

# BLOOMINGTON BRIEFING



OCTOBER 2014



PAGE 3



PAGE 4



PAGE 6



PAGE 8

FIND US ONLINE  
BLOOMINGTONMN.gov



Presort Std  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Twin Cities, MN  
Permit  
#2293

ECRWSS  
POSTAL CUSTOMER

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON  
1800 WEST OLD SHAKOPEE ROAD  
BLOOMINGTON MN 55431-3027



## 2014 CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS: RESIDENT SATISFACTION REMAINS STRONG IN BLOOMINGTON

**B**loomington's drinking water and snow removal are two of the City's most highly rated services, according to a new survey of Bloomington residents. Citizens also continue to be highly satisfied with the quality of life in Bloomington.

This is the third year in a row that the National Citizen Survey™ was conducted in Bloomington. The survey allows cities to compare their results against up to 500 communities nationwide.

### CENTER OF EVERYTHING

Overall, at least four out of five residents gave "excellent" or "good" ratings to Bloomington's overall image, their neighborhoods as a place to live, the city as a place to raise children and the community's overall appearance.

"I love Bloomington," stated one respondent. "It's the center of everything for me. I rarely leave."

The National Citizen Survey™ was conducted by the National Research Center, an independent research firm based in Boulder, Colorado. The company randomly selected 3,000 Bloomington residents to participate in a mail survey between May 2 and June 6, 2014. A total of 986 residents completed the survey.

### HIGH SATISFACTION LEVELS

When it comes to Bloomington as a place to live, 94 percent of respondents rated the city as "excellent" or "good." Nearly nine out of ten Bloomington residents rated their overall quality of life as "excellent" or "good" and 85 percent regarded the services provided by the City as "excellent" or "good," putting Bloomington in the top 20 percent of cities nationwide.

Of eight community facets measured in the survey, the

two that garnered the highest overall marks were safety and the economy.

### MORE HIGHLIGHTS

- With an 88 percent approval rating, Bloomington's drinking water rated ninth among 265 U.S. jurisdictions surveyed nationwide. Sewer and storm drainage ranked in the top 15 percent.
- Bloomington's snow removal placed in the top 15 percent of cities with an approval rating of 77 percent.
- Ninety-seven percent of residents feel safe in their neighborhoods and 93 percent feel safe in Bloomington's commercial areas.
- Public safety services – including police, fire, crime and fire prevention – ranked in the top 25 percent of cities.
- City employees rated higher than the national benchmark for treating residents fairly and for being honest.
- Services receiving the lowest ratings were street repair and maintenance (36 percent) and travel by public transportation (47 percent).
- Bloomington's K-12 education and availability of affordable, quality child care ranked much above other cities.

### FROM DATA TO ACTION

The survey results will help guide the City Council in setting the 2015 budget. The data will also help the City assess what it is doing well and where there is room for improvement. A follow-up survey on street repair and maintenance is being sent to 3,000 households in October.

### MORE INFORMATION

For more information and the complete survey results, visit the City's website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: CITIZEN SURVEY.**



## 31ST ANNUAL NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

**W**atch video highlights from this summer's National Night Out (NNO) on the City's YouTube channel at <http://blm.mn/nn014>.

This year's NNO took place on August 5. The annual celebration is dedicated to community-building, friendship and public safety. The Neighborhood Watch Block Captains organized 325 parties this year, collecting 14,283 pounds of food and more than \$1,500 for the VEAP food shelf. Parties were visited by Bloomington's Police and Fire Departments and Allina Medical Services.

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](mailto:jhill@BloomingtonMN.gov)  
**Website: BloomingtonMN.gov**

## BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL



**Mayor**  
 Gene Winstead  
 952-888-1258 (h)  
 952-563-8782 (w)  
[gwinstead@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:gwinstead@BloomingtonMN.gov)

**Councilmember At Large**  
 Cynthia Bernis Abrams  
 952-833-0505 (h)  
[cabrams@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:cabrams@BloomingtonMN.gov)



**Councilmember At Large**  
 Tim Busse  
 952-457-7506 (c)  
[tbusse@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:tbusse@BloomingtonMN.gov)

**Councilmember District I**  
 Dwayne Lowman  
 952-479-0226 (h)  
[dlowman@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:dlowman@BloomingtonMN.gov)



**Councilmember District II**  
 Andrew Carlson  
 952-242-5658 (h)  
[acarlson@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:acarlson@BloomingtonMN.gov)

**Councilmember District III**  
 Jack Baloga  
 952-944-5194 (h)  
[jbaloga@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:jbaloga@BloomingtonMN.gov)



**Councilmember District IV**  
 Jon Oleson  
 651-208-6586 (c)  
[joleson@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:joleson@BloomingtonMN.gov)

*Elected officials presented for informational purposes.*

## COUNCILMEMBERS

[council@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:council@BloomingtonMN.gov)

## CITY MANAGER

Mark Bernhardson 952-563-8780  
[citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:citymanager@BloomingtonMN.gov)

## DIRECTORS

Larry Lee, *Community Development* 952-563-8947  
[llee@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:llee@BloomingtonMN.gov)

