

B L O O M I N G T O N BRIEFING



SEPTEMBER 2018

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LIFE IN BLOOMINGTON

This beautiful photo was a fan favorite in our Summer in Bloomington photo contest, held on the City's Facebook page. We're using it to kick off a new *Briefing* feature, Life in Bloomington, to share more about our community through residents' photos and the stories behind them.

The photographer, Charles Anderson, has been taking photos for more than 40 years. He likes sports photography, golf mostly, and taking pictures at Fort Snelling or the Minnesota Wildlife Refuge.

"This picture was one of those occasions where everything was just right—the late afternoon light was magical, the pond was dead calm. I saw the heron swoop down and land there. Everything just lined up," he said.

Want to be part of the fun? Keep an eye out for an Autumn in Bloomington contest on Facebook at blm.mn/facebook in September. If you're not a Facebook user, upload your favorite Bloomington photo, along with a bit of information about where you took it and why it's special to you, using the photo upload form at blm.mn/photos.

TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Bloomington has seen its fair share of road construction this year and more is in the works. Last spring, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) allocated more than \$200 million for long-needed work on I-35W and I-494. This is a project the City has long supported and construction is expected to begin in 2021. In the meantime, there are two large road construction projects you may notice around town.



I-35W BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS UNDERWAY

Construction on the replacement of the existing bridge over I-35W across the Minnesota River and the bridge over 106th Street began in August and will be completed in fall 2021. You can go to the MnDOT website for up-to-date project information and road closures at blm.mn/mndot35.

This MnDOT project includes reconstructing the I-35W Minnesota River bridge, adding a bicycle and pedestrian walk across the river on the new bridge, raising the grade of the freeway south of the river out of the 100-year flood plain, adding a northbound truck acceleration lane from Cliff Road to 106th Street and reconstructing the freeway bridge over 106th Street. Drivers should expect to see the 106th Street southbound entrance ramp to I-35W south closed this fall and alternating lane closures in both directions on I-35W between Cliff Road in Burnsville and 106th Street daily from 7 p.m. – 6 a.m. through September.



I-494 AND EAST BUSH LAKE ROAD

Over three weekends in July, I-494 closed to traffic at East Bush Lake Road for work to continue on the new westbound entrance ramp at the interchange. During the closures, crews set beams for the new ramp and painted them. Construction began in October 2017 and is expected to be complete in December 2018.

The interchange at East Bush Lake Road and I-494 has been without a westbound on-ramp since its construction in 1960. Since that time, development and redevelopment has occurred in the Normandale Lake area with the emergence of a number of high-rise office towers, hotels, four- and five-story office buildings, townhomes and high-rise condominiums. A westbound ramp will relieve traffic problems in the area and assist in more efficient operation of the already congested interchange at TH 100/I-494. For more information, visit blm.mn/eb1r494.

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MAYOR’S MEMO

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN BLOOMINGTON

By Mayor Gene Winstead

When you think of economic development that leads to prosperous cities, you most likely think of major employers such as factories, corporate offices, universities or health care centers. While these are essential to job growth and economic health, it is important to mention an often-overlooked sector that provides substantial economic development benefits—affordable housing.

The term affordable housing can be defined several ways. A widely accepted definition, used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other agencies, says housing is affordable when occupants spend no more than 30 percent of their annual income on it, including utility costs.

Affordable housing is an important component of all vibrant communities, and it’s more of an economic issue than a social issue. In August, the City Council adopted a Fair Housing Policy that

aims to ensure fair and equal housing opportunities for everyone in City-funded housing units and developments regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, use of public assistance, creed, familial status, national origin or ability.

This policy is a step toward better access to affordable housing for everyone in Bloomington. Affordable, quality housing in the city is something residents say needs improvement. In the 2018 National Citizen Survey™, only 52 percent of respondents rated affordable, quality housing as excellent or good.

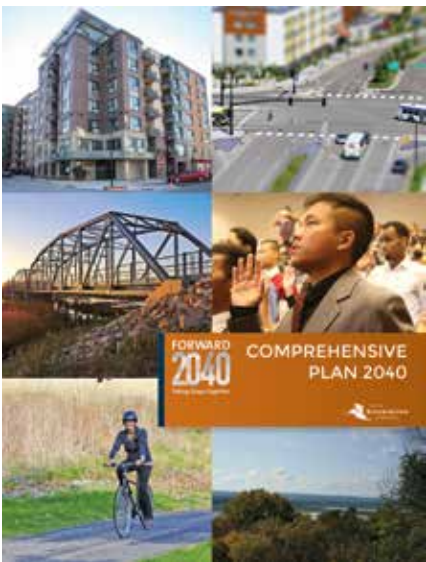
Affordable housing is good for area businesses as well as tenants and buyers. Construction of new affordable housing and programs that rehabilitate existing housing create jobs for architects, contractors and others in the construction trade. This also means more revenue for local businesses that supply building materials and related services.

