residents enjoy. Bloomington residents consistently rank Moir Park as one of the city’s top parks. They also consider natural resources a priority. In late 2024 and early 2025, the project team conducted community engagement. The team is currently in the design phase for Moir Park improvements and restoration work along the creek. Visit [bloomingtonforward.org/ninemile](https://bloomingtonforward.org/ninemile) to learn more.



ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT

The City of Bloomington reports financial year-end results in its *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report*, a document government entities must complete in accordance with accounting requirements set forth by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. It consists of three sections: Introductory, Financial, and Statistical. The *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report* goes into great detail and spans more than 200 pages.

This document, the *Annual Report to the Community Fiscal Year End 2024*, is Bloomington's *Popular Annual Financial Report*, a user-friendly companion to the *2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report*. Both the reports are consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the guidelines established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

The following pages show 2024 financial results for the City's annually budgeted funds, including the General Fund, Enterprise Funds, Internal Service Funds, and Special Revenue Funds.

For a complete review of the financial position in all of the City's funds and component units (the Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Port Authority) for the year ending 2024, consult the *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report* available online at [blm.mn/financialreports](http://blm.mn/financialreports).

THE GENERAL FUND

The General Fund, which accounts for a majority of City services, is Bloomington's primary operating fund. It uses revenues such as property taxes, lodging taxes, admission taxes, permit revenues, license revenues, program income, and grant revenues to fulfill expense obligations.

	2022 EXPENDITURES	2023 EXPENDITURES	2024 EXPENDITURES
FIRE	\$6,510,869	\$10,109,098	\$12,198,115
POLICE	29,173,044	31,886,358	36,206,015
PUBLIC WORKS	19,087,569	20,568,749	13,405,656
COMMUNITY SERVICES	7,882,827	8,807,636	9,530,977
PARKS AND RECREATION	3,902,314	4,067,065	12,142,787
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	9,891,223	10,559,495	10,801,087
ADMINISTRATION	3,199,923	3,427,208	4,103,582
LEGAL	2,044,379	2,406,407	2,806,675
FINANCE	1,472,742	1,574,861	1,744,253
COUNCIL	508,021	545,792	562,135
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$83,672,911	\$93,952,669	\$103,501,282

THREE TRIPLE-A RATINGS

Bloomington ranks with an elite few cities nationwide in holding three triple-A bond ratings. The City maintains its Aaa status from Moody's, AAA from Standard & Poor's and AAA from Fitch Ratings, the highest bond ratings awarded by these agencies.

Bloomington is one of just 37 cities that have achieved three triple-A ratings—and one of two in Minnesota— out of more than 19,000 municipal governments in the U.S. According to the agencies, our triple-A status reflects the City's conservative fiscal management, diverse economic base, central location, low unemployment rate that falls below state and national averages, and continued success in the Mall of America tax increment district.

The City's excellent bond ratings signal to current and potential investors that our financial future is strong and ensure that interest costs will remain low. They also signal to businesses and individuals that Bloomington is a financially healthy community.



BEST OF  
AFAF SALEH

Afaf Saleh joined the City of Bloomington as a public health nurse in 2021, bringing with her a bachelor's degree and extensive experience as a nurse in a neurology intensive care unit. Even though she was new to the position, Saleh was already familiar with Bloomington, visiting regularly to spend time with friends and family and as a member of the Dar Al Farooq Mosque.

"I love this community," Saleh said. "I meet so many wonderful people. I get to learn new cultures and contribute by providing health education and resources."

Seeing the difference her work makes is a constant source of inspiration for Saleh. "There are legitimate reasons for not being able to access health care, such as transportation, and public health nurses work to reach those individuals one person at a time," she said.

In 2023, Saleh played a key role in the Family Home Visiting team, which made nearly 1,400 client visits. Through these visits, Saleh and her colleagues offered education and support for pregnant people, new parents and families.

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## SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS

These funds account for revenues used for specific purposes including housing and community development, communications, parks and recreation initiatives and law enforcement activities.

		2022 EXPENDITURES	2023 EXPENDITURES	2024 EXPENDITURES	FUNDING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	South Loop revolving fund	\$38,785	\$180,186	\$25,922	South Loop building permit surcharge
	Creative placemaking	258,923	456,327	800,663	Transfer from South Loop capital and Port Authority
COMMUNITY SERVICES	Communications	1,917,843	1,986,990	2,048,712	Franchise fees/other fund charges/property taxes
PARKS AND RECREATION	Park grants	139,876	90,689	1,121,078	State and federal grants
PUBLIC SAFETY	Public safety special revenue	1,825,365	1,693,053	3,121,684	Forfeited assets and grants and one-time reimbursement*/ property taxes**
ADMINISTRATION	Cemetery trust	244,309	227,912	215,589	Lot/niche sales
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$4,425,101	\$4,635,157	\$7,333,648	

\* Used for specific police capital and operating expenses.  
\*\* If the City is required to fund Bloomington’s Fire Pension Fund, the tax levy will generally be the funding source.

## ENTERPRISE FUNDS

These funds consist of utilities, recreational facilities and contractual police services. They are supported by user fees and in some cases also by property taxes.