Diann Kirby, *Community Services* 952-563-8717  
[communityservices@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:communityservices@BloomingtonMN.gov)

Lori Economy-Scholler, *Finance* 952-563-8791  
[finance@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:finance@BloomingtonMN.gov)

Ulrie Seal, *Fire* 952-563-4801  
[fire@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:fire@BloomingtonMN.gov)

Kay McAloney, *Human Resources* 952-563-4898  
[krcaloney@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:krcaloney@BloomingtonMN.gov)

Sandra Johnson, *Legal* 952-563-4895  
[legal@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:legal@BloomingtonMN.gov)

Jeffrey Potts, *Police* 952-563-8601  
[police@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:police@BloomingtonMN.gov)

Karl Keel, *Public Works* 952-563-8731  
[publicworks@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:publicworks@BloomingtonMN.gov)

**General phone number 952-563-8700**

*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

## BLOOMINGTON: A COMMUNITY TO BE PROUD OF

By Mayor Gene Winstead

**A**s dyed-in-the-wool Minnesotans, expressing pride in our accomplishments stretches our natural behavior patterns. This past summer during the All-Star Game, Minneapolis broke out of this mold by bragging about their city. While we have chosen a different way to communicate it, we have plenty to be proud of here in Bloomington.

The National Citizen Survey recently conducted in Bloomington, *see page 1*, compares our results with resident responses in 500 other communities nationwide. Nine out of ten Bloomington residents rate their overall quality of life as "excellent" or "good" and 85 percent regarded City services as "excellent" or "good." Many of the reasons why people say they love this place is the result of years, even decades, of vision and focused implementation. Success is centered on Bloomington's people, neighborhoods, businesses and government.

Our neighborhoods are safe. We are friendly and welcoming to all that live and work here. Bloomington has high-quality recreation and open spaces for everyone as well as a variety of living options available to all.

Our businesses provide an important foundation for building community with many high-quality employment opportunities available, in addition to providing convenient and plentiful goods and services. Moreover, many businesses are active partners in the community.

Our City organization is a reflection of our community's aspirations, spending tax revenues wisely and investing our resources prudently for the benefit of all. We encourage public participation, asking our citizens for their opinions and their help. We anticipate and adapt to challenges and opportunities, planning for the future and taking action to implement those plans. We maintain and preserve public assets by protecting our environmental resources and maintaining quality public facilities.

Our civic and volunteer organizations, including Bloomington's Fire Department and the Bloomington Athletic Association, protect and serve, and enhance the lives of those who live in this community.

I am proud of these things and more, including our artfully created community, top-ranked schools, excellent businesses, range of parks, pristine water bodies, well-maintained streets and other essential and quality-of-life services. What are you most proud of?

## TOP 10 RANKED GOALS

**O**ur community vision is to build and renew the community by providing services, promoting renewal and guiding growth in an even more sustainable, fiscally sound manner.

- 1 Promote and/or provide enhanced alternative transportation options.
- 2 Be a family-friendly community.
- 3 Maintain and enhance City park and recreational assets.
- 4 Preserve and maintain our natural resources for ourselves and future generations.
- 5 Maximize desirability of residential and commercial areas.
- 6 Enhance support for members of the community as they age.
- 7 Create a community where residents and visitors are safe.
- 8 Optimize enrollment at Bloomington schools to ensure healthy class size and revenue.
- 9 Help all public and private Bloomington schools succeed.
- 10 Increase use of sustainable practices.

## COMING UP: A NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE

**T**he City of Bloomington is working to prepare a newly redesigned City website. The new site will focus on being mobile-friendly and accessible to all users, and will improve the efficiency with which staff can post and update content on the site. Staff is working closely with Electric Citizen, a Minneapolis Web design firm, to prepare the new site.

Expected to launch in early 2015, the redesigned site will have a dramatically new look and feel, incorporating best practices from the world of Web design and municipal communications. After the launch, most pages' Web addresses will change, so you'll need to update any bookmarks you use to find your favorite information on the site.

### INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT?

Usability testing helps ensure that the website delivers information and services efficiently and in a manner that's accessible to all users. Help us test the early version of the new website by volunteering for our usability testing sessions. We're particularly interested in obtaining feedback from people who can provide the perspective of a user with a disability – such as a vision or hearing impairment and dexterity limitations – that can impact online experiences.

For more information, email [website@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:website@BloomingtonMN.gov).

## CITY COMMUNICATIONS RECOGNIZED AT NATIONAL COMPETITION

**B**loomington received two awards from this year's City-County Communications and Marketing Association's (3CMA) Savvy Awards contest. The 2014 *State of the City: The Art of Creating Community* received 3CMA's highest honor – the first-place Savvy award – in the category of Special Events. The *Briefing* received a second-place Silver Circle award in the category of External Newsletters.

The Savvy Awards recognize outstanding local government achievements in communications, public-sector marketing and citizen-government relationships. 3CMA received more than 600 entries from around the country this year. Only 160 entries were honored with awards. Bloomington has captured awards in this prestigious national competition every year since 1999, for a total of 35 awards.



## TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN HOUSE

Are you concerned about traffic on local streets? The City's Traffic Management Program uses a variety of techniques to alleviate neighborhood traffic concerns. Two neighborhoods will be selected for the 2015 program. Eligible neighborhoods may request traffic management devices that may decrease traffic on their streets, reduce traffic speed and improve safety.

An open house will take place **Monday, October 20, 5 - 7 p.m.**, in the Public Works Training Room, 1700 West 98th Street. City staff will be on hand to answer questions and listen to resident concerns.

For more information, call Traffic Management Coordinator Paul Jarvis, 952-563-4548 or email at [pjarvis@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:pjarvis@BloomingtonMN.gov).

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: TRAFFIC OPEN HOUSE.**



## In the loop

This is a busy year for development in the South Loop District. Some projects around the Mall of America (MOA) are finishing up and others are getting started. There was a creative placemaking charrette early in the summer that got the creative juices flowing and generated ideas for future public artwork for the South Loop.

The "big finish" this summer was the opening of the Lindau

Lane lowering project, which began in 2011. Lindau Lane was lowered so that a plaza – which will be completed in 2015 – can be constructed above it at grade level. With that project well on its way, various projects bordering Lindau can get started. These include Marriott Townplace Suites and MOA's next phase, which includes additional retail space, underground parking and an office building.

## A MORE BIKEABLE BLOOMINGTON

In the 1950s and 60s, when Bloomington was first seeing a big boom in development, it was the age of cars. The city developed around the idea that people would be driving from place to place instead of biking or walking.

Times have changed, and Bloomington has changed with them. In 2008, the Bloomington City Council approved the Alternative Transportation Plan (ATP), which involves numerous planning and implementation projects to make Bloomington more bikeable and walkable. This means more trails for hikers and bikers, improvements to existing trails and walkways, and better connections between residents and major destinations such as schools and transit.

The City is continuing to build on the goals from the 2008 plan with an update this year to provide direction for future implementation and maintenance efforts.

"The ATP update will provide guidance for the next 10 years for making strategic investments over time in multi-modal transportation features that meet the needs of individuals and families living, working and recreating in Bloomington," Parks and Recreation Manager Randy Quale said.

A strategic investment currently in place is the implementation of the Complete Streets policy. The policy provides for planning streets that are safe and accessible for pedestrians, transit riders, bikers and drivers – all users, regardless of age or ability. One example is changing street design in favor of biking, walking and making connections to bike routes and light-rail stops.

"The City typically reviews our yearly construction program to implement Complete Streets practices as practical, such as bike lanes, bike trails, updating pedestrian crossings and safe routes to school," Civil Engineer Steve Segar said.

In July, the City held a series of focus groups with key stakeholders, conducted an online survey and held open houses to collect community input on the projects. Results so far show people favor opportunities to walk, bike and use transit in Bloomington.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: ATP.**



### CURRENT ATP PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- Construction of the Minnesota Valley State Trail from the Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge Center to the Bloomington Ferry Bridge, for which the State Legislature approved more than \$2.1 million this spring, will take place in 2016.
- Reconstruction of the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge over the next two years, reopening to cyclists and pedestrians in summer 2016.
- Finalization of Three Rivers Park District's plans for the Intercity Regional Trail, which will connect Bloomington with the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes, is planned for construction in 2015.
- Construction of the Hyland Trail, which was completed in September 2014.

## SEALCOATING: THE PATH TO A WELL-MAINTAINED STREET

When it comes to maintaining our roads, there is always work to be done. Each season brings new tasks, from snow plowing to sidewalk repair, and Street Maintenance has the work down to a science.

Each summer, one of Street Maintenance's projects is sealcoating streets, which preserves the road against cracks and potholes. It is a huge undertaking, involving three days and a large crew, but City crews know what they're doing: A circle can take 20 – 25 minutes, but a straight street can be finished in the time it takes to drive down it.

Sealcoating is just one "tool" in the Pavement Management Program toolbox for extending the life of a street. Performing the right maintenance (such as sealcoats and overlays) at the right time can extend the life of a street by 50 years. Each year, approximately 30 miles of streets are sealcoated, 7.5 miles are overlaid and 3 miles are reconstructed.

Currently, Street Maintenance Supervisor Ken Frosig is planning out the sealcoating for the next five years, taking into account road projects while making these plans.

"You don't want to sealcoat a street only to have it torn up a year later for a planned street replacement," Frosig said.

There is also plenty that can't be planned for – it's impossible to know what nature will bring; snow and ice damage roads, not to mention storms and flooding. This June's storms pushed the sealcoating date back by a week.

### THE STEPS OF SEALCOATING:

- Street sweepers clean the roads the day before sealcoating. (Think of it like painting a wall; you wouldn't paint a dirty wall.)
- Fine sand covers the manholes to keep them from being sealed, too.
- Oil is sprayed on the road. (The oil has a polymer in it to make it cure faster and helps to keep it from breaking down in high temperatures, though the actual timing of how fast it cures can depend on the sun, clouds and humidity.)
- Rocks are put down on the oil, completing the sealcoating.
- Rollers go over the rocks, pressing them into the oil.
- The next day, the street sweepers go by again to pick up the loose rock, keeping it out of the storm drains.