Local governments also reap the benefit of increased income in the form of occupational license fees and net profits from the jobs and services being provided. Often, affordable housing is constructed on vacant, underutilized parcels because they are more cost-effective to develop. This increases the value of the property, which in turn means increased property taxes that flow to local and state governments and local school boards. This new or renovated affordable housing often increases the value of neighboring properties.

Recently, the rental market has become very competitive with more people competing for fewer apartments. This has spurred the interest of investors to purchase properties, remodel units and then lease them at a higher cost—a practice that could displace current residents. Balancing investment in these properties while limiting displacement of the existing residents is the goal.

CHECK OUT THE FORWARD 2040 PLAN

What do you think about the Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan? The draft is available online for review and comment at blm.mn/forward2040draft. This summer, City staff attended community events and met with many of the City’s advisory boards and commissions to talk about the draft plan. You can also talk to City staff in person about the plan at Heritage Days on September 15. Later this fall, public hearings will be held before the Planning Commission and City Council. Once confirmed, meeting dates and locations will be posted online at blm.mn/forward2040 and emailed to the projects E-Subscribe list. For more information or to sign up to receive updates, visit blm.mn/forward2040.



GET INVOLVED: COMMUNITY TALKS

Beginning in October, the City Council will host town hall forums to discuss topics of interest to the community. Council has a strategic plan that includes maintaining high-quality services and community amenities. To ensure the City continues to meet resident expectations, staff has been working with Council to plan for the replacement of fire stations, park buildings, playgrounds and aging City buildings as well as improvements at the Bloomington Ice Garden, Dwan and Hyland Golf Courses and the Bloomington Family Aquatic Center. Planning for a new community center to replace Creekside is also underway. Meetings are scheduled on **October 4 for District II, October 9 for District IV, October 11 for District I and October 18 for District III**. For times and locations, look for an upcoming invitation in the mail or call 952-563-8782. Find your council district online at blm.mn/districtmap.

BRIEFING

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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 (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.



No KIDDING: CODE ALLOWS PRESCRIBED GRAZING

A City ordinance adopted in June allows the use of goats for managing vegetation in natural areas, such as the Minnesota River Valley.

“The new ordinance is meant to allow goats as a management tool to control unwanted vegetation or invasive species in natural areas that are difficult to access with equipment,” Assistant Maintenance Superintendent Dave Hanson said. “Typically they’ll be used in places that are too steep to mow.”

This is the first time goats and prescribed grazing have been addressed in a City ordinance. There are specific health and welfare regulations including housing, watering and waste disposal guidelines in the ordinance. Using goats for prescribed grazing is not allowed on sites less than one acre. The ordinance is not intended to allow the raising or keeping of goats as farm or domestic animals. An annual or temporary commercial animal license is also required.

To read the ordinance, visit blm.mn/code.

APPRECIATING THE MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY

The Minnesota River Valley is one of Bloomington’s most beautiful and unique natural areas. The City-owned portion of the valley spans roughly 1,180 acres and includes wetlands, shallow lakes and flood plains.

To enhance awareness and enjoyment of the Minnesota River Valley, the City created the Minnesota River Valley Natural and Cultural Systems Plan. It aims to ensure that City-owned land in the valley is used and managed in a manner that balances resource preservation with appropriate access and use.

The plan identifies priority areas for resource enhancement based on six criteria staff and volunteers developed with the Sustainability Commission. A set of six management goals are also identified in the plan, including maintaining and enhancing existing accomplishments; reintroducing natural disturbances such as grazing, haying and prescribed burning; and providing education and awareness opportunities.

“How we manage the river valley today will determine whether we



sustain the area’s rich natural heritage, biodiversity and ecosystem services,” Sustainability Commissioner Rob Bouta said. “While this plan is specific to the river valley, many of the goals and strategies are pertinent to all City parks and open spaces.”

The draft Minnesota River Valley Natural and Cultural Systems Plan was adopted by City Council on August 6. For more information or to read the plan, visit blm.mn/EcoCulturalPlan or contact the Planning Division at 952-563-8920 or planning@BloomingtonMN.gov.

