



BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



DECEMBER 2024



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SAFER AND STRONGER: BLOOMINGTON RECEIVES GRANT TO HIRE 18 NEW FIREFIGHTERS

The Bloomington Fire Department was awarded its second Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in September. This grant will fund the hiring of 18 additional full-time firefighters and strengthen BFD’s ability to meet the growing safety needs in Bloomington.

The SAFER grant fully covers the wages and benefits of the new firefighters for three years. The anticipated start date for the new recruits is April 1, 2025.

“The additional staffing will improve our response times and ensure that we can meet the growing needs of Bloomington residents,” said Deputy Chief Jay Forster.

The City received its first SAFER grant in 2022, which also allowed the department to hire 18 full-time firefighters. Visit FEMA’s website, [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov), for more information on the SAFER grant.

Find us online
BLOOMINGTON [MN.gov](https://www.mn.gov)



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This image shows the Toys ‘R Us and Herberger’s building that once stood at the Southtown Shopping Center at Penn Avenue South and I-494.

WHAT’S DEVELOPING: SOUTHTOWN SHOPPING CENTER

The City Council recently approved plans for the partial redevelopment of the Southtown Shopping Center site where the Herberger’s and Toys ‘R Us buildings once stood.

The approved development plans include a two-level, 120,000-square-foot Dick’s House of Sport retail building located just to the east of the existing Kohl’s store, and a complementary 18,000-square-foot outdoor athletic field on the north side along I-494.

A future development phase would include a four-story medical office building. The project will also include reconstruction of the parking areas on the eastern half of the site to ensure code compliance and to add landscaping and lighting improvements.

To improve the pedestrian experience, the plan calls for sidewalk connections through the parking lot, sidewalks along Knox Avenue north of American Boulevard, and a sidewalk connection to the existing Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit/pedestrian tunnel under I-494.

The City anticipates more redevelopment at Southtown in the future. A prerequisite for further development is addressing the sanitary sewer capacity constraints in the vicinity.

Work related to the Dick’s House of Sport and the parking lot is expected to begin this fall. Stay tuned for more updates.

BRIEFING

Volume 32, Number 12

The *Briefing*, published monthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to residents and businesses. Direct your comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer file to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3071; PH 952-563-8819; MN Relay 711; FAX 952-563-8715; Email: jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov Website: BloomingtonMN.gov

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MAYOR'S MEMO

WE'RE STILL MOVING BLOOMINGTON FORWARD STEP BY STEP

By Mayor Tim Busse

It has only been a few weeks since the 2024 election, but I want to start this column with a trip back to the 2023 election. In November of that year, Bloomington voters approved a new half-percent sales tax to provide \$155 million for the enhancement and protection of the Nine Mile Creek corridor and Moir and Central parks, construction of a new community health and wellness center and renovations to the Bloomington Ice Garden. We've made a point to provide updates on these projects each month. So here's the latest.

BLOOMINGTON ICE GARDEN

The Bloomington Ice Garden renovation began in November. Upgrades include reconfiguring Rink 3 to NHL size, improvements to ticketing, security, locker rooms, restrooms, concessions and offices, as well as mechanical, roofing and ADA accessibility upgrades. High school locker rooms, an indoor training area and a mural in the vestibule will also be added.

No interruptions to BIG operations are expected as a result of the renovation until mid-March 2025 when the facility is expected to close for construction through fall 2025.

NINE MILE CREEK CORRIDOR AND MOIR/CENTRAL PARK RENEWAL

The Nine Mile project team was busy offering a handful of public engagement events over the summer and into fall. You can see the concept plans for the project at bloomingtonforward.org/9mile. The City received a Regional Leaders and Innovators Award for this project from the Minneapolis Regional Chamber in October in the sustainability category for the planned restoration of Nine Mile Creek and prairie areas.



COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

HGA Architects and City staff are in the process of creating a draft design of the new community health and wellness center. The public is invited to review and comment on the draft design on Saturday, February 8, at the Indoor Market at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. Learn more at bloomingtonforward.org/chwc.



2025 BUDGET DECISION COMING THIS MONTH

The City Council will vote to approve the 2025 budget during its meeting on Monday, December 16. For details on how to participate in person or by phone, visit blm.mn/cc-1216 or call 952-563-8790. In September, the Council approved a preliminary 2025 property tax levy increase of 11.5% from the 2024 property tax levy. The preliminary levy can be reduced, but not increased, before final adoption.

For more information, including links to Council presentations on the budget, the notes from various budget outreach events and related Council Minute segments, visit blm.mn/budget.