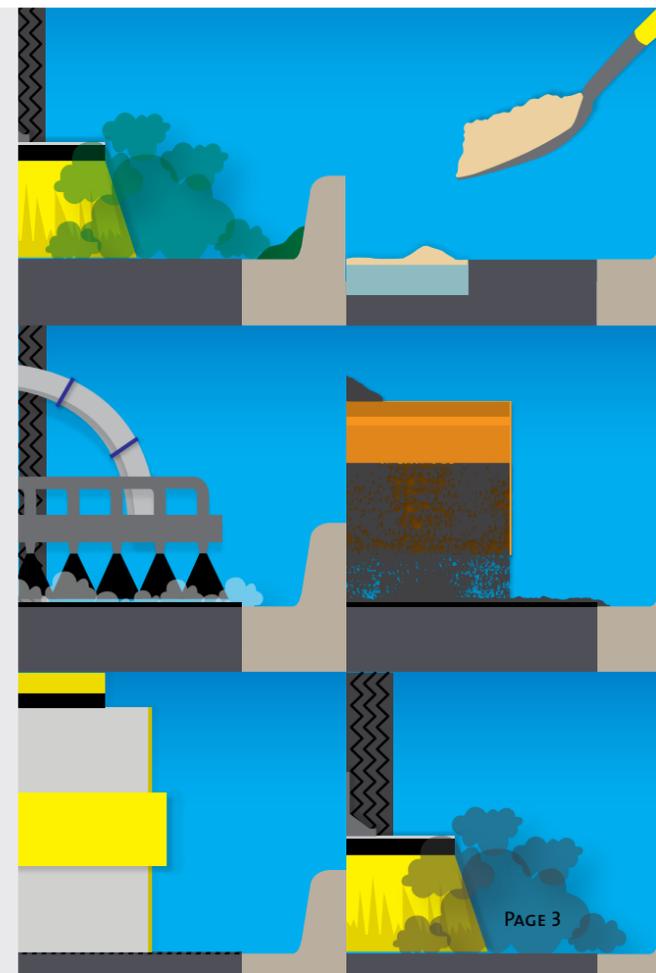




Photo courtesy of Hot Head Productions.

## KEEP THE LEAVES OUT OF THE STREETS

Did you know leaves are one of the main causes of poor water quality in the metro area? When leaves enter storm sewers, they travel into ponds and lakes, causing excess algae growth that severely impacts the health of the water. The problem is that, as they decay, leaves release nutrients that harm the delicate ecosystems in our water bodies.

Additionally, leaves block storm drains and can cause flooding in neighborhoods. As you rake or blow leaves in your yard this fall, be sure to keep them out of the street and storm drains. You can also help protect our water bodies by removing leaves and other debris from nearby storm drains.

When cleaning up, remember to use compostable bags for yard waste. Plastic bags are not accepted by garbage haulers.

For more information, call Environmental Health at 952-563-8934.

## TIME TO BUST SOME BUCKTHORN

Buckthorn is an invasive plant that grows quickly, choking out beneficial native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. Parks and Recreation and Park Maintenance are looking to team up with volunteers to clear buckthorn from Parkers Picnic Ground, 10401 Columbus Road, Saturday, October 11, 10 a.m. - noon.

If you would like to volunteer, meet at the park to receive instructions. Wear sturdy shoes, jeans, long-sleeve shirts and eye protection, and dress in layers. Some cutting and removal tools will be provided but bring a bow saw, handsaw and lopping or hand shears if you have them. Label tools with your name and phone number. Water and snacks will be provided to all volunteers.

For more information, visit the City's website or contact Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8693.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PARKS VOLUNTEER.



## BLOOMINGTON HOME THE FIRST TO RECEIVE NEW HOME ENERGY CERTIFICATE

When Ken Waletzko learned about Energy Fit Homes, he decided he could benefit from getting his home certified because it would provide him with recognition for investing in the energy efficiency of his home.

"We signed up for a visit because it seemed like a good idea to get things checked out and find out if there was anything we needed to do or if we were already in good shape," Waletzko, pictured above with Barb Waletzko, said.

It turns out his home was right on track. Waletzko had made energy efficiency a priority over the years, and his home was awarded the first Energy Fit Homes certificate.

"We have had the house for over 35 years – we built it originally – and right away made sure to put extra insulation in the attic," Waletzko said. "We also kept it in mind when we made an addition to the house."

Energy Fit Homes, Minnesota's newest home energy certificate program, provides a rating of basic home efficiency in existing homes. It focuses on energy-efficient upgrades that are cost effective to the homeowner.

A Home Energy Squad Enhanced visit is the first step to

certification. At all visits, homes receive an Energy Fitness Score that evaluates the performance and efficiency of five main areas of the home: insulation and air sealing, ventilation and combustion safety, heating system, windows and lighting, all of which improve comfort and save energy. The score rates each home from 0 – 100; the higher the score, the more energy efficient the home. A score above 95 qualifies for the Energy Fit Homes certificate.