IMPROVING BLOOMINGTON PARKS

Parks and Recreation has new and improved amenities rolling out as the summer season changes into fall. Several park improvement projects will be wrapping up soon:

Sunrise Park, 9401 Bloomington Ferry Road: Reconstruction of a basketball court and two tennis courts will be complete in late September. New dual striping on the tennis courts will accommodate pickleball as well as tennis.

Westwood Park, 3490 West 109th Street: The number of pickleball courts is increasing from three to eight. They will be dedicated for pickleball only. The existing tennis court will be

repainted and striped for tennis and four additional pickleball courts. The projected completion date is Labor Day.

Valley View Playfield, 9000 Portland Avenue: New lighting is being added around six parking lots. The light installation will be completed later in the fall. A new picnic shelter is also being installed near the playground. Adult fitness with 8 – 10 pieces of equipment is being added. The basketball courts are being reconstructed and ball field improvements will be completed this fall.

Various parks will also see bleacher replacements.



CITY ENGINEER RETIRES

From the restoration of Old Cedar Avenue bridge to securing funding for phase one of the I-494 and I-35W interchange improvement, City Engineer Shelly Hanson has worked on countless projects that shaped the landscape of Bloomington in her 24 years with the City.

The diversity of the work is one of the things that attracted her to Bloomington when she started in 1991. It’s also one of the things she says she’ll miss when she retires this month after nearly 20 years leading the City’s engineering efforts.

“The diversity of the work made it very interesting, challenging and rewarding,” she said. “Some of my favorite projects were working on Penn American, the Lindau Lane Corridor, small cell wireless technology legislation and developing South Loop.”

In 2005, Hanson was recognized as the Women’s Transportation Seminar—Minnesota Chapter’s Woman of the Year. She was also the first woman to be named the City Engineer’s Association of Minnesota (CEAM) Engineer of the Year in 2015, and the first woman to serve as CEAM’s president in 2009.

Through her career, Hanson has helped advance women in the fields of Public Works and Engineering by mentoring individual women and volunteering at Girl Time, a special event at The Works Museum for girls between 5 – 12 years old.

NEW DATE FOR CREATIVE HAPPY HOUR

Join the City and Artistry for a creative experience in the park! Find food trucks, free desserts, games and art in South Loop at Creative Happy Hour on Wednesday, September 26, 5 – 7 p.m., in Bloomington Central Station Park, 8101 31st Avenue South.

Strike a pose with a 3D mural by local artist Rock Martinez or get your groove on with live salsa and dance instruction from Malamanya. “Parking Ramp Project” rehearsal also begins at 7 p.m. with more than 30 dancers in the HealthPartners parking ramp. For more information, visit blm.mn/placemaking.



ORGANICS RECYCLING
BY THE NUMBERS

Stop, drop and recycle. Think twice about your household food garbage. Composting organics is easier than ever in Bloomington with handy drop-off sites open daily at Valley View Park, 201 E 90th Street, and West Bush Lake Park, 95th Street and West Bush Lake Road.

Residents can bring their food scraps, certified compostable products and nonrecyclable paper. The numbers show the program’s growing success:

- 751 PARTICIPANTS REGISTERED
- 219 VOLUNTEER HOURS
- 59 VOLUNTEERS REGISTERED
- 38+ TYPES OF ITEMS ACCEPTED
- 2 DROP-OFF SITES (FOR HOUSEHOLDS)

Want to get involved with free organics recycling? Visit blm.mn/organics-signup to sign up.



TAKE ACTION
PROTECT AREA WATERBODIES

Are you looking for an easy way to protect your neighborhood’s natural water? The City is partnering with the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District and the Center for Global and Environmental Education at Hamline University on Bloomington’s Adopt-a-Drain program.

Residents who adopt a storm drain will be asked to report debris removal once in the fall and spring online or by returning a postcard. As a thank you, those who sign up will receive a yard sign to show they are protecting our water.

Visit Adopt-a-Drain.org to sign up or call Water Resources Specialist Steve Gurney at 952-563-4606 for more information.



BLAZING A TRAIL TO ENERGY
EFFICIENCY FOR BUSINESSES

The Bloomington Sustainability Commission and Quality Bicycle Products (QBP) got the new Best Practices Energy Tour series rolling this summer. The tours are one of 19 strategies outlined in the City’s Energy Action Plan that aim to reduce home and business energy-related emissions by 75 percent by the year 2035.

The tours are meant for Bloomington businesses to learn from one another, have easy access to program information and to celebrate energy successes.

