



BEST OF  
**BLOOMINGTON**

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM  
2026



## OUR MISSION

OUR MISSION IS TO CULTIVATE AN ENDURING AND REMARKABLE COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO BE.

## OUR CORE VALUES – WE BELIEVE THAT...

- THE COMMUNITY THRIVES WHEN ITS MEMBERS SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS WELL-BEING.
- TRANSFORMATION WILL COME THROUGH COLLECTIVE COURAGE AND THE WILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS.
- WHEN DIVERSITY IS EMBRACED, THE COMMUNITY IS STRENGTHENED.
- EVERYONE BENEFITS WHEN THERE IS EQUITABLE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY.
- SAFETY AND SECURITY ARE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF A RESILIENT AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

## WE WILL NOT:

- ADD ANY PROGRAM, PROJECT, POLICY, OR SERVICE THAT IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH OUR CORE VALUES AND ALIGNED TO OUR MISSION.
- ALLOW PAST PRACTICES TO INTERFERE WITH THE CONSIDERATION OF NEW IDEAS.



# 2026 CITY COUNCIL



**MAYOR**  
**TIM BUSSE**

952-563-8782 (w)  
952-457-7506 (c)  
tbusse@BloomingtonMN.gov



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
AT LARGE**  
**JENNA CARTER**

612-284-8751  
jcarter@BloomingtonMN.gov



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
AT LARGE**  
**DANIELLE  
ROBERTSON**

763-229-7582  
drobertson@BloomingtonMN.gov



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
DISTRICT I**  
**DWAYNE LOWMAN**

952-270-2377  
dlowman@  
BloomingtonMN.gov



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
DISTRICT II**  
**SHAWN NELSON**

952-479-0471  
snelson@BloomingtonMN.gov



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
DISTRICT III**  
**LONA  
DALLESSANDRO**

612-231-6824  
ldallessandro@  
BloomingtonMN.gov



**COUNCIL MEMBER  
DISTRICT IV**  
**VICTOR RIVAS**

952-255-9570  
vrivas@BloomingtonMN.gov

*Note: Council Member Chao Moua was a member of the City Council at the time this platform was adopted. His term concluded at the end of 2025, and the at-large seat is currently held by Danielle Robertson.*



## STATE CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS

### NORTH CENTRAL SANITARY SEWER PROJECT

- Requesting \$13 million toward the \$27.7 million total estimated project cost

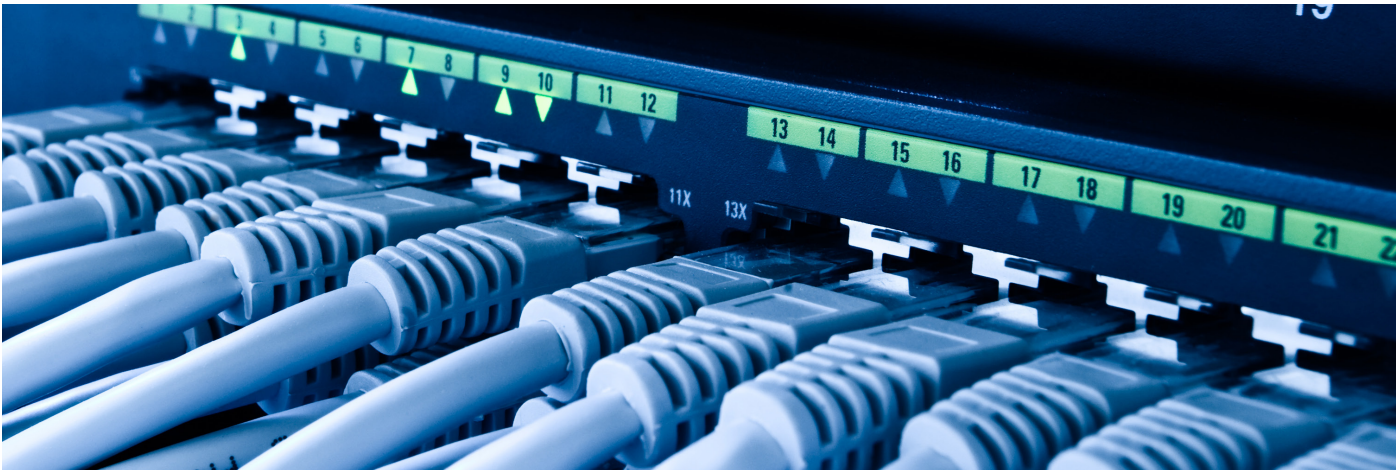
### OLD SHAKOPEE ROAD CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT (ALDRICH AVE TO 2ND AVE)