Waletzko's home scored a 99, so the Home Energy Squad was able to qualify his home during the visit. Not only does this mean that he's saving money, Waletzko also sees another benefit.

"It will be helpful when the time comes to sell our house to show prospective buyers that the house has been certified as energy efficient," said Waletzko.

Visit [mnenergyfit.org](http://mnenergyfit.org) to learn more about Energy Fit Homes and how to get your home certified.

The Bloomington HRA co-sponsors the Home Energy Squad. For more information, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: HOME ENERGY SQUAD.

## FINAL OUTDOOR FARMERS MARKET OF THE SEASON

The Farmers Market is a weekly community gathering in which farmers, growers and producers sell their products to the public. The market is held in the east parking lot of Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, on Saturdays from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. through October 11.

On November 8 and December 13, the market moves indoors. You will find winter produce, pork products, cheese, chocolates, jams and gifts at the indoor market. In addition, the December 13 market takes place during the Bloomington Theatre and Art Center's Gifts in the Gallery show and sale (December 3 - 17), which features handmade gifts by dozens of local artists.



## GET YOUR YARD READY FOR WINTER

You've worked hard through the warmer months to create and maintain your yard. You mow, rake, weed, trim, compost, mulch, rinse and repeat. But now it's getting colder again. Here's how to prepare your yard before there's snow on the ground:

- Fertilize your lawn. Late summer and fall are the best times of year for this, as it helps the grass stay greener longer in the fall, provides the grass with nutrients that it will store until spring and reduces the likelihood of summer diseases.
- Water your yard. Try to keep the ground moist (but not soggy) during dry fall weather and into the winter.
- Use compressed air to clear out automatic sprinkler systems so that water doesn't freeze in the pipes and sprinkler heads.
- Put fall leaves in your compost bin to build up your compost pile and ensure they don't end up in the street. Leaves can also be shredded to speed up decomposition.
- Move your compost bin into at least partial sunlight. Heat aids composting, so more sunlight in winter months will keep things moving. Or, put the lid on the bin and let it go dormant in the winter; you can start adding to it again next spring.
- Spot-treat weeds such as dandelions, plantain, clover and creeping charlie with herbicides before the temperature falls below 50 degrees. Crabgrass is easier to control in the spring.





BVDC/Bigstock.com.

## SHARE IN THE FEAST, THANKSGIVING MEALS

This Thanksgiving, free meals will be served at Bloomington Covenant Church, 10150 Xerxes Avenue South, and Atonement Lutheran Church, 601 East 98th Street, **Thursday, November 27, 12:30 p.m.** Seating will begin at noon.

Register by Friday, November 21, by calling 952-563-4944. Please include which location you will be attending with your registration. Food and cash donations will be accepted.

These events are cosponsored by Bloomington Covenant Church, Atonement Lutheran Church and Good in the Hood.

## FLU SHOTS AVAILABLE AT CREEKSIDE

Human Services will be hosting a flu shot clinic at Creekside, **Wednesday, October 15, 5 - 6:30 p.m.** No appointment is necessary. Bring your insurance or Medicare card if you have coverage. (There is no charge for those unable to pay due to financial hardship.) Children 17 and under must have a parent or guardian present to receive a shot. Cosponsored by Bloomington Public Health.

## FALL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Household and Outside Maintenance for the Elderly (HOME) program is looking for Bloomington volunteers to help with raking and fall yard cleanup October 24 - November 3. Last year, the HOME program helped 234 elderly Bloomington residents. If you are interested, contact Valerie at 952-746-4046.

## COFFEE TALK: VETERANS' BENEFITS FOR HOME CARE

Are you or do you know an older adult veteran or surviving spouse of a veteran? Learn how you can use the VA's pension to pay for up to \$25,020 annually to cover home care costs. Join presenter Kaleb Void as he provides a comprehensive education on the pension, including its origin, eligibility criteria, free local resources to guide you through the claims process and more. To register, call 952-563-4944, 952-563-4933 TTY or email [reservations@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:reservations@BloomingtonMN.gov).

Event is cosponsored by Assisting Hands Home Care.

## RECOGNIZING BLOOMINGTON VETERANS

Human Services will pay tribute to Bloomington veterans and active duty service men and women at a Veterans Appreciation Breakfast, **Monday, November 10, 9 - 10:30 a.m.**, at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South. The event will include a special presentation by Vietnam veteran and author Ronald Schwerman, USAF retired. Schwerman will share his personal story of real healing, inside and out, after a rocket attack cost him both arms and one leg.

Schwerman was crippled by more than the violent explosion. Wallowing in self-pity, refusing to work toward self-reliance and medicating his fears with alcohol, he was among the first to be diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Today, Schwerman has regained his sobriety and independence.

The breakfast is complimentary for veterans and active duty service members. Guest tickets cost \$6.50 per person. To register, call 952-563-4944.