“It’s a great way for Bloomington businesses to quickly learn about ways to save money on energy from peers,” said Quality Bicycle Products CEO and Sustainability Commissioner Steve Flagg. “It was really fun to hear other people’s perspectives and share what we have going on here at QBP.”

Thirty-five people attended the first tour to learn about QBP’s conversion to LED lighting both inside their building

and outside in parking lots, as well as their installation of rooftop solar panels. Many attendees also asked questions about QBP’s bike commuting program. The company pays employees \$3 a day if they bike to work. The incentive actually adds up to money saved for QBP, according to Flagg. He says employees who bike make fewer health insurance claims.

Two more energy tours are scheduled this fall. IKEA will host a tour of its facility on October 3 and Donaldson will host one on November 1. These tours are designed to showcase energy projects to other business owners, facility and sustainability managers and project managers. Xcel and CenterPoint will be in attendance along with representatives from the City. To receive an invitation or more information, contact Steve Flagg at sflagg@BloomingtonMN.gov.

GARBAGE AND RECYCLING SCHEDULE

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

* No pick up; pick up one day later.

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

RECYCLE WEEK

HOLIDAY*

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY
NORMANDALE LAKE PROJECT IN FULL SWING

The views at Normandale Lake are changing a bit. The Nine Mile Creek Watershed District began working to drain three feet of water from the lake in late August. The goal is for the bottom of the lake to freeze over the winter, killing invasive plant species such as curly-leaf pondweed. With curly-leaf pondweed gone, the lake will look and smell better. One reason for this is that pondweed produces high levels of phosphorous, which encourages algae growth.

Staff expects some curly-leaf pondweed to survive the freeze because it is such a hardy plant. To address the remaining curly-leaf pondweed, the watershed district will apply targeted herbicide treatments in the spring.

No trails will be completely closed off during this project. Staff also predicts that area wildlife will remain safe throughout the draw down process. The City installed fencing to steer turtles to safe crossing points before the draw down began and fish should swim into the creek as the water levels in the lake come down. For more information, visit blm.mn/normandale.





EXPLORE BLOOMINGTON’S PAST

ATTEND A LIVING HISTORY FESTIVAL

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to go back in time to the 1800s? Get a firsthand look at what life was like in Bloomington between 1800 and 1870 at River Rendezvous, Thursday, September 20, 4 – 8:30 p.m., at Pond-Dakota Mission Park, 401 East 104th Street. Admission is \$6 per person and free for children under four. Visitors will

get a feel for day-to-day life for American Indians, fur traders and early settlers through storytelling, interactive games and hands-on demonstrations. This festival has a long history of its own—it started back in 1995 as a unique way to educate students about Minnesota’s past. For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.

REMEMBERING VIETNAM VETERANS

This summer, more than 30 Bloomington veterans boarded a bus to make the trip to the state Capitol to remember fallen friends and family members at the Wall That Heals traveling display. It’s a three-quarter-scale replica of the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial in Washington D.C.

“It’s a very sad thing because I know many of the people on that wall. It’s also a very good thing to see people come out here and remember what we all—those on the wall and those that are out here viewing—went through,” Vietnam veteran and Bloomington resident David Merrill said.

Human Services arranged the trip as part of the work they are facilitating with the City’s three-year Vietnam War 50th Anniversary Commemorative Partnership. This is the second year of the three-year partnership.



SUN’S OUT, CLUBS OUT

With beautiful fall weather in full swing, Hyland Greens and Dwan golf courses are great places to spend the sunny days we have before winter weather. You can even tee up your next day at Dwan online. Using the online registration system, Dwan members can reserve tee times with their member numbers. Nonmembers can also reserve tee times online using their names and phone numbers. To schedule your next tee time, visit dwan.golf/tee. For more information or to reserve your tee time over the phone, call 952-563-8702. To reserve a tee time at Hyland Greens, call 952-563-8868.



TEEN VIDEO BOOT CAMP IS A SUCCESS

Lights, camera, video! A free Teen Video Boot Camp, the first-ever for Bloomington Community Access Television, gave participants, ages 12 – 17, a chance to study production from professional videographers. Ben Vinar of BCAT and Dietrich Nissen from the City of Edina’s SWTV showed 15 teens how to use professional video cameras and create short films. The teens divided into groups and worked together to select a genre, character and prop. Every student had the opportunity to act, direct, operate the camera and record audio. A screening for family and friends made a grand finish.