		2022 EXPENSES	2023 EXPENSES	2024 EXPENSES
PARKS AND RECREATION	Aquatics (Bush Lake Beach and Bloomington Family Aquatic Center)	\$975,269	\$1,126,467	\$1,153,663
	Center for the Arts	1,209,285	1,398,475	1,346,976
	Golf (Dwan Golf Course)	1,798,147	2,001,466	2,104,679
	Ice Garden	2,147,510	2,255,251	2,371,289
PUBLIC SAFETY	Contractual Police	1,021,027	1,722,575	1,509,526
PUBLIC WORKS	Solid Waste Utility	10,254,999	9,587,939	10,620,935
	Stormwater Utility	5,837,396	5,399,621	5,381,677
	Water	16,145,994	16,805,664	17,500,534
	Wastewater Utility	11,895,072	12,561,325	13,643,597
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$51,284,699	\$52,858,783	\$55,632,876

## INTERNAL SERVICE FUNDS

These funds finance interdepartmental goods and services on a cost-reimbursement basis. Internal Service Funds are supported by interdepartmental user fees already included as expenses to other funds in this report.

	2022 EXPENSES	2023 EXPENSES	2024 EXPENSES
BENEFIT ACCRUAL	\$2,778,210	\$3,129,914	\$3,539,307
FLEET MAINTENANCE	7,271,943	7,723,606	7,826,014
FACILITIES MAINTENANCE	6,199,131	6,808,730	6,686,625
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	6,372,494	7,208,211	7,435,589
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	10,876,190	12,275,521	13,479,819
PUBLIC SAFETY TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT	1,487,377	1,195,018	2,855,198
SELF-INSURANCE	3,314,834	2,735,243	2,745,924
COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES	478,281	474,947	483,849
PERA PENSION	9,753,673	11,858,416	5,811,181
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$48,532,133	\$53,409,606	\$50,863,506



BEST OF

RIET VELTHUISEN  
VAN DER BLIJ

For more than three decades, Riet Velthuisen van der Blij has been a cornerstone of the Twin Cities arts community. Born in the Netherlands and trained in Paris, Riet brought her passion for ballet to Bloomington where she founded the Continental Ballet Company 35 years ago. Under her leadership, the Continental Ballet Company has become a cultural fixture, known for its graceful performances and community engagement. Beyond the stage, Riet is committed to nurturing the next generation of dancers. She emphasizes discipline, artistry and the joy of movement in her teaching, inspiring countless students over the years. Riet’s enduring impact on the Bloomington arts scene shows how one person’s vision and perseverance can enrich a community for generations.



ABOUT THIS REPORT

The City Council presents this annual report of financial and related information to show how Bloomington’s City government performs. This report does not include Housing and Redevelopment Authority or Port Authority financial information. To see financial information for those component units of the City, see the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

MAYOR

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ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT

The City of Bloomington reports financial year-end results in the more than 200-page Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. This 2024 Annual Report to the Community summarizes significant data from the 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and is consistent with generally accepted accounting principles. The report reflects the net tax cost by service expenditure developed by crediting related revenues against appropriate expenditures and allocating local taxes against the remaining balance.

The Corporate Report and Annual Comprehensive Financial Report are both available online at blm.mn/financialreports.

Minnesota state law states that “a city or county with a population of more than 15,000 must annually notify its residents of the positions and base salaries of its three highest-paid employees.” For the City, 2024 titles and salaries are: Assistant City Manager – \$229,483, Fire Chief – \$218,860, Chief of Police – \$218,860, and Chief Financial Officer – \$218,860.



CAPITAL PROJECTS

Capital project improvements are funded through a combination of reserves, property taxes, fees, federal grants, state grants, and debt. Capital projects that have expenditures of \$50,000 or more are included in the 10-year Capital Improvement Plan that is approved annually by the City Council at a public hearing. Individual project appropriations are then approved by the Council on a project-by-project basis. Here are some of the capital projects completed in 2024.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- One aerial ladder truck: \$1,559,632.
- Fiber optic cable expansion: \$437,312.

PARK AND FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

- Smith Park Playground project: \$749,398.
- Hrbek Fields ballfield grading: \$376,198.
- Solar system for Public Works: \$320,000.
- Dred Scott/Girard Lake Park trails improvement: \$1,858,239.

UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE

- 82nd Street reservoir roof: \$1,481,259.

PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Pavement Management Program is a funding and implementation plan for the repair, maintenance and reconstruction of Bloomington roads. It’s all about providing the right maintenance at the right time to maximize efficiency of road replacement and repair.

Funding is provided through state aid, assessments and franchise fees after needs are identified. In 2024, the Pavement Management Program expended \$10.2 million. These improvements include over three miles of reconstructed streets and more than nine miles of overlaid streets.

MANAGING DEBT, MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Many community needs must be met by the City of Bloomington in a cost-effective manner, including street and infrastructure work, construction projects and equipment purchases. The ability to issue future debt at lower interest rates provides for our community’s upkeep and renewal without substantially increasing property taxes for debt service.

OUTSTANDING DEBT

The City’s outstanding debt on December 31, 2024, was \$148,772,323. The legal limit for Bloomington is \$535 million. About 39% of the currently issued debt will be paid off in five years and more than 68% in 10 years—a sign of strong financial management.