The Annual Veterans Photo Wall, *pictured above*, will also be on display at Creekside and Civic Plaza throughout the month of November. The collection grows each year, and includes more than 275 photos of men and women from all branches of service. If you would like to include a photo for the 2014 display, visit Human Services at Creekside or Civic Plaza. Your original photo will be scanned and immediately returned to you. Photos may also be submitted electronically by emailing [humanservices@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:humanservices@BloomingtonMN.gov). Please include name, branch and years of service with your photo.

## BRAIN GAMES VS. BRAIN FITNESS

Interested in protecting your brain health and having a good time doing it? Take advantage of Human Services' offer to regularly use the Dakim brain fitness program for people ages 60+ at Creekside.

Digital brain games on your phone or computer offer amusement and an ego boost when you rack up zillions of points. But Dakim's structured brain-exercise program helps improve your memory as well as protect against age-related cognitive decline. The greatest investment brings greater rewards. Stay sharp – make brain exercise a regular part of each day and have fun, too!

Call 952-563-4933 TTY or visit Creekside to schedule a demonstration and to register for this free opportunity to use Dakim's scientifically designed touch-screen program.

## 911 CELL PHONES

Human Services, in partnership with CenturyLink Pioneers, is pleased to offer free cell phones programmed to call 911 only. These phones are available to qualifying Bloomington residents. Call or visit Creekside to schedule a 30-minute appointment. You will receive a cell phone with charger and training on how to use it.

Donations of used cell phones can also be brought to Creekside. All phone types are accepted and will be refurbished for this program.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission and the social justice committee of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church are hosting an event in honor of the International Day of the Girl, **Saturday, October 11, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**, at Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, 2200 West Old Shakopee Road.

The event features a screening of the documentary *Girl Rising*, which tells the story of nine ordinary girls who demonstrate the power of education to change the world. Guest speaker and Somalia native Sherry Mohamed will share her story and the challenges faced by girls in Somalia today.

The event is free and open to the public. To register, call 952-563-4933 TTY or email [reservations@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:reservations@BloomingtonMN.gov).



Photo by Kiran Reddy, provided by GIRL RISING © 2014



## GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL FIRE STATIONS

This year's open houses take place **Saturday, October 11, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**, at all Bloomington fire stations. The theme this year is "Smoke Alarms Save Lives, Check Your Smoke Alarms Every Month." Bring the kids to meet Sparky and enjoy fun activities, station tours, fire equipment demonstrations and more. Stations will have temporary tattoos, cookies, juice, a coloring contest, and a t-shirt or backpack for kids.

### Fire station locations:

- Station 1 – 10 West 95th Street
- Station 2 – 10601 Xerxes Avenue S.
- Station 3 – 2050 East 86th Street
- Station 4 – 4201 West 84th Street
- Station 5 – 10540 Bush Lake Road
- Station 6 – 8601 Lakeview Road



## LIVE FIRE TRAINING HELPS FIREFIGHTERS PERFECT THEIR SKILLS

In July, firefighters took advantage of a City-owned house that was due to be torn down by stacking straw, cardboard and pallets in the rooms of the house after all furniture and other homey touches had been removed, and then setting fires.

"This is a great opportunity," said Assistant Chief Jay Forster. "We want to take advantage of it while we can."

Firefighters practice regularly at the South Metro Public Safety Training Facility, a collaborative effort of the Fire and Police Departments of the cities of Eden Prairie, Edina and Bloomington, and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Police Department. But when the opportunity arises to train in a real structure everyone is on board.

## PLAN AN ESCAPE. ESCAPE WITH A PLAN.

Being ready in case of a fire is important. Start with fire alarms – approximately two out of three fire deaths happen in homes that don't have working fire alarms – and an escape plan. Then, follow these tips to make sure you and your family are ready in case of an emergency:

- Make an escape plan. Draw a map of your home that shows all of the doors and windows.
- Know at least two ways out of every room. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- Have an outside meeting place that is a safe distance from the house (like a neighbors' house or the mailbox).
- Practice your escape plan at least twice a year, both at night and during the day.

- Make sure children can get out on their own in case an adult isn't able to help.
- Close the doors behind you.
- Get out and STAY out. Never go back inside the house.
- Smoke alarms are a key part of a home escape plan.

Working smoke alarms give you an early warning so you will be able to get out quickly.

- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Change the batteries twice a year at daylight savings time.
- Smoke alarms should be installed in every bedroom, outside of each sleeping area and on every level of the house.
- Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 71 percent of Americans have an escape plan, but only 47 percent have actually practiced it.



## WHAT HAPPENS TO WORN-OUT FLAGS?

Worn-out flags from Civic Plaza go to Stars for Our Troops, where the embroidered stars from the flags are put in little plastic bags along with a wallet-sized card for veterans and active service members. The card reads, "Please carry me as a reminder that you are not forgotten."

For more information, visit [StarsForOurTroops.org](http://StarsForOurTroops.org).

## SAFE HOLIDAY SHOPPING

The Bloomington Police Department reminds you to be safe this holiday season. When shopping:

- Park in well-lit spaces and as close to the store as possible. Remember to lock your car doors.
- Be mindful that packages in plain view inside your vehicle could be a target for thieves. Make sure they are out of sight and keep your receipts separate from your items.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card, if possible. Ask the clerk to check your I.D. if they don't ask for it.
- Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put your wallet in an inside coat pocket or a front pants pocket, if possible.
- Don't leave your purse unattended in a cart.
- If you take your children shopping, teach them to go to a police officer or store security guard if they get separated or lost.
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings at all times. Report suspicious activity by calling 911.