The camp earned high marks from the teens participating in the program from June 25 – 29. “I liked learning about how to film and learning about sequencing and shots,” Anjali said. “It was fun to get a taste of behind-the-scenes work on a movie.”

Three Teen Video Boot Camps were held this summer. Look for six short films (two films from each camp) on the



BCAT16 channel, YouTube channel and Facebook page. Go to blm.mn/bcatcamp for information.

BECOME A BCAT MEMBER

Interested in using the Bloomington Community Access Television studio and equipment? Become a member! Apply online at blm.mn/bcat or call Communications Specialist Ben Vinar at 952-563-4980 for more information or to get started.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

HUMAN SERVICES EVENTS

Take part in these free activities organized by Human Services.

SEPTEMBER 8 – OCTOBER 5

The Children of Immigrants art exhibit will be on display Saturday, September 8, at the Farmers Market in the east lot at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, and September 9 – October 5, inside Civic Plaza. It moves to Augsburg Library, 7100 Nicollet Avenue, Richfield October 22 – November 16 and returns to Civic Plaza December 3 – 21. The exhibit is coordinated by the Human Rights Commission.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

A naturalization ceremony will be held Friday, September 14, 2 p.m., in the Schneider Theater at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

The paper shredding event runs from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., in Bloomington Public Works northeast parking lot, 1700 West 98th Street. Bring up to two standard-sized shopping bags per car. No prior drops offs. Call 952-563-4944 for information.



BATS HAVE THEIR DAY

It’s OK to go batty at the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge, at least during the Minnesota Bat Festival. The second annual event at the Bloomington Education and Visitor Center drew more than 1,000 bat enthusiasts. Family-friendly activities gave everyone a chance to get involved and spread their bat wings or even create their own.

The City’s Creative Placemaking Commission and Artistry offered a bat-inspired make-and-take art activity with cutouts and headbands.

“Multiple partners from many agencies and organizations all came together to promote bat conservation and education,” Creative Placemaking Director Alejandra Pelinka said. “We were happy to be a part of this fun event in South Loop.”



AT YOUR SERVICE
MARKET COORDINATOR

Whether she’s reviewing market vendor applications, booking musicians, scheduling activities or promoting the market on social media, Farmers Market Coordinator Victoria Hoffman is dedicated to bringing residents fresh produce and a chance to meet local farmers every week at the Farmers Market.

Hoffman’s job largely consists of making sure vendors are approved and ready to sell produce, food products and crafts each week.

When it comes to fresh produce and local food, Hoffman is something of an expert. She has been involved in every facet of running a farmers market, starting as a vendor’s employee during college while studying organic and local food systems. Most recently she was an assistant manager for the Kingfield, Fulton and Nokomis farmers markets in Minneapolis. When it comes to her day-to-day work, Hoffman says she loves market days the most.

“It’s great to be outside and seeing people with armfuls of flowers and kids carrying around produce. It’s so fun,” she said.



FLU SHOT CLINICS

Take a big step to stay healthy this fall and winter. Get a flu shot. Public Health offers flu shots at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South, on Wednesdays, September 19, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., October 3, 5 – 6:30 p.m., and October 17, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. No appointment is necessary. Bring an insurance card or, for free shots, let the nurse know if you do not have insurance. Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. For more information, call 952-563-8900 or visit blm.mn/flu.



FRESH PRODUCE, FARMERS AND FRIENDLY FACES
ATTEND THE BLOOMINGTON FARMERS MARKET

Refresh your grocery shopping routine at the Bloomington Farmers Market Saturdays through October 20, from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m., in the east parking lot at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. The market draws thousands of visitors each week and offers a chance to meet your local farmers.

In addition to the Saturday market,

Farmers Market staff sprouted up a new crop of fun this summer. The Midweek Music and Market series ran every Wednesday from July 11 to August 15. During that time, market goers could find live music, fresh produce, craft vendors, food trucks, lawn games and more at Civic Plaza, pictured above.

“We wanted to bring in new

customers and re-energize our existing customers with this midweek market,” Farmers Market Coordinator Victoria Hoffman said. “It was a great resource for people who can’t make it to the Saturday market.”

City staff plans to offer a midweek market again in 2019. For details, recipes and more, visit the market’s Facebook page at blm.mn/fbookfarmers.

THE BRIEFING IS THE CAT’S MEOW

The pictures and articles printed in the *Briefing* can have a lasting impact on readers. While rereading a past issue recently, a resident came across a “paw-sitively” adorable photo of a kitten at the Animal Shelter that ran with an article about licensing your pets in April 2017.