A NEW LOOK FOR THE BRIEFING COMING IN 2025

The *Bloomington Briefing* will debut a bold new look in 2025 with a new full-image cover that will highlight different natural areas, amenities and things to check out around the city. The inside pages will look more like a newspaper with the same number and kind of articles and photos you know and expect. These design changes will place an even greater focus on what makes Bloomington an enduring and remarkable place where people want to be.

Want to see your photography on the cover? Submit your photo for consideration online at blm.mn/photo. If your photo is chosen for a *Briefing* cover, Communications staff will notify you and include a photo credit in the publication.



Utilities staff accepted the “Best in Glass” award for Bloomington at a conference in Duluth this fall.

DRINK UP! BLOOMINGTON TAP WATER IS THE BEST IN THE STATE

The City of Bloomington was recently awarded “Best in Glass” after a tap water taste test hosted by the Minnesota Section of the American Water Works Association. This is the third time Bloomington has been recognized for providing the best tasting tap water in the state.

In the blind taste test, tap water is served at room temperature and judges rank it on taste, color, odor and mouth feel. Seventeen other cities across the state competed at the conference in Duluth this fall. The final round came down to Bloomington, Moorhead, Owatonna and St. Peter.

Watch for the results when Bloomington, representing Minnesota, heads to Denver for the national conference and competition in June.

Flash back: At the national conference in 2016, Bloomington took first place for “Best of the Best” water nationwide. Cheers!

CITY HONORED FOR INNOVATIVE WORK

The City of Bloomington was honored during the Minneapolis Regional Chamber’s Regional Leaders and Innovators Awards ceremony in October. The Chamber recognized the Police Department’s Bloomington Community Brain Health Services in its public safety category, which pairs people in crisis with therapists, and the Nine Mile Creek Corridor project in the sustainability category.

This was the second annual Regional Leaders and Innovators Awards ceremony where municipal leaders from across the region were recognized for their commitment to the economic vitality of their respective communities.

CALL FOR EXHIBITORS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPO

The City and Bloomington Public Schools’ Early Learning Services are seeking exhibitors for the Early Childhood Expo on Saturday, April 26, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road.

If your organization offers meaningful products and/or services that support parents and caregivers of children ages five and under, we encourage you to participate. This is a great opportunity to showcase how your offerings can benefit families in our community. Proof of licensure or insurance may be requested.

Exhibitor registration forms are due by Friday, February 21, at 11:59 p.m. Nonprofit organizations can participate for free. For-profit organizations have a \$150 registration fee.

For more information or to receive the registration form, contact Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator Amanda Crombie at acrombie@bloomingtonmn.gov or 952-563-8736.



THANK YOU, VETERANS

On November 8, the Veterans Appreciation Celebration brought together Bloomington veterans, families and community members in a heartfelt tribute to military service.

Hosted at the Minnesota Masonic Heritage Center, the event was made possible by the support of the Community Outreach and Engagement Division, American Legion Post #550 and dedicated volunteers. The ceremony began with the Posting of the Flag by the Bloomington Police Honor Guard followed by the National Anthem performed by the Nativity of Mary Sunday choir. Representative Steve Elkins, Vice Chair of the Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy Committee, opened with words of gratitude, setting a respectful tone for the event.

The Veterans Appreciation Celebration was a genuine expression of community support, honoring the sacrifices of service members and reminding attendees of the enduring impact of military service.



TRAVIS BRINKMAN, NAVY 2004-PRESENT

Commander Travis D. Brinkman, a Bloomington native with nearly two decades of Navy service, delivered the keynote address at the Veterans Appreciation Celebration in November. He shared his story of dedication and gratitude for the veterans who paved the way, including his father, Duane Brinkman, a Vietnam veteran.

Note: Commander Brinkman was featured on the November Briefing veterans appreciation page and was incorrectly identified as serving in the Army.



HAVE A SAFE DRIVE: Go 25

In summer 2024, the City reduced speed limits on local streets from 30 to 25 miles per hour, unless posted otherwise.

Local streets are intended for low speed, short trips between residences and the larger roadway system. Since these streets provide direct access to homes and residences in Bloomington, they are the heart of the community and need to be safe and welcoming for pedestrians, bicyclists and cars.

The City was able to make this change to local streets after the state legislature granted cities the authority to change speed limits on roadways within their systems in 2019. Prior to that, the Department of Transportation was solely responsible for establishing speed limits on roadways in Minnesota.

Speed limits were also updated on larger roads in Bloomington except for those operated by Hennepin County. Counties were not granted the same permissions to set speed limits by the state.