- Requesting \$4.4 million support toward the \$22 million total estimated project cost



## BLOOMINGTON'S BILLS

- Special legislation to allow the City to issue an on-sale intoxicating liquor license for Dwan Golf Course (also requested in 2025)



## PRIORITIES FOR BLOOMINGTON AND THE REGION

### BROADBAND (ROW)

- Support** the Equal Access to Broadband Act: Authorize cities to negotiate franchise agreements with broadband companies for the use of public rights-of-way (ROW). Local franchising is not just a governance preference—it is a fundamental tool that ensures private utilities pay fair compensation for occupying public space that taxpayers have built and maintain. Without clear municipal authority to charge for ROW use, residents effectively subsidize private broadband companies' infrastructure, even as those companies profit from service delivered through publicly owned corridors.

Franchising allows cities to address system build-out, expand equitable broadband access, and establish consumer protections tailored to local needs. It also ensures a fair and predictable franchise fee for the significant value represented by public ROW access.

These community benefits far exceed what can be achieved through simple permitting of broadband operators. While cities like Woodbury have successfully demonstrated that broadband franchising is both feasible and beneficial, relying on one-off negotiations city by city creates inconsistency and inequity across the state. A uniform, statewide framework that clearly affirms municipal broadband franchising authority is the best way to ensure fairness for taxpayers, predictability for providers, and equal access for communities of all sizes.
- Support** current statutes developed as a result of the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. This federally funded initiative aims to expand high-speed internet access across the United States, particularly targeting underserved and unserved communities in each state.

### DATA AND FINANCIAL

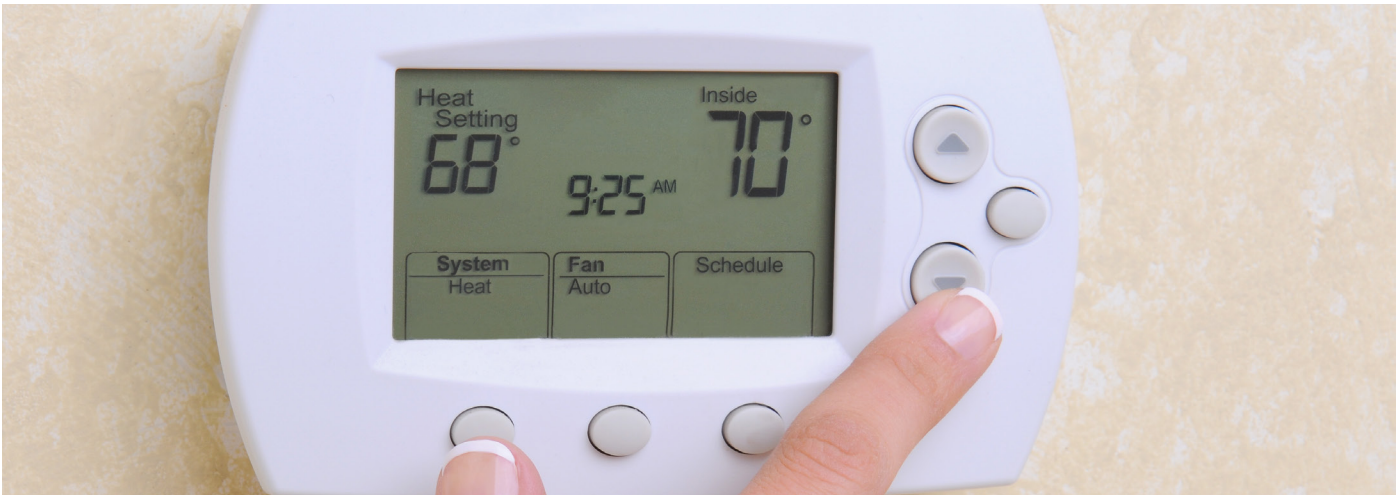
- Support** local governments in maintaining the authority to manage, retain, and delete their data as necessary to meet operational, legal, and privacy requirements. Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Chapter 13), local governments must comply with specific requirements for making data publicly available. However, the complexity and volume of data requests have grown significantly in recent years. Supporting local agencies in maintaining authority over data retention practices—so they preserve only essential and relevant records—will help streamline compliance efforts and reduce the overall burden on staff and resources.



