

BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



DECEMBER 2014



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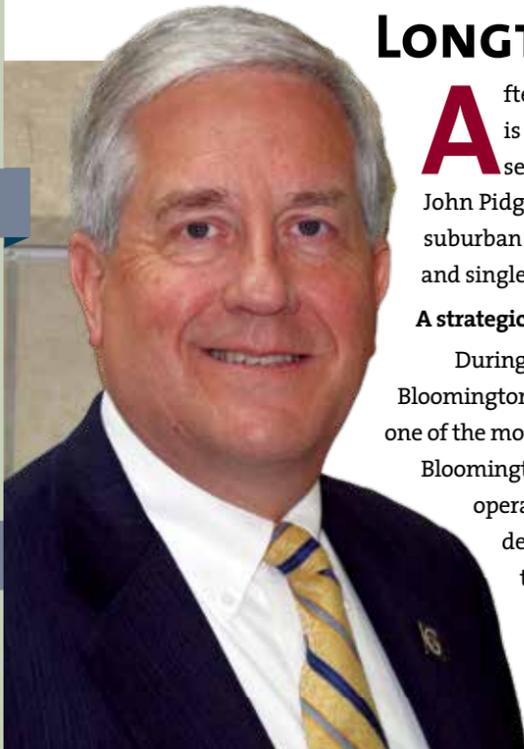


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Nine Mile Creek is a great place for a hike any time of year, but it is especially serene in the winter. The creek's source is two lakes – Bryant Lake in Eden Prairie and Mud Lake in Edina. Visit the City's website to share your winter beauty shots.

LONGTIME CITY MANAGER RETIRING



After more than 23 years of service, Bloomington's City Manager Mark Bernhardson is retiring at the end of this year. Bernhardson is one of Bloomington's longest-serving City Managers, beginning his service after another longtime City Manager, John Pidgeon, retired in 1991. Bernhardson has guided Bloomington's growth from a sprawling suburban community to a thriving walkable, bikeable city with a mix of commercial, multi- and single-family home neighborhoods, more than 85,000 residents and a workforce of 90,000.

A strategic thinker and visionary

During Bernhardson's tenure, the Mall of America opened and expanded, light rail came to Bloomington and many of the city's aging facilities were either improved or replaced. Perhaps one of the most notable projects during his watch was the joint Bloomington Civic Plaza and Bloomington Center for the Arts facility. Civic Plaza provides a unique venue for both City operations and Bloomington's vibrant cultural arts. Bernhardson shepherded the project, designing an innovative financing plan to fund the facility by using operational savings to avoid increasing property taxes.

A strong believer in strategic planning and long-term visioning, Bernhardson helped create many strategic plans during his tenure, including the most recent plan, "Imagine Bloomington 2025," that defines the City's strategy for development, redevelopment, services, infrastructure, and fiscal strength over a 20-year period. He has also shepherded new initiatives, including revising City ordinances to

address nuisance issues, implementing annual zoning and code inspections, developing the City's alternative transportation plan and strengthening code enforcement ordinances and procedures.

Jim Miller, executive director of the League of Minnesota Cities, describes Bernhardson as the consummate city manager and an outstanding credit to the profession.

"I have been fortunate to know and work with Mark Bernhardson for over 30 years and I have been consistently impressed not only by his skills as a manager, but equally importantly, by his integrity and passion about providing the best possible local government services to ensure the community's quality of life," he said.

Quality services at an affordable price

When he was hired in 1991, Bloomington was rated AA by the ratings agencies Moody's and Standard and Poors. An expert in financial planning and property tax issues, Bernhardson developed a multi-year budgeting plan that helped the city achieve three AAA bond ratings. Bernhardson introduced a five-year planning model that takes into account both the short- and long-term needs of the community to develop a preliminary property tax levy. This has helped keep the city's property tax growth to an average rate of 2.2 percent on existing properties since the early 1990s. As a result, Bloomington has among the lowest monthly property tax costs for City services for a median-valued, single-family home in Hennepin County communities with populations over 20,000.

Innovative communicator

Bernhardson has a passion for communicating Bloomington's City services, their costs and financial condition to ensure that residents and businesses are informed. Prior to his arrival, the City's newsletter was published on a sporadic basis. Bernhardson revamped the *Briefing* and put it on a bimonthly schedule. He championed the development of the City's website in 1996, making it one of the first municipal sites in the metro area. In 2000, Bloomington became one of the first cities in Minnesota to webcast City Council meetings. Today, the City Council meetings are streamed in real time, agendas and minutes are posted online and the City has a social media presence that includes Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Bernhardson grew up in Nebraska, attended Naval Officer Candidate School and worked as a Supply Corps officer before getting a graduate degree in public affairs and administration from the University of Minnesota. He served as a volunteer firefighter and assistant fire chief for Golden Valley, assistant city manager in Edina and city administrator in Orono before leading Bloomington.

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The *Briefing*, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8819; TTY: 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; E-mail: jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov Website: BloomingtonMN.gov

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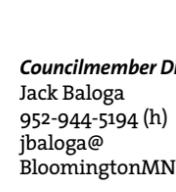


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The City of Bloomington complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. For more information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; 952-563-8733 (Voice); 952-563-8740 (TTY).

Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.