Watch for these new speed limits, which are now being enforced and stay safe.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH THIS WINTER

Along with finding the perfect holiday gifts, be sure to take care of your mental well-being this winter by following these tips.

- Reach out to a friend or family member to see how they are doing. If you need to talk with someone, call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.
- Consider using an app for mindfulness. Free versions are available, or check with your health insurance provider to see if they offer discounts on any apps.
- Become grounded in gratitude. “When you’re feeling overwhelmed, it can be helpful to write down what you’re grateful for,” said Jade Burt, community health supervisor with Bloomington Public Health.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a more serious form of depression. Talk with your health care provider if you feel sad for days at a time or if you aren’t motivated to do activities you enjoy.

Learn more about SAD online at blm.mn/sad.



2025 GARBAGE AND RECYCLING CALENDAR

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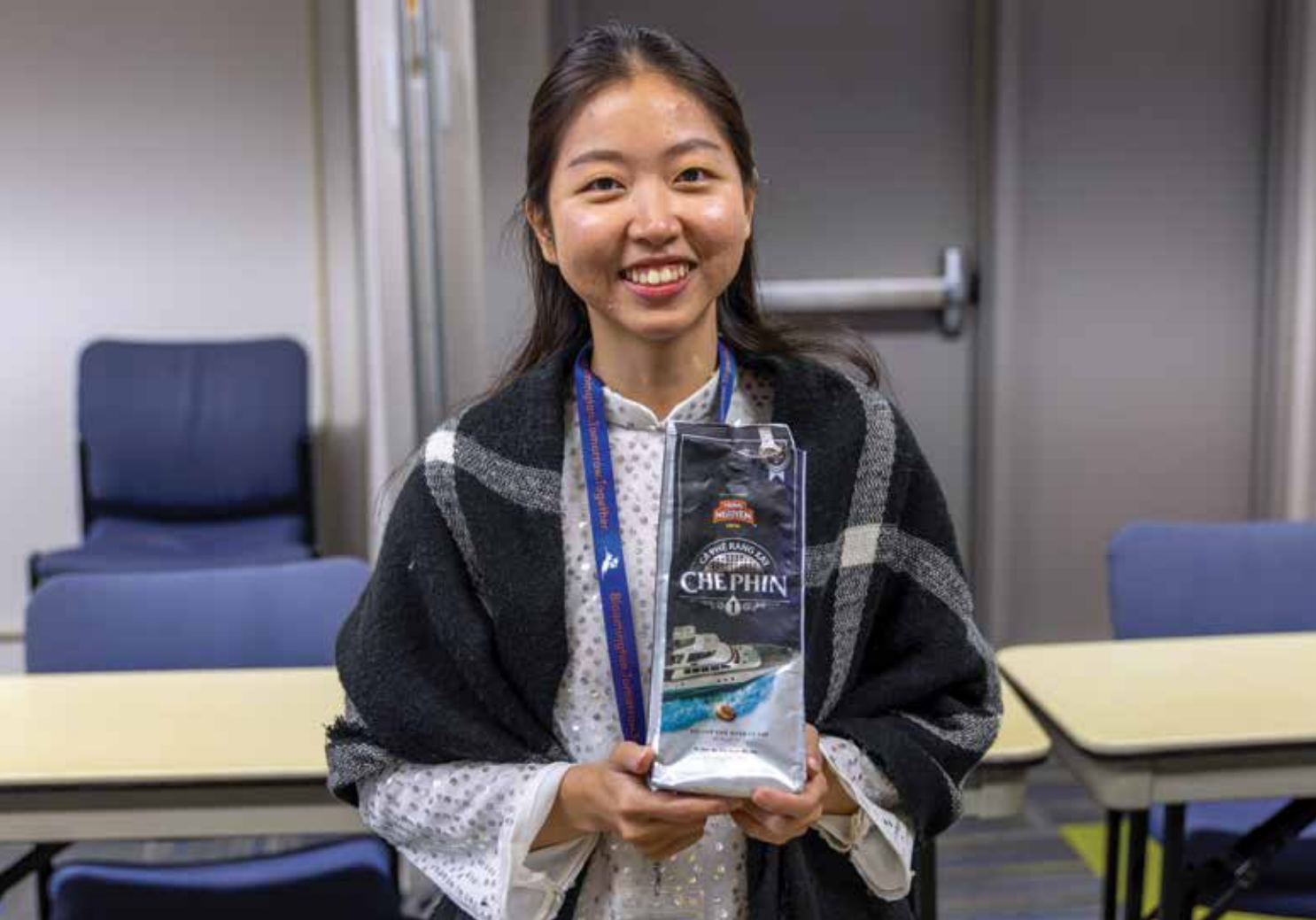
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- RECYCLE WEEK
- BETTER FUTURE'S BULKY ITEM PICKUP WEEKS
- HOLIDAY; PICKUP IS DELAYED BY ONE DAY