The resident loved the picture so much she called in to find out where the kitten was “me-ow.” She even clipped out the picture to keep on her fridge. The kitten’s story has a happy ending, too. At the time of the photo, she was up for adoption at the animal shelter. Now she has a family to call her own.

Connecting with readers is one of the *Briefing*’s main purposes so we thought we’d share the photo one more time. Thanks for reading and for taking the time to call in!



CAR KITTY’S CUTE ENDING

In July, Bloomington Police received an unusual call for help. A motorist started her car and heard something that sounded like a kitten inside the engine compartment. BPD officers responded and after trying to free the kitten on their own, enlisted the help of Freeway Ford mechanics to ensure the kitten was removed safely. After the three-hour rescue, a Freeway Ford employee adopted the kitten. BPD posted about the call on their Twitter account with the hashtag #carkitty. Officers and commentors alike are happy car kitty will spend the rest of its nine lives in comfort.

GO, DOG, GO!

RUN FREE AT OFF-LEASH RECREATION AREAS

Every dog can have its day in an off-leash recreation area. Enjoy the many benefits of Bloomington’s dog recreation areas. Improve the health and happiness of your dog, while getting some fun exercise yourself and enjoy the opportunity to socialize with other visitors.

“Pawsome” pooch places run aplenty in Bloomington. The City has two off-leash locations for dogs.

Your dog will give a paws up to running free in the broomball rinks at Tretbaugh Park on West 90th Street and Tretbaugh Drive. Both rinks are open for leash-free dog recreation through mid-October.

For more room to roam, head over to the vast 25-acre area at Nesbitt Avenue and West 110th Street. Leafy lined hills and a three-quarter mile walking trail make for a howling good time. This off-leash area is partially fenced with an open pond. While some dogs dive in and take a swim, keep in mind the City does not test or treat pond water. A few fun facts about this off-leash spot:

- Amenities include a water fountain to keep dogs hydrated and a hose for a post-workout wash.
 - In winter, trails within the off-leash area are not maintained. People and their dogs pack down the trails.
 - Even though the land is City property, this off-leash recreation area is not a park. The City Utilities Division manages the property. It could serve as a future location of a water treatment plant.
- For information, visit blm.mn/off-nesbitt or blm.mn/off-tretb.

MEET A BLOOMINGTON FIREFIGHTER

Joe Zinniel has been a Bloomington Firefighter for two years. He serves out of Station 3.

Q: What is your day job?

A: I'm a paramedic for HealthEast Ambulance.

Q: What made you want to become a volunteer firefighter?

A: I come from a family of first responders—my dad was a volunteer firefighter and he's now the fire chief in Sleepy Eye, MN. My mom was a volunteer EMT for about 10 years. My sister is a nurse and my brother is a deputy sheriff.

Q: Did you always know you wanted to be a firefighter?

A: When I was really little, yes. I was really into it with my dad and the fire department he volunteered for. I got into it again after college and started looking for places I could get involved.

Q: What brought you to Bloomington?

A: I've lived in Bloomington for four years. I actually came here because I was interested in being a firefighter. I did some research and I saw Bloomington's volunteer department had a great reputation.

Q: What do you do for fun?

A: I love the outdoors. I do a lot of hunting and fishing. I do some woodworking. I build things like coffee tables, end tables and shelving. I got into it because I love working with different tools and it was a new way to do that.

Q: What do you like about firefighting?

A: Oh that's easy—serving the community. Even with my full-time job, no two days are the same. Using all the tools and equipment is a lot of fun, too. And, of course, the camaraderie is another benefit.



EXPLORE YOUR FIRE STATION

Get an inside look at your local fire station at the 2018 Fire Department Open House Saturday, October 13, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., at all Bloomington stations. Bring the kids to meet Sparky, enjoy activities, take a station tour, see fire equipment demonstrations and meet Bloomington firefighters. For more information, visit blm.mn/fireopen or call 952-563-4801.



JUNIOR POLICE ACADEMY PROMOTES SAFETY FOR KIDS

You're never too young to play safe and be safe. The Junior Police Academy showed kids how they can make a difference with safety in their homes and communities. The program is geared toward ages 5 – 12 and led by Crime Prevention Coordinator Katie Chase.

She and Officer Heidi Miller provided thoughtful answers and real-life stories kids could easily understand. Kids learned useful personal, home, neighborhood, school and internet safety tips they could apply to day-to-day situations. The Junior Police Academy covered how to call 911 and more.