MAYOR'S MEMO

THE CONSUMMATE CITY MANAGER RETIRES

By Mayor Gene Winstead

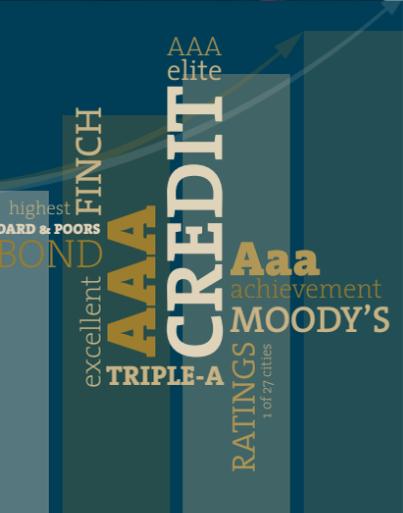
In my 15 years as mayor of Bloomington, I've had the pleasure of working with many talented and hard-working individuals, including constituents, City employees and council members. One of those individuals is City Manager Mark Bernhardson, who after 23 years, will retire at the end of December.

The Mayor and the City Manager have a close working relationship. Many people don't realize that our City Manager is actually a member of the city council, and although he doesn't have the option to vote, he is a lead member of our team. A key leader and decision maker, Mark Bernhardson is, essentially, the City's CEO. He enforces ordinances and resolutions, appoints City employees, spearheads strategic planning and budgeting and recommends actions to the City Council that will protect Bloomington residents and provide efficient operation of government. He serves as a leader, a trusted advisor, a planner and as an advocate for Bloomington citizens. To be all these things for a large, multifaceted city organization takes a special kind of individual with a broad skill set and wide range of knowledge.

Over the years, I've referred to Mark as the glue that holds this organization together. He truly is one of the most knowledgeable, hardworking and dedicated public employees I know. Mark is conservative in nature and every decision he makes is always well thought out. He is an expert in complicated financial matters. The City's financial stability over the long term is the result of a budgeting process developed by Mark over the years that has positioned the City to achieve its long-term goals irrespective of downturns in local or national economies.

Mark has always been a highly ethical and strong leader, which is so important when it comes to public service. As a result, other organizations in the area have looked to him to provide leadership and direction. He has collaborated with neighboring cities to provide services and improve the quality of lives in the area. He also played a major role in bringing the South Metro Public Safety Training Facility to the area that significantly improved public safety by allowing police and firefighters from neighboring communities to train together.

Mark is somewhat unique as far as city managers go. Most managers serve for five or ten years and move on. For 23 years, Mark has been a great champion for Bloomington and this community has thrived under his leadership. He has created a legacy of service to our community that has transformed its physical landscape, its financial base and its future. He will be greatly missed as our City Manager. We hope to soon announce the name of the leader who will continue where Mark left off, leading us forward to our Imagine Bloomington 2025 vision.



In the loop

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS SELECTED

Traditionally, art draws people to an area. That's why the City and Bloomington Theatre and Art Center (BTAC) are bringing art to the South Loop District. A jury of public art experts along with City and BTAC staff recently selected the following four art projects to be unveiled in the South Loop in 2015:

- Little Box Sauna, by Molly Reichert and Andrea Johnson, is a mobile warming house that creates a visible, small-scale space for socializing. The sauna will travel through the South Loop in February and March.
- Ripple of Life, by artist Tom Henry, will create a ripple landform with a field of wheat surrounded by a blue Russian Sage hedge and a half circle of yellow sunflowers to captivate pedestrians and viewers from trains, planes and cars. The wheat will be harvested and used to make bread for local food shelves.
- A Science and Nature Mural, by artist Erik Pearson, *above right*, will be created at the border of Cypress Semiconductor and the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge at the Bass Ponds parking lot.
- Cross-Pollination, a musical theater and storytelling production by PlaceBase Productions, in partnership with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, will turn the refuge into a work of walking theater. *Photo at right.*

Creative Placemaking in the South Loop is a joint initiative of the City of Bloomington and BTAC to engage creative people from throughout the region in transforming the South Loop District into a vibrant, walkable neighborhood.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SOUTH LOOP.