**CHRISTMAS TREES PICKED UP FOR A REDUCED FEE
JANUARY 6-17**

**YARD WASTE SEASON
APRIL 14-NOVEMBER 29, WEATHER PERMITTING
SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE, EXTRA CHARGES APPLY**

**NOTE: CITY-OBSERVED HOLIDAYS THAT ARE NOT ON THE CALENDAR
DO NOT DELAY COLLECTION. FOR THE FULL 2025 GARBAGE AND
RECYCLING CALENDAR, VISIT BLM.MN/2025GARBAGE.**



Giao shares a coffee blend from her home country as part of her demonstration on traditional Vietnamese coffee-making.

FROM VIETNAM TO BLOOMINGTON: GIAO'S EXPERIENCE THROUGH YSEALI FELLOWSHIP

In September, the City welcomed Giao, a participant in the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) Professional Fellows Program. Giao is a project manager at Evergreen Labs in Vietnam and spent a month with the City's solid waste team to learn about sustainability and waste management practices. Her focus back home is on recycling and reducing plastic pollution, with a particular interest in pond lining (a practice that protects water quality) and reuse and recycling.

During her time in Bloomington, Giao worked on preparing the City's recycling event and observed waste management practices, including a tour of the organic waste facility. She was able to explore different approaches to community involvement in waste management and hopes to adapt some of the strategies she observed to her work in Vietnam.

Giao also enjoyed exploring the area, biking around Bloomington and visiting the sights of Minneapolis. She was particularly impressed by Minnesota's natural water treatment methods, which she plans to advocate for in her own environmental work.

"This has been an amazing opportunity," Giao said. "I've gained new knowledge, built relationships and will take what I've learned back to help address environmental issues in Vietnam."

ATTENTION BLOOMINGTON BUSINESSES: BONUS REBATES ARE AVAILABLE FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) has partnered with the City of Bloomington to offer rebates to businesses that make energy efficiency upgrades. These rebates can cover 20% of the cost (up to \$2,500) for lighting, HVAC, and refrigeration upgrades on top of regular Xcel Energy rebates. Rebates are available on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are gone.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Schedule a free energy assessment with CEE's One-Stop Efficiency Shop.
2. Receive your report with recommendations and estimated energy savings and rebates.
3. Work with your CEE consultant to guide you through the entire project. The CEE team will complete and submit all City and Xcel Energy rebate paperwork.
4. Complete all projects by November 30, 2025, to qualify. To learn more and sign up for a free energy assessment, visit mncee.org/business.

CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION

Natural Christmas trees will be collected during the weeks of January 6-10 and 13-17. The proposed fee for 2025 of \$12.01 per tree will appear on your next utility bill. To prepare your tree for pickup, remove all decorations, wires and stands. Set out before 7 a.m. on your collection day but no earlier than the day before pickup. Keep snow or ice off the tree. No plastic, compostable or other bags should be included. For collection outside these two weeks, call Utility Billing at 952-563-8726 and schedule a bulky item pickup for a fee. Visit blm.mn/garbage for information.



2024 HOLIDAY GARBAGE AND RECYCLING SCHEDULE

The holidays can get busy, so it's easy to forget about garbage pickup days. Here is a friendly reminder that Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on a Wednesday so collection will be delayed by one day. For the full 2025 calendar, see page 4. For more information, visit blm.mn/garbage.

- RECYCLE WEEK
- HOLIDAY; PICKUP IS DELAYED BY ONE DAY
- BETTER FUTURE'S BULKY ITEM PICKUP WEEKS

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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HOLIDAY RECYCLING BASICS

From Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, food waste increases by more than 25%. That adds up to about 1,000 pounds of extra waste per household.

Be sure to recycle:

- Aluminum foil and trays (mostly clean): ball up the foil to be three inches in diameter or larger.
- Cartons: from eggnog, wine, broth and milk.
- Gift boxes: break down to recycle or save intact to use again next year.
- Paper: cards, junk mail and newspapers.
- Tins: decorative, cookie and pie, or save for reuse.

EXTRA RECYCLING?

Once you have filled your cart with recyclable materials, place overflow in paper bags and place them next to your recycling cart. Flatten and stack cardboard into a pile no larger than three feet wide and one foot tall. Bundle stacked cardboard with string or twine and place next to your cart. For more information, visit blm.mn/recycling.