- **Support** clarifications to state and pass through federal grantmaking and recordkeeping (ex: audit and sub-grantee agreement templates). State and local governments play a critical role in administering federal funds, often acting as “pass-through” entities that distribute resources to local agencies or community organizations. Variations in grant agreements, audit requirements, and recordkeeping practices can create confusion, administrative inefficiencies, and compliance risks. Local governments are seeking clarity and consistency in how to manage federal grant funds.
- **Support** allowing intergovernmental data-sharing for law enforcement. Clear policies and well-defined systems will enhance public safety agencies’ ability to respond to and solve active and inactive cases.
- **Support** efforts for legislative clarification and statutory amendments to the ‘Clean Slate Act’ of 2023 to ensure consistent responses to requests for government data.
- **Support** aligning property tax levies with the unit of government where services are provided. Local governments in Minnesota occasionally provide residents and businesses similar types of services. Where similar services are provided by different levels of local government, property tax levies for those services should only apply to those areas receiving the service.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Support** startup funding for unique tourism projects. Home to 49 hotels and over 9,500 hotel rooms, Bloomington is a tourism hub for the region and State. To maintain and grow tourism in this area, creative partnership and funding strategies will be needed.
- **Support** reinstatement of cannabis tax revenue to cities. In 2025 the legislature eliminated the Local Government Cannabis Aid account, the only cannabis specific funding provided to cities and counties. This aid was a critical part of the state and local relationship for administration and implementation, however, it was repealed before it was ever dispersed to cities and counties. Restore the Local Government Cannabis Aid fund to ensure adequate funding for local governments to implement the law and respond to challenges resulting from the cannabis industry. Cities and counties should be able to recover costs from assisting businesses and implementing the law through fees or other revenue sources.



- **Support** reform of the construction sales tax exemption. Removing the state sales tax on materials used for all types of city capital improvement projects would save money for property taxpayers. The city could reduce the amount of debt issued or reserves used for these projects, which would reduce the tax levy needs. This change would make it more affordable to build and maintain essential public facilities like parks, fire stations, and streets. It ensures local tax dollars go directly toward local community improvements.
- **Support** investment in expanding microelectronics and other high-tech manufacturing. Bloomington's growing cluster of these types of companies provides high paying jobs, drives local economic growth, diversifies Bloomington's economy, and aligns with the State's strategic efforts to strengthen these industries.
- **Support** Tax Increment Financing (TIF) policies that improve the ability to support affordable housing, business expansion, and redevelopment projects. Bloomington seeks flexibility in this important economic development tool to allow for creative and strategic investments that overcome current barriers to desired development. For example, allow excess TIF dollars to be transferred into a city's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
- **Support** childcare feasibility study or regional efforts in this space. Employers and job seekers consistently report that access to childcare is a barrier to successful employment. There is an opportunity to better understand the problem and create shared solutions.

## ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- **Support** establishing a right to cooling standard for Minnesotans. Landlords in Minnesota are required to keep rental temperatures at a minimum of 68° F from October 1 through April 30 for all units where residents cannot control the temperature themselves. This protects residents from extreme temperatures in the winter, but there are no protections in the summer. A right to cooling standard would change this. It would ensure safe indoor temperatures by minimizing residents' exposure to extreme heat. The City recommends using a maximum indoor temperature between 82°F and 86°F for this legislation.
- **Support** efforts to increase Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) funding. Cities need greater state investment in SCORE grants to meet local and regional recycling and waste diversion goals, address today's more complex solid waste challenges, and keep valuable materials out of the trash. Currently, 27% of the State Solid Waste Management Tax (SWMT) still goes to the state's General Fund rather than directly supporting waste reduction and recycling. This user tax on trash should be fully reinvested in local solid waste and sustainability programs in order to meet the State metro recycling goal of 75%.



- **Support** energy affordability efforts to ensure residents can maintain safe and healthy living conditions. This includes funding programs that lower residents' energy bills as well as programs that help pay for energy efficiency upgrades. Half of Bloomington's single-family homes are under insulated which makes heating and cooling homes more expensive. 82% of Bloomington's housing stock was built in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, while only 4% of the City's housing stock was built in the 1990's and later.
- **Oppose** closure of the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (HERC) without first meeting the County's 85% recycling and diversion goal identified for an environmentally responsible closure of the facility. The City supports a phased and data-driven approach that ensures regional waste processing capacity, environmental outcomes, and equity impacts are fully addressed. Any transition away from HERC must include a clear, sustainable plan for managing the waste currently processed by the facility.
- **Oppose** efforts to repeal the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act. Passed in 2024, the Act (Minn. Stat. § 115A.144-115A.1463) establishes a producer responsibility framework for managing packaging materials. This legislation holds producers and brand owners accountable for the full lifecycle of their packaging and directs them to fund recycling and waste reduction efforts that have historically been paid for by local governments and residents.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- **Support** exemption of temporary food licenses from Statewide hospitality fee. Per MS 157.16, subd. 3a, the Minnesota Department of Health collects a \$50 hospitality fee that is in addition to the license fee. Public and community events serving food for a day or part of a day are charged the same \$50 fee as a restaurant operating 365 days of the year. Legislation to exempt temporary food event from the hospitality fee has been introduced both in 2024 and 2025.



## HOUSING

- **Support** reinstating the ability for cities to license and inspect group homes. MS 144G.45, subd. 3 enacted on 5/16/24 prohibits cities from issuing rental licenses to state (MDH and DHS) licensed group homes. This means state licensed group homes, housing the most vulnerable tenant population, are no longer receiving annual safety and maintenance inspections or complaint investigations like the rest of the rented houses, condos, townhomes, and apartment buildings in the city. A group of northwest metro cities led by Brooklyn Park has drafted a detailed position that includes this topic as well as allowing cities to control the number and concentration of congregate care facilities for more equitable regional distribution.
- **Support** the continuation and expansion of Local Affordable Housing Aid (LAHA), including allowing a small percentage of LAHA to be used for administrative costs. LAHA is a valuable tool for cities to assist with funding local housing needs, including homeowners, housing production, and rental assistance. The need for LAHA funds far outpaces current resources. Administering these funds also requires resources to ensure compliance, which is currently not an allowed use.
- **Support** well-crafted policies and programs that increase regional housing supply and affordability (e.g. missing middle, building code, zoning, opportunity housing, affordable homeownership, small landlord rehab loans). Bloomington recognizes the complexity of housing development and is a leader in removing barriers to housing production despite being a fully developed community. Yet, we know there are additional policies and programs that could help Bloomington and the State increase housing supply and affordability. Bloomington seeks to be a leader and a partner in advancing legislation that supports housing affordability through all available avenues.