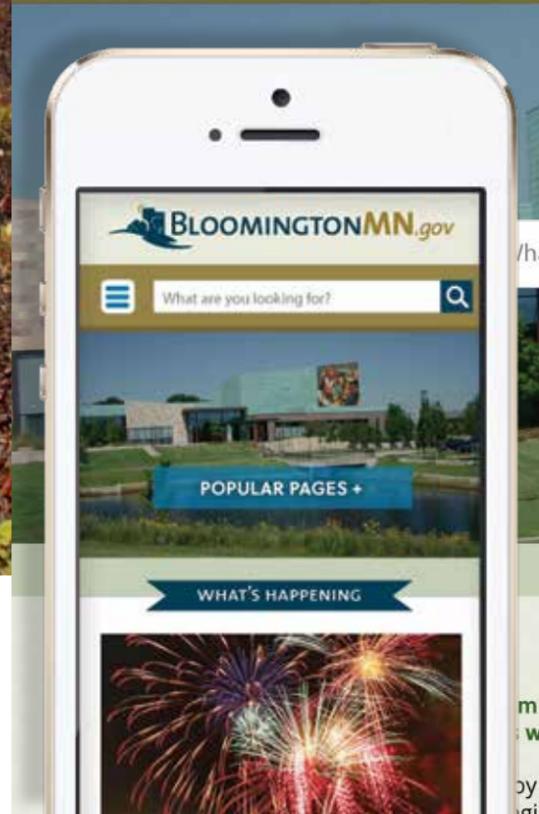
CITY COUNCIL AMENDS ORDINANCE

The City Council recently amended an ordinance to prohibit the use of electronic delivery devices (e-cigarettes) in all public places, including places of business, restaurants and bars and their outdoor spaces, and City-owned parks and trails. This strengthens the 2014 state law that prohibits the use of e-cigarettes in spaces such as hospitals, schools and government buildings. As part of the ordinance changes, single cigars must be sold for a minimum cost of \$2.60, or in packs of five or more. Both of these changes will help deter young people from smoking and assure that indoor air is clean for Bloomington residents. For more information, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: TOBACCO CODE.



Photos courtesy of Bruce Silcox.



REVITALIZING OUR PARKS AND TRAILS

The City continues to update and revitalize its parks and trails through focused plans and implementation. This includes the creation of a Minnesota River Valley Master Plan and an update to the Alternative Transportation Plan, which will provide direction for future implementation and maintenance efforts.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Since the original Alternative Transportation Plan was adopted in 2008, the City and agencies such as the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, Three Rivers Park District and others have initiated projects that have furthered bicycle and pedestrian transportation in and around Bloomington. This past summer, residents provided input through an online survey and open houses. The draft Alternative Transportation Plan should be available for review and public comment by early 2015. Comments can be made online or at an upcoming open house.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: ATP.

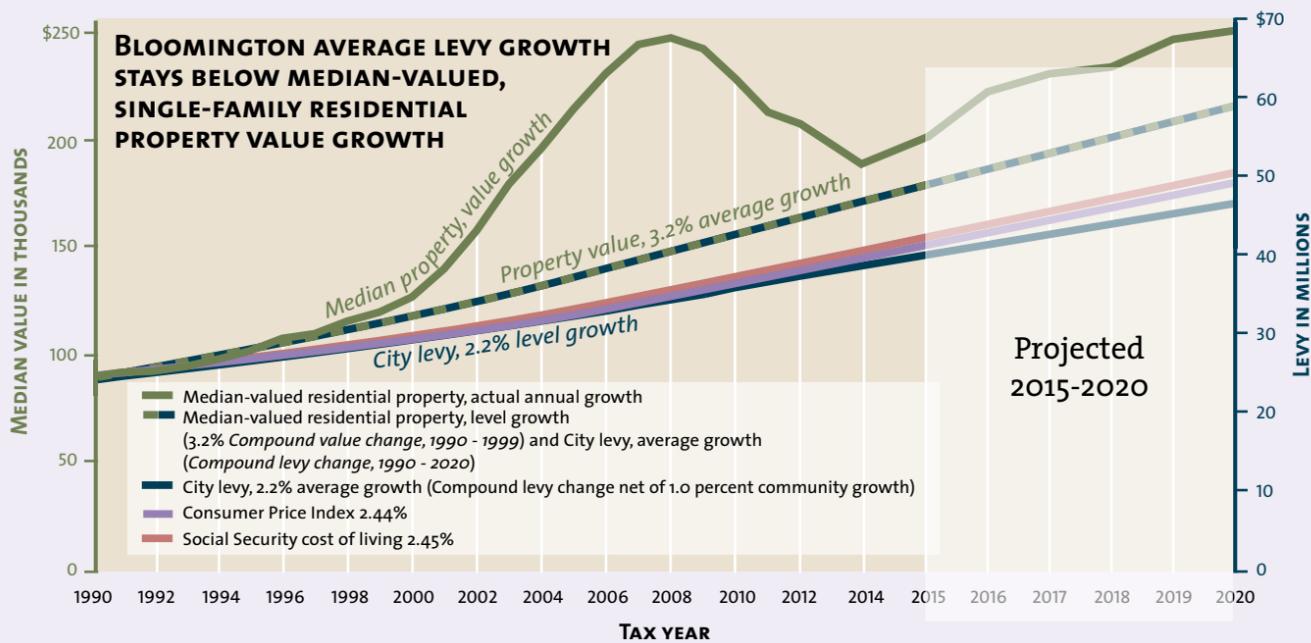
MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY MASTER PLAN

A master plan is being created for the Minnesota River Valley, where the City owns and maintains more than 1,000 acres of land. Work on the plan began in early 2014. The key goals of the plan are to enhance access, increase awareness of the area, and ensure that trails and water bodies are protected. An open house to gather public input on the plan and an online survey was conducted last summer. City staff are currently drafting the plan and should have a draft ready for public review by early 2015. For more information, contact Parks and Recreation Manager Randy Quale at 952-563-8876 or parksrec@BloomingtonMN.gov.

WEBSITE REDESIGN UPDATE

The City's redesigned website will go live in early 2015. You can read progress reports online at blm.mn/redesign. Visit this page to learn about various new features we're implementing and to preview other aspects of the new site as we get closer to the launch date. While you're there, you can sign up to receive email notifications when new information is posted.

The City's last website redesign was in 2006, well before the popularization of the "mobile Web." In addition to looking better on smartphones and tablets, the redesigned website will focus on accessibility for all users.