DON'T WISHCYCLE

From mid-December to late January, recycling centers across the U.S. receive record amounts of cardboard shipping boxes, gift boxes and paper. These facilities need your help to keep out non-recyclables such as:

- Cellophane wrap.
- Gift bags that are laminated, coated, dyed or glittered.
- Holiday lights: Bring to the Hennepin County Drop-Off Facility, 1400 W. 96th St. for recycling.
- Plastic bags, bubble wrap, air pillows and all types of foam packaging.
- Ribbons and bows.

FOOD WASTE

Be kind to the environment this holiday season by putting your food prep scraps, leftovers and paper towels in organics recycling. If you don't participate in the City's curbside organics program, you can find an organics drop-off location listed at blm.mn/organics. For more information about how to properly dispose of items, visit blm.mn/recycling or call 952-563-8726.

WARM UP WITH LOCAL GOODS AT THE WINTER FARMERS MARKET

Looking for unique gifts and fresh produce this holiday season? Stop by Bloomington's Winter Farmers Market on Saturday, December 14, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road.

The market offers seasonal produce, baked goods, handcrafted gifts and more, all in the warmth of an indoor setting. This is the second winter market of the season, with two more indoor markets to come in the new year.

For more information, visit blm.mn/market or call 952-563-8877.

INDOOR PICKLEBALL RETURNS TO BLOOMINGTON

Indoor pickleball is now available at the indoor gym space located at 6900 W. 115th Street. Pickleball returned in mid-October and will continue through March 15, 2025. Daily entry is \$7 cash on-site with monthly and seasonal pre-purchase passes available for \$50 and \$225, respectively.

The gym will be available on weekdays. For more information on schedules and registration, visit blm.mn/adultsports.

HOMEMADE HOLIDAY GIFTS AT CREEKSIDE

The Creekside Boutique sells a selection of unique items like scarves, mittens, slippers and quilts, embroidered towels, greeting cards, cutting boards and doll dresses handmade by older adults.

Stop in Mondays-Thursdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., and Fridays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at Creekside, 9801 Penn Ave. S. Or check out special hours on Saturday, December 7, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

For information, visit blm.mn/boutique or call 952-563-4944.