## Q&A WITH VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER DENNIS ZWASCHKA

Volunteer firefighter Dennis Zwaschka has been with the Bloomington Fire Department for five years.

**Q:** Where did you grow up?

**A:** My family moved to Bloomington from Robbinsdale in 1997. I have lived in Minnesota all of my life; I grew up on a farm near Comfrey.

**Q:** What made you decide to be a volunteer firefighter?

**A:** Volunteer firefighting is a great way to be involved in the community. Some people volunteer at church, school or other organizations that are important to them, so this is my way of giving back to the community.

**Q:** What do you do outside of firefighting?

**A:** I have a "day job" like just about every firefighter in the department. I work for a Silicon Valley software company as the director of production and customer training.

**Q:** What do you like to do in your spare time?

**A:** My wife and I enjoy watching our 16-year-old son play high school sports, entertaining at our home, traveling and scuba diving as a family. I like tinkering with anything mechanical, making furniture, occasionally flying (I have a private pilot's license), cooking and participating in BFD activities (new recruit training, maintaining equipment, etc.).

**Q:** What is your favorite part about volunteering for the BFD?

**A:** Being a member of the BFD provides many opportunities for interaction with people (both inside and outside the department) and the satisfaction of helping those in need. There is a high degree of satisfaction from helping solve a problem as part of a highly functional team.

## NEW PROGRAM USES EXTRA EYES AND EARS TO HELP DETER CRIME

Hundreds of residents are out walking their dogs every day, and now they can participate in a new crime awareness program, the Dog Walker Watch, started by the National Association of Town Watch and sponsored by the Bloomington Police Department.

Participating residents learn what to watch for and when to call 911. Then, they keep their eyes open when they're out and about walking their dogs.

"Many good leads police have to go on are from community members," said Crime Prevention Coordinator Kim Czapar. "This is another way to educate residents on what is suspicious activity and when they should call police. It's about creating more 'eyes and ears' in the community."

The first Dog Walker Watch event took place at Moir Park. Close to 50 people turned up, many with their furry companions to learn more about the program.

If you weren't able to attend the event but are interested in the Dog Walker Watch, you are still encouraged to be the eyes and ears in the community. If you see suspicious activity, report it to police immediately. For more information, contact Kim Czapar at 952-563-8808.



## THIS ONE'S FOR THE DOGS

**D**og parks offer a great way to get outside, stay active and enjoy time with your furry friends. The city is now home to two new enclosures located at Tretbaugh Park at West 90th Street and Tretbaugh Drive.

The spaces – which are used as broomball rinks in the winter – opened in fall 2013 as part of an effort to provide Bloomington dog owners with more places to go with their pets.

Parks and Recreation Assistant Manager Greg Boatman said the new plots opened after residents expressed a need for more off-leash recreation areas in addition to the large and popular dog park at 111th Street between Nesbitt and Hampshire Ave.

“Bloomington is a very pet-friendly city, with many natural areas and trails to get you and your four-legged companion moving,” Boatman said. “Tentative plans are in the works for an off-leash park in the South Loop area in the next couple of years.”

For guidelines on taking your dog to an off-leash recreation area, visit the City’s website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: OFF-LEASE HOME.**

## TRICK OR TREAT!

**I**t’s time once again for the Annual Citywide Halloween Party, sponsored by the City of Bloomington, Richfield-Bloomington Credit Union and the Bloomington Optimist Club. This year the party takes place **Friday, October 31, 6 - 8 p.m.**, at the Bloomington National Guard Armory, 3300 West 98th Street. This is a free event open to all Bloomington preschoolers through fourth graders accompanied by an adult.

Donations of nonperishable food items to the VEAP Food Shelf will be accepted. For more information, call Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877.

## BORN AGAIN JOCKS

**T**he Born Again Jocks volleyball league welcomes men 55 years and older of all skill levels to enjoy volleyball at Jefferson High School, 4001 West 102nd Street. For more information, call Don Wilkie at 952-895-6087 or Don Wagner at 952-831-4460.



## FOOTGOLF BY THE NUMBERS

**T**his summer, Hyland Greens brought a new way to play golf to Bloomington with a 9-hole footgolf course. Footgolf combines soccer and golf. It has already developed quite a following.

- 0** Soccer cleats allowed while playing footgolf
- 8** Footgolf courses in Minnesota
- \$9** Cost to play a round at Hyland Greens (\$8 for kids under 12)
- 21”** Diameter of footgolf holes
- 60** Approximate time, in minutes, to play a round
- 216** Footgolf courses in the U.S.
- 587** Rounds of footgolf played at Hyland in the opening month
- 5,764** Rounds of footgolf played from the time the course opened through August 31

## BE A NEIGHBORHOOD WARMING HOUSE VOLUNTEER

**P**arks and Recreation is looking for volunteers to help at neighborhood warming houses. As a warming house volunteer, you will open and close park shelter buildings, supervise rink activities and interact with skaters. Rinks are open mid-December through mid-February, depending on the weather. The application deadline is November 14. All potential volunteers are interviewed and screened.