Chase and Miller helped attendees understand what police officers do in their jobs. Kids even got a chance to sit in a police squad car, learned what's on a police tool belt, and saw and heard a siren up close. Who knows, maybe a future Bloomington police officer was in the crowd?

The program was made possible by a grant from the Bloomington Crime Preventative Association. For information visit, blm.mn/kidsbcpa.



PATHWAYS TO POLICING RECOGNIZED

The Bloomington Police Department was recently recognized for its efforts to bring more diversity to the department. The League of Minnesota Cities awarded the cities of Bloomington and St. Louis Park the 2018 City of Excellence Award at its annual conference for their joint Pathways to Policing program.

In 2017, Bloomington and St. Louis Park were experiencing a reduced number of police officer applications and saw an

opportunity to work together. What came next was a program designed to recruit more applicants and attract more people of color and nontraditional candidates. The initiative won this year's "Promoting Leadership and Career Opportunities in City Government" award.

During the 2017 legislative session, the state appropriated money to help agencies offset program costs. The City plans to hire more officers through Pathways to Policing in 2018.

PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

Preparation is key, especially when planning for emergency situations. Public Health works to build relationships with community partners, including police, fire, emergency management, and other organizations to ensure the health and safety of residents in the case of an emergency. September is Emergency Preparedness Month and a good reminder to take time to prepare.

Make a plan: Choose an emergency contact—someone outside of the area that family members can contact if they are unable to reach each other. Know local emergency numbers. Identify safe

spots in your home and escape routes for each type of disaster, such as fires or tornadoes. Choose a meeting place in case of

an emergency. And practice, practice, practice!

Build an emergency kit and include: One gallon of water per person, nonperishable food items, a manual can opener, basic utensils, a flashlight with extra batteries, a first-aid kit, a change of clothes and a blanket.

To stay informed, sign up for emergency alerts at

blm.mn/citizenalert or follow the City's website and Facebook pages.