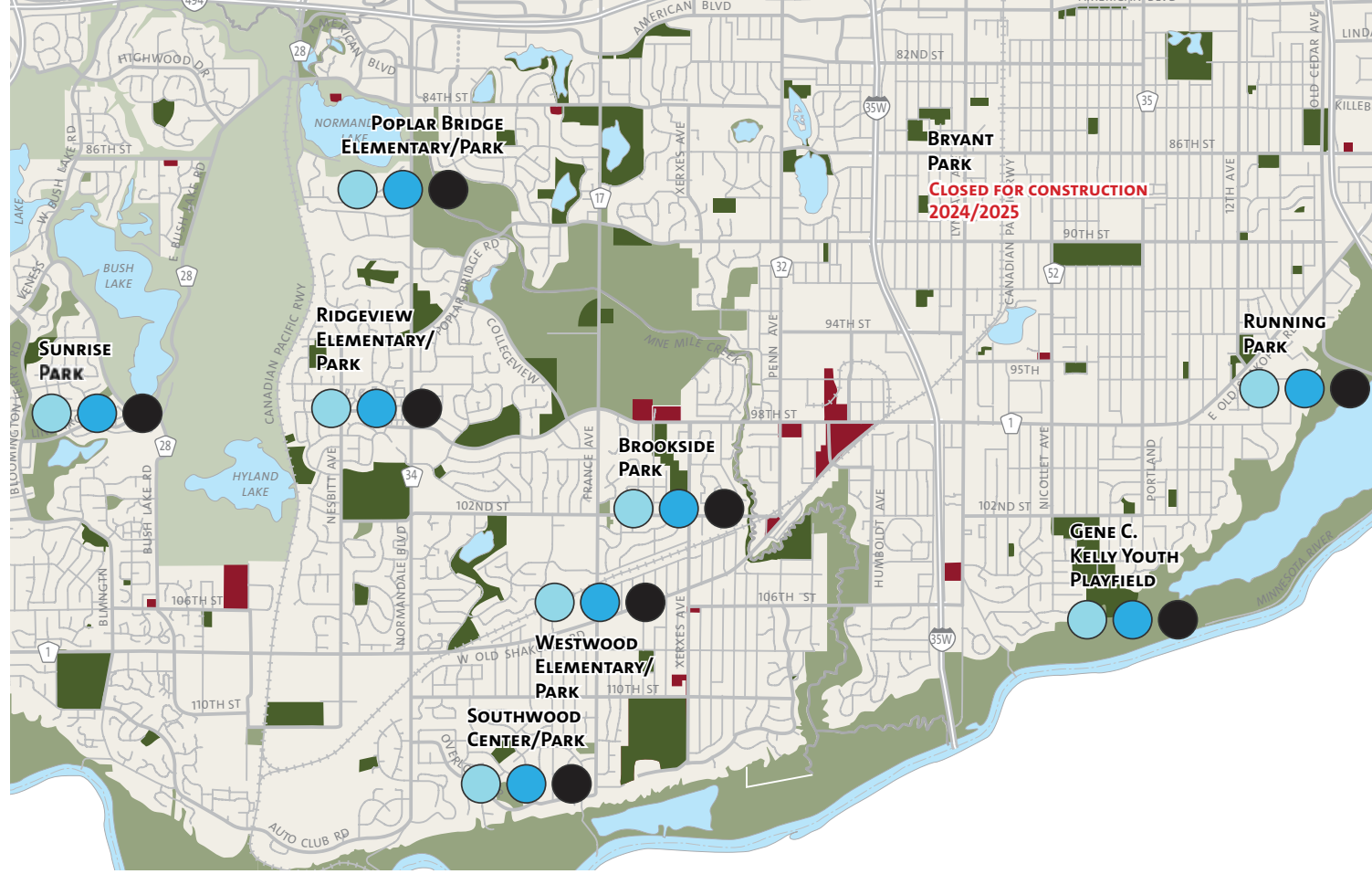
FARE FOR ALL AT CREEKSIDE OFFERS DISCOUNTED FOOD FOR EVERYONE

Bloomington Parks and Recreation is hosting its monthly Fare for All sale, Friday, December 13, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Ave. S.

Fare for All is a cooperative food buying program that offers up to 40% savings on name-brand products. There are no qualifications or income restrictions. All are welcome to purchase packages of fresh fruits and vegetables as well as frozen meat items.

Payment is by cash, credit, debit or EBT. No checks.

Visit fareforall.org for more information and other dates and locations.



● General skating ● Outdoor hockey (Running Park and Westwood Elementary/Park have two rinks.) ● Warming house

2024-2025 OUTDOOR SKATING RINKS AND WARMING HOUSES

Lace up your skates and glide into a classic winter pastime on one of Bloomington's nine outdoor skating rinks. The outdoor skating season is scheduled to run December 16-February 21, depending on weather and ice conditions. Rink lighting will operate 4:30-10 p.m. daily.

Warming houses are scheduled to be open during the following times:

- Monday-Thursday: 4-8 p.m.
- Friday: 4-9 p.m.
- Saturday: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
- Sunday: 12-8 p.m.

Warming houses will be closed December 24, December 25 and December 31, but will be open January 1. Lights will be on and people may skate during posted park hours.

For park addresses, up-to-date rink conditions, closings and schedules, visit blm.mn/rinks or call 952-563-8878 and select option 3.

SKATE BIG INTO THE NEW YEAR AT BLOOMINGTON ICE GARDEN

Celebrate New Year's Eve with an open skate at Bloomington Ice Garden, 3600 W. 98th Street, on Tuesday, December 31, 4-7 p.m. Enjoy skating to music on multiple sheets of ice and take part in a kid-friendly countdown at 6:30 p.m. Concessions will be available, and all ages are welcome. Admission is \$8 per person and includes skate rental.

Register online at blm.mn/winterfete or pay at the door.

SKATE SCHOOL WILL RELOCATE TO RICHFIELD DURING BIG RENOVATIONS

Renovations at the Bloomington Ice Garden began in October and will continue into 2025. Upgrades include reconfiguring Rink 3 to NHL size, improving ticketing, security, locker rooms, restrooms, concessions and offices, as well as mechanical, roofing and ADA accessibility upgrades. High school locker rooms and an indoor training area will also be added.

Skate School will remain at BIG for sessions 1-3 (fall, winter, early spring). Starting with session 4 (late spring) and continuing through the summer session 2025, Skate School will temporarily move to the Richfield Ice Arena at 636 E. 66th St.

Renovation plans are on display at BIG during operating hours. For updates, visit bloomingtonforward.org/big.



EXPLORE BLOOMINGTON'S WINTER LIGHTS TOUR

Brighten your nights and celebrate the season with Bloomington's third annual Winter Lights Tour. The City's Winter Lights Tour map is now available, featuring homes across the city that have been decorated for the season.