- **Support** HOA regulation reform that would help HOAs and their members resolve disputes outside of the courtroom. Needed reform also includes Minnesota FAIR plan that would establish a reinsurance program to backstop property & casualty insurers who have been unable to obtain reinsurance on the private market.
- **Support** funding for housing construction and rehabilitation; housing navigation services; rental assistance; homelessness prevention, response, and shelter capacity. Funding for these purposes currently falls far short of the need to address the housing crisis.
- **Support** the reporting of rent payments to credit bureaus to strengthen credit building and help aspiring homeowners improve credit scores. Reporting tenant rent payments to credit bureaus can improve tenants' credit, increasing their opportunity for homeownership or other financial products.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

- **Support** the expansion of the definition of “mental health provider or practitioner” to allow providers to bill for service. As the mental health workforce shrinks, Certified Peer Support Specialist, Community Health Workers, School counselors, Licensed Alcohol & Drug Counselors, family and caregiver support specialists and community-based or traditional healers are increasingly doing more mental health work. Increasing the hours they can bill or allowing them to bill would expand access to mental health service.
- **Support** consistent standards statewide for rapid access to mental health support. This would include piloting a benchmark of an initial consultation within 7 days of request for outpatient mental health services and a 30-day benchmark for follow up appointments. Support a youth access standard requiring each school district to provide at least one licensed mental health professional per 250 students, consistent with American School Counselor Association guidance.



## PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Support** universal law enforcement background checks to allow for the standardization of material each public safety organization must review when conducting employment background checks on perspective employees. Also, require all employers who operate within the state of Minnesota to disclose all requested employment documentation to public safety organizations conducting background investigations.
- **Support** funding embedded social work program as this program has been invaluable at providing resources and stabilization services, such as housing and food access, to those who come into contact with police officers.
- **Support** funding therapist programs that serve residents by providing free in-home therapy to those who are in crisis as a result of suffering from addiction, mental health issues, or other social problems.
- **Support** statewide restorative court so that defendants' opportunities for success and stability are not determined by the jurisdiction where the crime occurred. Currently, only Bloomington, Brooklyn Park, Minneapolis, Oakdale, and Saint Paul offer restorative court. Restorative court eligibility is based on criteria including the type of crime. Social workers help defendants address the underlying problems (such as lost paperwork) so the defendants can return to being law abiding citizens, thereby reducing costs of policing and prosecuting livability offenses.
- **Support** funding for State bomb squads. Bloomington has one of only four in MN and funding these units is vital to their ability to continue to provide this critical public safety service. The public safety of Minnesota's citizens will be put at risk if these units are not funded.



## TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Support** limiting local cost participation with modifications to Cost Participation Policy (CPP). By limiting local cost participation, we can reduce the financial strain on local governments while ensuring every community benefits from safe, reliable highways, bridges, and alternative transportation systems while also ensuring local roads, trails and sidewalks and other transportation components have funding.
- **Support** transit that meets local needs including higher frequency service, on demand service, and last-mile connections. When transit reflects the needs of the community--through frequent service, on demand options, and better last-mile connections people have more freedom and reliability in how they travel. These improvements make it easier for people to get to work, school and essential services while supporting local mobility, economic opportunity and reducing congestion/greenhouse gases.
- **Support** the 494 Corridor Commission's requests for \$300,000 per year in on-going funding to support their efforts to promote alternatives to driving alone, including telework, vanpools, carpools, transit, and biking to work. The Commission has received annual state funds for over a decade, and these funds are critical to sustaining the services that promote actions for a more sustainable future.

## ADDENDUM:

### THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING:

I-494 CORRIDOR COMMISSION LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA CITIES – POLICIES

LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION PLATFORM

METRO CITIES – POLICIES

MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION – POLICIES