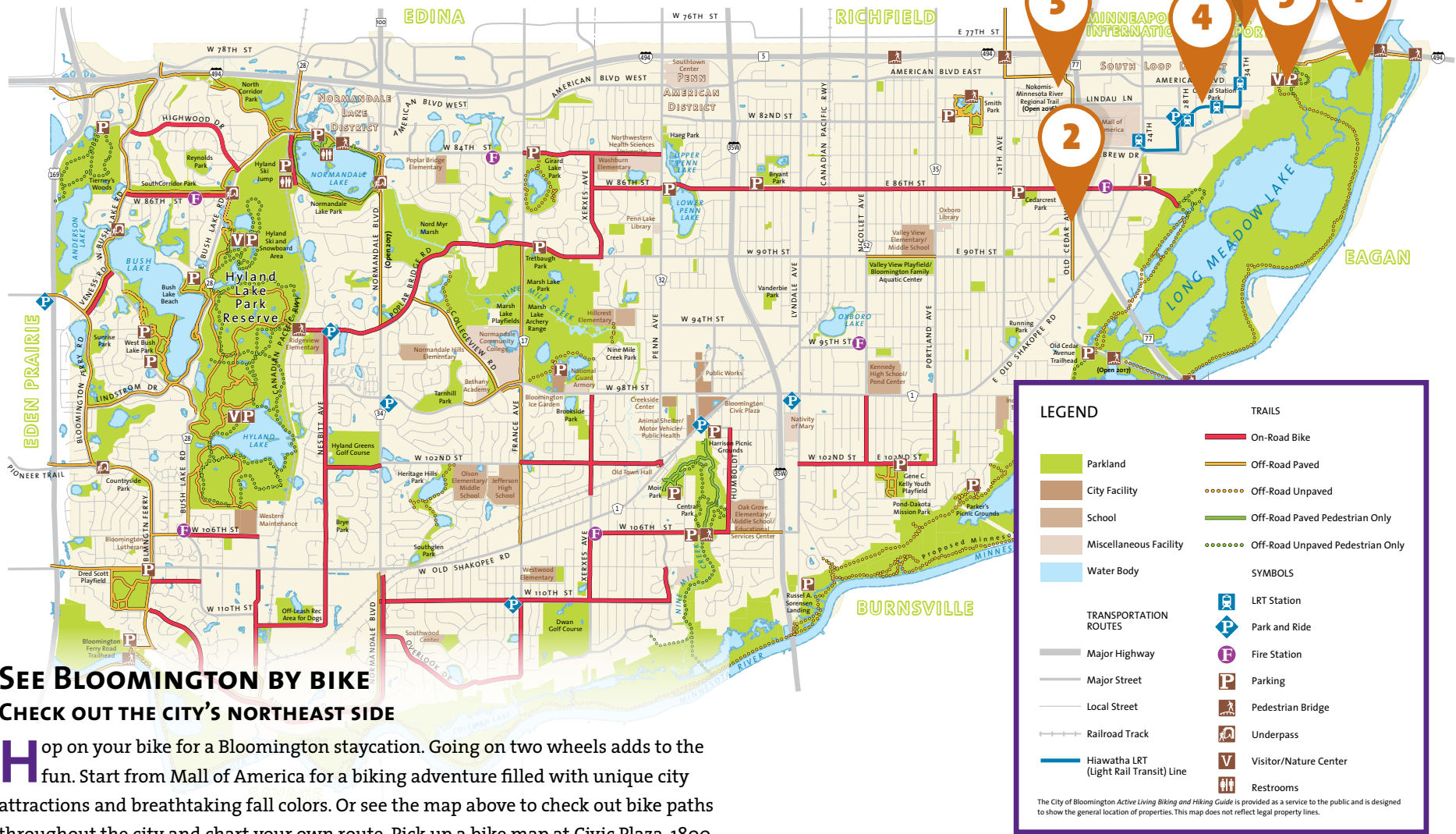
GET INVOLVED

Looking to get involved? Become a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteer. MRC is a national network of locally organized volunteers with the goal of strengthening public health emergency response efforts, building community resiliency and engaging the public. Previous emergency response knowledge is not a requirement. To become a volunteer, contact Public Health at 952-563-8900 or for more information, visit blm.mn/mrc.

Bloomington Yesterday

Back to School

Back in 1917, seven one-room school houses—Gibson (later renamed Palmer), Bush Lake, Bloomington Ferry, Poplar Bridge, Kell, Kimball and Cates—came together to become Bloomington Consolidated School District No. 142. One year later, a school for grades 1 – 12 was built on Penn Avenue South, where the Presbyterian Homes of Bloomington is today. The merger marked the beginning of secondary education and school bus transportation in Bloomington. Before the new school was built, Bloomington students who wished to continue to secondary education enrolled in Minneapolis high schools. They often traveled to class by horse and buggy or by train.



SEE BLOOMINGTON BY BIKE

CHECK OUT THE CITY'S NORTHEAST SIDE

Hop on your bike for a Bloomington staycation. Going on two wheels adds to the fun. Start from Mall of America for a biking adventure filled with unique city attractions and breathtaking fall colors. Or see the map above to check out bike paths throughout the city and chart your own route. Pick up a bike map at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, or at blm.mn/bikemap.



The northeast side of the MVNWR parking lot marks the start of a paved trail that crosses the Minnesota River, along the south side of I-494. Ample free parking makes this a popular starting point for bike rides connected to a vast network, including the Big Rivers Regional Trail and the Lilydale Trail, known for its scenic bluff views and miles of vibrant fall leaf color. From the MVNWR, bike a few miles east to the Verizon Vikings Training Camp Viking Museum, blm.mn/vikemus.



Connect through Bloomington from north to south. The new extension of the Old Cedar Avenue off-road bike trail extends from West 86th Street south to Old Shakopee Road. The final Old Cedar Avenue segment is under construction and in 2019 you will be able to get from American Boulevard to the Minnesota River, blm.mn/bike3rparks.



For a major workout, head north to Lake Nokomis. The chain of lakes trail system connects to Minnehaha Falls. Then return south through Fort Snelling State Park. Visit blm.mn/henncobike for an interactive Hennepin County bike map.



An abundance of bike racks and close proximity to light rail and bus lines makes MOA a natural transportation hub. From MOA, head east on 34th Avenue to the Crown Plaza Hotel where the Northwest Airlines History Center Museum is housed. Pros and aspiring aviators alike will enjoy the airline artifacts and exhibits.



The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and Visitors Center, blm.mn/mn-valley-r, is just a few yards east on American Boulevard. Allow time to view the exhibits at the visitor center then snap a few photos outside. The view on the south side terrace offers panoramic vistas of the Minnesota River valley. Nearby, a cluster of bird feeders attracts wild turkeys and other fine feathered friends. Walking trails stretch down the river for miles.



Watch planes take flight at the Minneapolis-St. Paul Aircraft Viewing Area, blm.mn/see-planes. Take in the sights and sounds of a busy airport hub at the end of Cargo Road and next to the FedEx Shipping Center. The viewing area is free and open to the public daily.