Enjoy the sights and take the tour at your own pace by visiting blm.mn/winter-lights, where you can download the map and find a list of participating addresses.



NAME:
KYLE MAITREJEAN
TITLE:
TRAINING OFFICER

MEET A POLICE OFFICER: KYLE MAITREJEAN

Maitrejean started with the Bloomington Police Department in 2015 working in patrol until 2023 at which time he moved to his current position as a training officer.

He holds degrees in criminology, sociology and law enforcement from the University of Minnesota-Duluth and Rasmussen University. Following college, Maitrejean worked in security roles and then the Burnsville Police Department for several years before coming to the BPD, his “dream agency.”

In his teenage years, Maitrejean witnessed a tragic car crash where several people lost their lives. At the time, he felt helpless. “I made the decision then to dedicate myself to a profession of service so I could help,” Maitrejean said.

“I’d be lying if I said my parents were overcome with excitement when I told them my career goals,” Maitrejean shared. “But they also saw that it was a noble, stable career path where I could help a lot of people. My wife knew from the time we met that I wanted to be a police officer, and she’s remained my biggest supporter since.”

To others considering a career with the BPD, Maitrejean said: “Do it. I know there have been uncertain and challenging times but, in my opinion, it is the most fun and rewarding job on earth.”

When off duty, Maitrejean spends time with his wife and two little boys. They enjoy anything outdoors and the summers on the lake boating and fishing.

MAITREJEAN’S SAFETY ADVICE

Put your cell phone away while driving and while out and about. It will keep you safer by being less distracted and more aware of your surroundings, and happier as well.



BLOOMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT AND VIKINGS BRING THANKSGIVING MEALS TO LOCAL FAMILIES

This Thanksgiving, the Bloomington Police Department partnered with the Minnesota Vikings to deliver 60 meals to local families in need. Each meal included a full turkey and traditional sides, helping families celebrate the holiday with a complete and nutritious meal.

Food plays a critical role in holiday celebrations, and families with limited resources may find it challenging to provide a festive meal. The BPD is grateful for their partnership with the Vikings, which made it possible for these families to enjoy a nourishing holiday meal.



NAME:
NICK HONAN
STATION:
FIRE STATION 3

MEET A FIREFIGHTER: NICK HONAN

Nick Honan came to the Bloomington Fire Department in the summer of 2021 with a bachelor’s degree and has since earned a master’s degree. He also served as a Marine infantry officer for 10 years and is a certified EMT and BLS (Basic Life Support) instructor.

After leaving the Marine Corps, Honan wanted to continue serving in some capacity and set an example for his four boys who he is raising with his wife Jenny. “It’s also an effort to have our sons keep thinking I’m cool for as long as possible,” Honan added.

With the support of his whole family, Honan continued to parent four children, hold three jobs and complete graduate school during his initial year of firefighter training. “I couldn’t have done that without a lot of help from my parents and siblings, and the incredible patience of my lovely bride,” Honan said.

“Don’t underestimate the sacrifice that your friendly neighborhood firefighters make,” Honan said. “It’s not just the occasional burning house they run into. It’s missed holidays, time away from family, their bodies breaking down and sleep deprivation. But we’ve got you, Bloomington!”

To others considering a career as a firefighter, Honan recommends doing “that which scares” you and being in good shape.

Off duty, Honan enjoys beating his sons in football and plans to continue to while he still has the size advantage.

NICK’S FIRE SAFETY ADVICE

Stop smoking indoors, people! It is safer to smoke outside from a fire prevention perspective. Many things in your home can catch on fire if they touch something hot like a cigarette or ashes.



A LOOK BACK AT THE BLOOMINGTON POLICE CITIZENS ACADEMY

The Bloomington Police Citizens Academy is an annual program held in the fall, designed to strengthen communication between officers and residents. Participants engaged in an immersive experience, touring the police department, meeting officers, going on ride-alongs and participating in pursuit training and scenario nights.

This year’s academy ran for eight weeks on Thursday evenings, with a special graduation session in October. Participants gained insight into policing, including department history, training and community outreach. The academy aims to create a partnership that enhances the safety and quality of life in Bloomington.

Questions? Contact Officer Jerry Wukawitz at 952-563-8853 or jwukawitz@BloomingtonMN.gov.

BLOOMINGTON FAITH COLLECTIVE BRINGS FAITH LEADERS TOGETHER

The Bloomington Faith Collective, launched this fall, brings local places of worship together twice a year. These meetings provide a chance to share resources, exchange ideas and receive safety and community updates from the Bloomington Police Department.