GENERAL FUND BUDGET

In 2015, the monthly cost of City services for owners of median-valued homes of \$206,900 will be \$71.64 for 2015. Four out of the past five years this cost was \$67.82. The increase is the result of a shift in value of the tax base from commercial properties to residential properties. On September 22, the City Council approved a preliminary levy of \$49,971,775 for 2015. It also approved a preliminary general operating fund budget of \$63,848,334, a 3.90 percent increase from the 2014 budget.

The City uses multiyear modeling to track revenue and expenditures to predict upcoming trends for 2015. City staff also uses a five-year planning model that considers both the short-term and future needs of the community to recommend a preliminary levy. In providing quality City services that meet public demand, the City continues to be cost effective. In a 2014 resident survey, 65 percent of respondents thought that the value of City services for taxes paid was excellent or good, placing Bloomington in the top 25 percent of cities surveyed.

The preliminary levy can be reduced, but not increased, before final adoption. If the 2015 levy is approved at this proposed level, the average annual increase in the City's levy from 1996 - 2015 would be 3.34 percent. One of Bloomington's

strengths has been the diversity of the tax base over which City services provided to Bloomington's residents and businesses are allocated. Historically, Bloomington's tax capacity has been split between residential, including apartments, and commercial/industrial. However, the current economy is showing greater variability of real estate values as it comes out of the downturn.

"The City levies an exact dollar amount needed to maintain certain levels of services," Chief Financial Officer Lori Economy-Scholler said. "This amount is apportioned to all properties in the community based on their individual property values."

The City's multiyear modeling indicates that property tax levies over the next five years should remain approximately equal to long-term home value appreciation plus community growth as Bloomington works for the longer term to be more sustainable.

For more information, contact Chief Financial Officer Lori Economy-Scholler at 952-563-8791 or email leconomy@BloomingtonMN.gov. For property valuation information, contact City Assessor Matt Gersemehl at 952-563-8708 or mgersemehl@BloomingtonMN.gov.



SIGN UP FOR EMERGENCY ALERTS

Bloomington's Citizen Alert system sends time-sensitive emergency notifications directly to your home phone, cell phone via voice and text alerts, and email. Sign up on the City's website to receive notifications about natural disasters, flooding, gas leaks, police activities, and more.

For more information, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: CITIZEN ALERT.

SEEKING APPLICANTS

The Bloomington City Council is seeking applicants to serve on its advisory boards and commissions for terms beginning January 2015.

For more information, call the City Manager's Office at 952-563-8780.



TORO DONATES TREES

Bloomington-based Toro Company recently donated 100 trees to help beautify Bloomington parks as part of its 100-year anniversary celebration.

A combination of river birch, Accolade elm, hackberry, Redmond linden, white pine and Black Hills spruce were planted at Dred Scott Playfield and Valley View Park. Toro volunteers worked with City of Bloomington employees to strategically plant the trees to provide cover near fences and tennis courts.

DON'T GET STUCK WITH FROZEN PIPES

During extended periods of sub-zero temperatures, water meters and internal water pipes may freeze. To prevent this, allow heat to circulate around the meter by leaving the access unobstructed and the doors to the meter closet open. Protect water pipes by wrapping them in foam insulation.

If you plan to be away for an extended period of time, contact Bloomington Utilities to request your water be turned off at the street. Utilities charges \$50 to send a technician to shut water off and \$50 to turn it back on.

For more information, visit the City's website or call Bloomington Utilities at 952-563-8777.



CREATING A RECYCLING OASIS

Hennepin County and the City want to see recycling everywhere. With its innovative, and aptly named, Recycle Everywhere program, Hennepin County is expanding its focus beyond promoting recycling at home to include recycling at work, school, public events and on the go. If you attended Bloomington Heritage Days this past fall, you probably noticed the recycling oasis, a portable park constructed of recycled materials and native plants installed on the trailer. It offered the opportunity for passer-bys to get their recycling questions answered.

"We wanted to let people know that more recycling opportunities are available and to ask for recycling if they don't see it in their community," Green Partners Program Manager Patience Caso said. "Hennepin County has free resources, including grants, educational materials and professional staff assistance to start or improve recycling at businesses, schools, events, public spaces and apartment buildings."

Recycle Everywhere is the third iteration of Hennepin County's campaign encouraging people to recycle and compost more with the goal of diverting 50 percent of waste from landfills. The first two years of the campaign focused on Recycle Half.

Caso said the main goal of the program is to set the expectation that recycling should be available and then encouraging people to use those services to recycle as much as they can. The campaign's man-on-the-street video and radio ads featured interviews at businesses around Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis and Hyland Park in Bloomington. The County is planning more events to kick off in the spring.

"The ads were intended to generate excitement about recycling and communicate that recycling is easy, good for the environment and a no-brainer," she said.

For those who want to help Hennepin County spread the word and educate others about recycling, there's a Master Recycler and Composter program. Master recycler and composters are trained on waste prevention, recycling and composting through an extensive six-week course that features industry experts and field trips to local waste processing and recycling facilities. Once training is complete, participants commit to volunteer 30 hours.

To learn more about recycling efforts in Bloomington, including a recycling guide and other valuable resources, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: RECYCLING.



PAYING YOUR WATER BILL ONLINE

You can now pay your water bill online. Register on the City's website to pay your outstanding bill, view account balances, review water and sewer consumption history, print statements and more.

For help registering, call Utility Billing at 952-563-8726.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: WATER BILL.



GO EASY ON THE SALT

Like shovels and snow blowers, salt has become a common tool used in snow and ice removal. However, when the snow and ice begin to melt, any salt that has been used goes with it. This salt ends up in nearby water bodies or in our groundwater. Once the salt gets into the water, there is no cost-effective way to remove it.

The City is doing its part to limit the amount of salt used during snow removal, such as using a salt-brine mixture that reduces the amount of salt needed to make streets safe, see *article on page 8*. What can you do to help? Before grabbing the salt this winter, consider the following:

- Shovel away snow. The more snow you can remove, the less salt you will use. Get out early and keep up with the storm.

- Don't over-apply. More salt does not mean more melting. Use less than four pounds of salt per 1,000 square feet. One pound of salt is about equal to a heaping 12-ounce coffee cup. Excess salt can also harm your lawn and irritate your pet's paws.
- Temperature matters. Most salts stop working when the pavement temperature drops below 15 degrees, and should not be applied. Instead, use small amounts of sand for traction.
- Sweep up extra salt and sand on dry pavement and store it away for next winter.

For more information, contact Bloomington Engineering at 952-563-4879 or Nine Mile Creek Watershed District representative Erica Sniegowski at 952-358-2276.



BLOOMINGTON SCHOOLS ON A NUTRITION MISSION

Chef Marshall O'Brien brought his Nutrition on a Mission® message to Bloomington Public Schools with the goal of empowering food service staff with advanced training to prepare healthy, fresh vegetables in tasty ways. The Chef Marshall O'Brien Group works with schools, child care facilities, city agencies and corporations to help develop wellness through positive eating habits.

"It is important to know that lunch is so much more than just a time to feed kids," O'Brien said. "It's a time for proving that healthy choices can also taste great if cooked and served in the right way."

Bloomington Public Health Nutritionist Joan Bulfer said making healthier choices easier in schools is vital because healthy foods can improve how children feel, how they learn, and ultimately, who they become.

"We want to give our children a good future," she said. "Evidence shows eating plenty of fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet protects children from some chronic diseases, giving them a better chance for a long and healthy life."



LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES

You may have seen the small house-shaped boxes around Bloomington, but have you ever walked up for a closer look? They're called Little Free Libraries, and they're filled with books. You can take a book and read it at your leisure at no cost. When you finish, bring it back for someone else to enjoy. Bloomington has seven registered libraries, including one outside Creekside.

Residents should verify their property boundaries to ensure that they don't install a free library on the public right-of-way or in a clear view triangle. Libraries should also be at least two feet from a sidewalk or trail.

SHOP LOCAL

The Farmers Market will host its final indoor event of the year at Bloomington Civic Plaza on **December 13, 9 a.m. - noon**. Foodies will be pleased to find plentiful winter vegetables, honey, olives, cheese, baked goods, salsas and much more.



FOUND ON facebook FIRE STATION OPEN HOUSES

A good time was had by all at the October 11 Fire Station Open Houses. Thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate Fire Prevention Week. The photo at left is one of many in a photo album on the City's Facebook page that reached more than 1,000 people and garnered 30 likes. Visit and become a fan of the City's page by clicking the Facebook icon on the City's website.

MEET A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER

Volunteer firefighter Jason Mielke has been with the Bloomington Fire Department since 1995. He works out of Station 4.

Q. What do you enjoy most about being a firefighter?

A. Helping the community. A friend of mine always says "I'm not here for me. I'm here for 'we' and we are here for them." I think it really applies to the service we offer. I also have the best extended family one could ask for.

Q. What is your day job?

A. I work for the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension as a state duty officer for emergency management.

Q. You have two children. Do they have any interest in volunteer fire fighting?

A. My son does. He has grown up with me being a firefighter his whole life and would like to work in public safety.

Q. What do you do for fun when you're not working or volunteering?

A. I spend time with my family and friends. I also play hockey and softball and enjoy hunting and fishing.



SKATE SCHOOL AT BIG

The Bloomington Ice Garden (BIG) Skate School is a City program that runs year-round. Classes are available for beginners to advanced skaters, ages three to adult. New this year is a therapeutic program for physically challenged skaters.

The Skate School is designed to teach all ages how to skate for recreation, play hockey, figure skate and speed skate. In March, students offer an annual spring show at BIG that also includes members of the Figure Skating Club of Bloomington.

For more information, call 952-563-8841 or email BloomingtonSkateSchool@yahoo.com.

INTERNET SAFETY FOR KIDS

The Internet has drastically changed the way kids communicate, and parenting wired kids can be difficult, especially if you didn't grow up with the same technologies. Be sure to keep your computer in an area of your home where children can be monitored and talk to your kids about how to navigate the Internet safely. Here are some basic tips to get you started:

Make sure your children know NEVER to do the following:

- Reveal their address, telephone number, password, school name or any other personal information.
- Post vacation plans on social networks since this could let criminals know that your house will be vacant for a period of time.
- Agree to meet face-to-face with someone they've met online without discussing it with you first.
- Respond to messages that have bad words, are scary or just seem odd.
- Enter an area that charges for services without asking you first.
- Send a picture of themselves to anyone without your permission.

For more tips, visit Netsmartz.org.



Contact Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877 for more information.