The meetings have already begun and will continue to serve as a space for leaders to connect and discuss topics relevant to their communities. If you did not receive an invitation to the last meeting and would like to be added to the contact list for future gatherings, please reach out to dalkhouja@bloomingtonmn.gov.



SNOW SAFETY ON THE ROAD AND AT HOME

Minnesota can be a winter wonderland, yet that same snow can create dangerous driving conditions. To get Bloomington residents through winter road conditions safely, snowplowing crews plow the most heavily used roads first and then move on to other roads and culs-de-sacs. After or during a snowfall, City plow operators hit the streets as early as 3 a.m. to prepare for morning traffic. Snowplowing services are provided at a cost of \$4.05 per month for an owner of a median-valued home.

Did you know? In the 2023 National Community Survey, 81% of respondents rated the City’s snow removal services as excellent or good.

WHAT’S A SNOW EMERGENCY?

A snow emergency is a declaration the City can make any time weather conditions warrant it. During a snow emergency, no parking is allowed on city streets for the following 48 hours or until the full width of the street has been plowed.

STAY INFORMED

When a snow emergency is declared, the City posts alerts on its website, social media pages, cable channel and E-Subscribe.

To receive email alerts about snow emergencies and parking restrictions, sign up for E-Subscribe alerts at blm.mn/esubscribe.



ON THE ROAD

Snowplows are massive machines weighing much more than passenger vehicles. To share the road safely, please follow these precautions:

- Allow at least 10 car lengths between you and a snowplow.
- Do not use cruise control on wet, icy roads.
- Never drive into a snow cloud created by a snowplow.
- Turn off cruise control. Turn on headlights.
- Yield to snowplows and stay alert.

BLACK ICE

Black ice is an almost totally transparent ice that can easily cause vehicle skids and crashes. It forms when the air temperature is warmer than pavement, causing moisture to freeze quickly and create ice. To help prevent accidents:

- Avoid applying brakes on ice as it may cause a vehicle to skid.
- Be attentive and keep both hands on the wheel.
- Do not use a cell phone while driving.
- Do not use cruise control.
- Keep a safe speed for the conditions, regardless of the posted speed limit.
- Keep a safe stopping distance from the vehicle ahead of you.
- Slow down on bridges, overpasses and tunnels, especially in the early morning when air temperatures rise faster than road temperatures.

OUR WATERS DESERVE A LOW-SODIUM DIET

Winter in Minnesota means snow and ice. Deicing roads, parking lots and sidewalks often means using chloride derived from salt. Salt levels are so high in the metro area that many creeks and lakes are considered unhealthy or impaired, including Nine Mile Creek. Along with environmental consequences, too much salt leads to costly damages. You can reduce deicing salt use and impact by:

- **Shoveling** walkways before snow compacts to minimize ice buildup.
- **Sanding** for traction. When temperatures fall below 15 degrees, salt doesn’t work effectively.
- **Scattering salt sparingly** with about three inches between grains of salt. More salt does not mean more melt.
- **Sweeping up leftover salt** and sand on dry pavement, and reusing as needed.
- **Storing salts properly.** City ordinances require stored salt and deicing materials to be covered and located on an impervious surface in an area that prevents discharge into the storm sewer or other water resources.



AT HOME

- Wait to clear your driveway until the full width of your street has been plowed so you only have to shovel once. While clearing streets, snowplows may inadvertently push snow from the road into driveways that have already been shoveled.
- Police enforce a parking ban during snow emergencies. To see if a snow emergency has been declared, visit the City’s website and look for an alert stripe at the top of each page, or call the Snow Emergency Hotline at 952-563-8768.
- Keeping fire hydrants clear is vital to helping firefighters protect your neighborhood from house fires. Accessible hydrants lessen the time it takes firefighters to extinguish a fire.

GARBAGE/RECYCLING BINS

- To leave room for plows if it snows on or near garbage collection day, place garbage and recycling bins behind the curb, away from the end of the driveway and off sidewalks.
- The U.S. Post Office delivers in rain, sleet and snow. Help them out by providing easy access to your mailbox. Mailboxes should be located on the left side of your driveway, not extend past the curb and be on sturdy four-by-four timber posts. The bottom of your mailbox should be at least 45 inches off the ground. If damage to turf or a mailbox occurs due to snow removal operations, call Street Maintenance at 952-563-8760.

SNOW SAFETY FOR KIDS

- Snowbanks and snow conditions can make it difficult for plow operators to see children. Keep sleds and other toys out of the street and far away from the edge of the road. Never allow children to build tunnels or snow forts near the street. The force and weight of the snow from the plows can collapse tunnels or forts and severely harm kids.