2014 - 2015 OUTDOOR SKATING RINKS AND WARMING HOUSES

Parks and Recreation will operate 15 outdoor ice skating rink sites this winter. During rink hours, all facilities will be lighted with the exception of Logan Playlot. Some sites are supervised by Parks and Recreation employees during public skating hours. *See below.* Weather and ice conditions permitting, **park shelters will be open Saturday, December 13, 2014, through Monday, February 16, 2015.** For more information, contact Parks and Recreation. For up-to-date rink conditions and closings, visit the City's website or call 952-563-8878 and select option 3.

LOCATIONS AND FEATURES						
	PARK	ADDRESS	STAFFING	General	Hockey	Floodlights
1	Brookside	10000 Xerxes Avenue	Daily	•	•	•
2	Bryant	1001 W. 85th Street	Wknds, SRD*	•	•	•
3	Brye	10500 Xavier Avenue South	Wknds, SRD*, Special	•	•	•
4	Haeg	8301 Penn Avenue South	Volunteer basis**	•	•	•
5	Kelly	185 E. 102nd Street	Volunteer basis**	•	•	•
6	Logan	1900 W. 91st Street	No warming house	•		
7	Oak Grove	1301 W. 104th Street	Wknds, SRD*	•	•	•
8	Poplar Bridge	4600 W. 85th Street	Wknds, SRD*, Special	•	•	•
9	Ridgeview	6001 W. 94th Street	Volunteer basis**	•	•	•
10	Running	9501 12th Avenue South	Daily	•	2	•
11	Southglen	10701 Rich Road	No warming house	•		•
12	Southwood	4800 Terracewood Drive	Volunteer basis**	•	•	•
13	Sunrise	9401 Blmgtn. Ferry Road	Daily	•	•	•
14	Tarnhill	9650 Little Road	Volunteer basis**	•	•	•
15	Westwood	3490 W. 109th Street	Daily	•	2	•

DAY OF WEEK	REGULAR	SCHOOL RELEASE DAYS (SRD)*
	Dec. 13 - 19 Jan. 5 - 18, 20 - 24 and 27 - 31 Feb. 2 - 15	Dec. 23 - Jan. 3, 20 and 27 Feb. 17
M-F	4 - 9 p.m.	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Saturday	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Sunday	1 - 8 p.m.	1 - 8 p.m.

Lights on at rinks during scheduled hours.

PLEASE NOTE Special hours for staffed rinks are 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. on the following days:

- December 24, 25 and 31, 2014
- January 1, 2015 (Bryant and Oak Grove sites will be closed on these dates).
- Feb. 1, 2015 (Super Bowl Sunday).

**Staffed on a volunteer basis only. Schedules are posted on the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PARKS VOLUNTEERS.

CELEBRATE THE SEASON

Join Bloomington Parks and Recreation and local sponsors in welcoming winter during the 12th annual Winter Fete celebration, taking place throughout the city, Saturday, January 17 through Sunday, January 25. The City will host the Annual Pond Dakota Winter History Festival on Sunday, January 25, and other exciting events during this weeklong celebration. All activities are free, unless otherwise noted, and are fun for the whole family! For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.

WATER POLO IN WINTER? YES!

That's right! Bloomington Parks and Recreation is pleased to introduce the greatest game you may have never played – at least not during the winter. Players float on an inner tube while playing this fun variation of traditional water polo in a pool. League play begins Thursday, January 9, and runs through Thursday, February 27, at Olson Middle School pool. Teams will play an eight-week regular season. Participants must be 18 years or older. For more information call 952-563-8877 or visit the City's website.

BUMP, SET, SPIKE

The Born Again Jocks volleyball league welcomes men, 55 years and older, of all skill levels. Games are held Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9 a.m., at Jefferson High School, 4001 West 102nd Street and Kennedy High School, 9701 Nicollet Avenue. For more information, call Paul Johnson at 612-866-4428.

ADULT WINTER VOLLEYBALL LEAGUES

Take your volleyball game indoors this winter with the adult winter volleyball league. League play runs Sundays, January 4 through March 22, at the Kennedy High School Activity Center and Bloomington Armory. Co-rec and Women's leagues are offered Sunday - Thursday evenings. For more information, call 952-563-8877 or visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: ADULT VOLLEYBALL.



DREAMING OF SPRING!

Picnic shelters will soon be available to rent for next year's picnics, receptions, reunions and meetings. Registration begins January 2 for use April 15 through October 15. Shelters have electricity, grills, restrooms and drinking fountains. City parks offer playground equipment, volleyball and horseshoe courts, trails and softball fields.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PICNIC SHELTER RENTAL.

EAST BUSH LAKE PARK

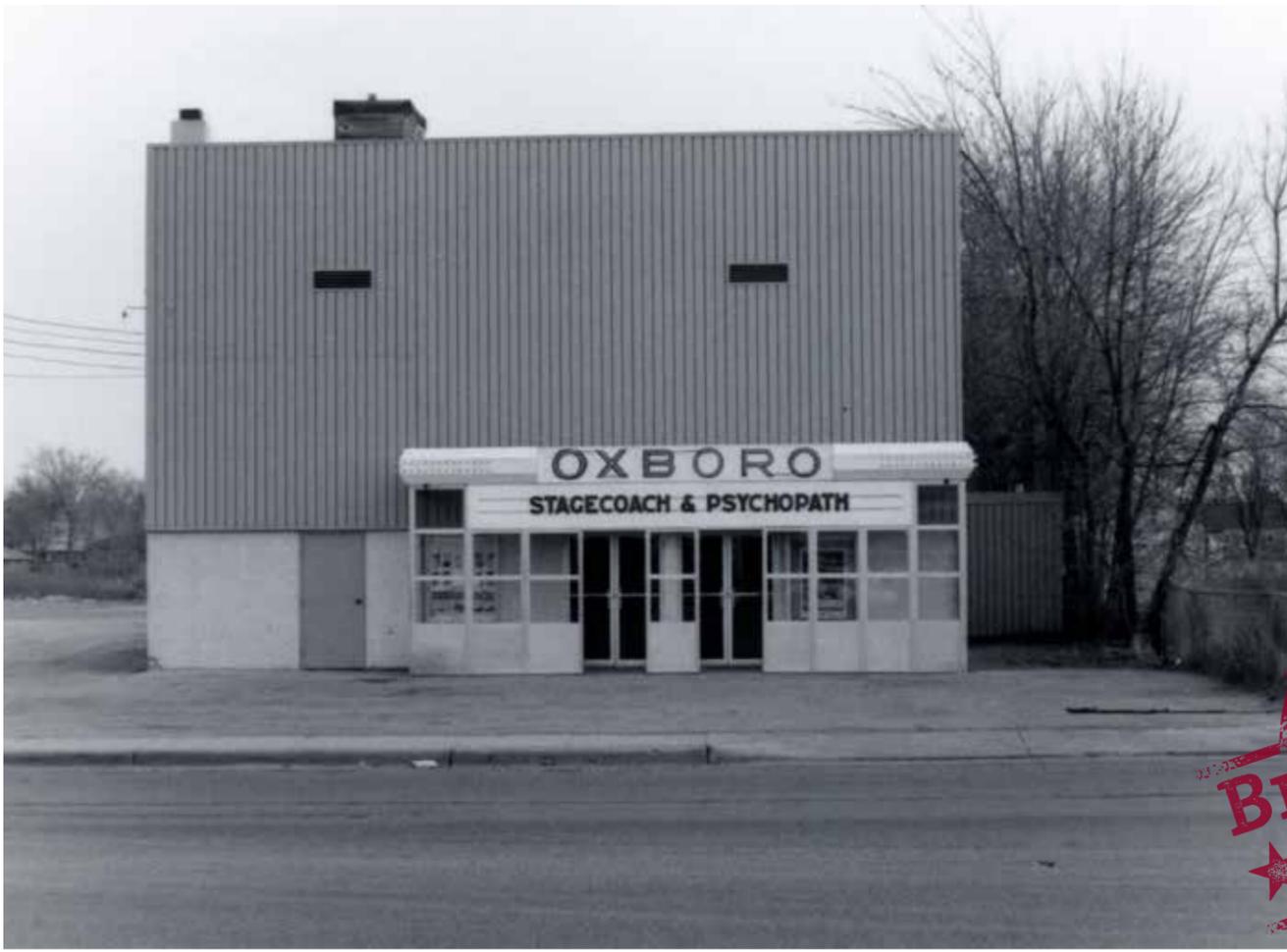
9140 East Bush Lake Road
Shelter 3: Accommodates 200
\$317 + tax

WEST BUSH LAKE PARK

9401 West Bush Lake Road
Shelter 1: Accommodates 200
\$240 + tax
Shelter 2: Accommodates 100
\$163 + tax

MOIR PARK

10320 Morgan Avenue South
Shelter 1: Accommodates 200+
\$240 + tax
Shelter 2: Accommodates 50
\$163 + tax



THE OXBORO MOVIE THEATER

Before there were mega-multiplexes, there were small, movie houses like this one on the corner of 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue. This photo of the Oxboro Movie Theater was taken in 1966.



CHECK OUT THIS AMAZING LINEUP OF HOLIDAY FUN

Located in Bloomington Civic Plaza at the corner of West 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road, the Center for the Arts is a first-class facility housing seven arts organizations. For facility information, call 952-563-8889. For exhibit information and events, visit www.btacmn.org and click on Exhibitions, or call 952-563-8575.

For all theater tickets, call the Box Office at 952-563-8575.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: CENTER FOR THE ARTS

GALLERY HOURS

Hours: M - F 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Sa 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Su 1 - 10 p.m.



GIFTS IN THE GALLERY

Visit the annual Gifts in the Gallery sale, December 9 - 23, for one-of-a-kind, artist-created gifts for the holiday season. The gallery will be transformed into a holiday shopping winter wonderland where 60 artists will display and sell their unique gift items.



Bloomington Civic Theater Striking 12

Our annual holiday show returns for a third season! This family-friendly musical will lift your spirits.

*Special New Year's Eve performance. December 5 - 21
Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 7:30 p.m. Sundays, 2 p.m.*

*Adults \$24, Seniors \$22, 25 and under \$19
Black Box Theater*



Bloomington Chorale Messiah and African-American Spirituals

The Bloomington Chorale will be performing the Messiah followed by African-American spirituals.

*Friday, December 12, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, December 13, 4 p.m.
Adults \$15, Seniors \$11, 15 and under \$11
(Add \$1 to ticket price at the door)*



Medalist Concert Band Sounds of the Season

Join the Medalist Band for an afternoon of holiday cheer. You'll enjoy a program of traditional classics and contemporary favorites.

*Sunday, December 14, 4 p.m.
Adults \$15, Seniors and Students \$12*



Girl Singers of the Hit Parade Great Holiday Songs of the 50s

Colleen Raye and The Girl Singers of the Hit Parade bring a wave of nostalgia to the stage with popular Christmas songs made famous by the Andrew Sisters, Lennon Sisters, Brenda Lee and others.

*Sunday, December 21, 2 p.m.
Adults \$29, Seniors \$26, 25 and under \$22*



Monroe Crossing A Bluegrass Christmas

Celebrate the season with the Midwest's premier bluegrass and gospel quintet. You'll enjoy a blend of classic and traditional bluegrass, bluegrass gospel and heartfelt originals.

*Saturday, December 20, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Adults \$29, Seniors \$26,
25 and under \$22*



Arne Fogel and Maud Hixson Holiday for Frank

A celebration of the songs of Frank Sinatra and Billie Holiday, featuring Arne Fogel, Maud Hixson and music director Rick Carlson.

*January 16 - 18, Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m., Sunday, 2 p.m.
Adults \$20, Seniors \$18, 25 and under \$15
Black Box Theater*



WHAT IS A SNOW EMERGENCY?

A snow emergency is automatically in effect when three or more inches of snow have accumulated. When that happens, no parking is allowed on any city street for the following 48 hours or until the street has been plowed from curb-to-curb. The City's website, cable channel and social media pages will post alerts. For more information, visit the City's website or contact Public Works at 952-563-8760.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SNOW EMERGENCY.

SNOW EMERGENCY SURVIVAL GUIDE

The City helps residents get through the winter with snowplowing services – at a cost of \$2.18 per month for the owner of a median-valued home. Snowplow operators often start their days at 3 a.m. during a snow event. They plow the most heavily used roads first and then move on to other roads, cul-de-sacs and sidewalks. The City prides itself on its snow removal services.

Residents can help the City provide even better service during the snowy winter months by helping out their neighbors as well as themselves. This page shows what you can do before and during a snow event.

PROACTIVE SOLUTIONS TO SAFER ROADS

To make roads safer before snow falls, the City pretreats streets with an anti-icing brine solution. The solution, a liquid mixture of salt and water that is sprayed on, prevents ice from bonding with street surfaces. Once the liquid solution is sprayed, it evaporates and leaves behind thin deposits of salt, making roads that have recently been de-iced easily identifiable. The salt prevents the bonding of snow and ice to the street so snowplows can scrape the street clean. This process reduces the amount of salt that needs to be applied when streets are plowed, protecting water bodies from run-off in the spring. The City has received awards and recognition for sustainable snow removal practices such as this.

FIRE HYDRANTS, MAILBOXES AND GARBAGE BINS

The Fire Department asks residents to shovel out the fire hydrants near their homes. Accessible hydrants greatly reduce the time it takes firefighters to douse a fire.

Keep your mailbox clear of snow. Mailboxes should not extend past the curb and should have sturdy four-by-four timber posts. The bottoms of the mailboxes should be no less than 45 inches off the ground and located on the left side of your driveway.

If it snows on or near collection day, keep garbage and recycling bins away from the end of the driveway and behind the curb. Place containers off sidewalks so plows can get by.



PARKING GUIDELINES

Bloomington Police enforce the parking ban in a snow emergency. This ensures that all streets get fully plowed during a snowstorm. To find out if a snow emergency has been declared, visit the City's website or call the Snow Emergency Hotline at 952-563-8768.

CHILD SAFETY

Never allow children to build tunnels or snow forts in snow banks near the street. The force and weight of the snow coming off the plows can collapse the tunnels or forts and may severely harm a child. Keep sleds and toys out of the street and far away from the edge of the road. Snowbanks make it difficult for plow operators to see children in these areas. Children should never play near the edge of the road.

WAIT TO CLEAR THE END OF YOUR DRIVEWAY

After a snowstorm, the City makes every effort to clear snow as quickly as possible. Snowplows may plow already shoveled snow into driveways. To reduce the chance you'll have to shovel more than once, wait to clear the end of your driveway until the plows have completed your street.

USE STAKES TO PREVENT SOD DAMAGE

Strike the edge of the sidewalk and street along your property to help reduce sod damage associated with plowing. The City recommends lightweight wooden stakes such as those sold at most home improvement stores. Mark only the side of the sidewalk closest to your house to give plow operators the room they need. (Plows need a minimum 55 inches of clearance.) Keep in mind these markers should be temporary. They should give easily if hit.

KEEP SIDEWALKS CLEAR

Many people rely on sidewalks to get where they need to go. Keeping sidewalks clear of snow and other objects such as recycling bins ensures safe travel for everyone. The City asks that all residents and business owners help in keeping public sidewalks free of fresh snow, as well as any snow that may be deposited as a result of snow removal from streets and driveways. In addition, it is illegal for any vehicle to block a public sidewalk. The City removes snow from 250 miles of Bloomington sidewalks at a cost of 46¢ per month.

BLOOMINGTON'S SNOW REMOVAL SERVICES WERE RATED "EXCELLENT" OR "GOOD" BY 77 PERCENT OF RESIDENTS IN A 2014 COMMUNITY SURVEY.