Training takes place in December. For an application, visit the City’s website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: VOLUNTEER PARKS.**

## CENTER FOR THE ARTS

**L**ocated in Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, the Center for the Arts is a first-class facility housing seven arts organizations.

For tickets and exhibit information, visit [www.BTACMN.org](http://www.BTACMN.org) or call 952-563-8575. For facility rental information, call 952-563-8889.

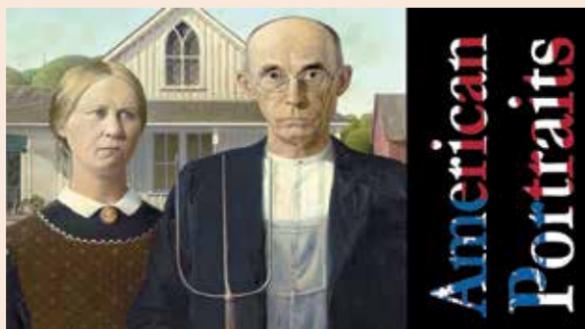
**WEBSITE KEYWORD: CENTER FOR THE ARTS.**

## SCHNEIDER THEATER



### THE NUTCRACKER

The Continental Ballet Company presents the Nutcracker Ballet, **November 29 - December 7**, with special themed performances on select nights. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$19 for seniors and students, and \$13 for children. For more information, call 952-563-8562 or visit [www.continentalballet.com](http://www.continentalballet.com).



### MEDALIST CONCERT BAND AMERICAN PORTRAITS

A tribute to Americans and Americana, featuring “Lincoln Portrait” by Aaron Copland, in which a narrator recites excerpts from President Lincoln’s letters and speeches. Among the excerpts are passages from the Gettysburg Address, which the president delivered on November 19, 1863.

**Sunday, November 16, 4 p.m.** Adults \$15, seniors/students \$12.

### ANNUAL MEMBERS’ JURIED ART EXHIBITION

**October 16 - November 28**

Each year this exhibition brings together many talented members of the Bloomington Theatre and Art Center. It is always a varied and eclectic collection, showcasing many different mediums, styles and techniques. The exhibiting artwork is selected by a prominent member of the local arts community who will also judge 13 awards, including a \$400 Best of Show Award.

The opening reception and awards ceremony is Thursday, October 16, 6 - 8 p.m.

### GIFTS IN THE GALLERY

**December 9 - 23**

Visit the Inez Greenberg Gallery in December to find unique, one-of-a-kind gifts for everyone on your shopping list. This two-week, boutique-style sale features a stunning array of items – including silk scarves, jewelry, ceramics, blown glass and much more – handmade by over 60 local artists.

Join us on Tuesday, December 9, 6 - 8 p.m., for a special “Festive Reception.” Be the first to check out the many wonderful items for sale while enjoying live holiday music, light refreshments, a drink from the cash bar and a chance to win a door prize!

### “METAMORPHOSIS”

**October 2 - November 14**

A lightning strike that destroyed many of the appliances and electronics in her home led artist Judy Anderson to the art of Assemblage and “Steampunk” creations. Anderson was curious about what the lightning did to the inner workings; one unscrewed bolt led to another, and she became hooked on combining interesting parts of one thing with altered pieces of something else.

“The piece defines itself as I work on it, developing a theme of its own,” said Anderson, “I love creating artwork that invites the viewer to think...to discover...to enjoy.”

An artist’s reception will be held October 16, 6 - 8 p.m.



# 2014 ELECTION INFORMATION

## CAST YOUR BALLOT ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

State General Election is **Tuesday, November 4**. Polling places will be open **7 a.m. - 8 p.m.**

Bloomington residents will have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote for candidates seeking election to federal, state and county offices. There are no school district or city offices on the 2014 ballot.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE?

- You may vote if all these conditions are true:
- You are at least 18 years old on Election Day.
  - You are a U.S. citizen.
  - You resided in Minnesota for 20 days immediately preceding Election Day.
  - Any felony convictions have been discharged, expired or completed.
  - You are not under court-ordered guardianship where a court has revoked your voting rights.
  - You have not been ruled legally incompetent by a court of law.

### VOTER REGISTRATION

If you aren't sure if you're registered to vote, visit the Minnesota Secretary of State's website, <http://blm.mn/registered>, which allows you to verify your voter registration status or call the Bloomington City Clerk's Office at 952-563-8729.

If you are not registered to vote, you can register at your polling place on Election Day. You will need state-approved identification. For more information, call the City Clerk's office at 952-563-8729.

### VOTING ASSISTANCE

Voting assistance is available at the polling places to accommodate people with disabilities. Ask the election judges for assistance if you need:

- Help to read or mark your ballot.
- Use of a magnifying device.
- Use of a chair while waiting in line or at the voting booth.
- Curbside voting.

All polling places are accessible with clearly marked doors and parking spaces.

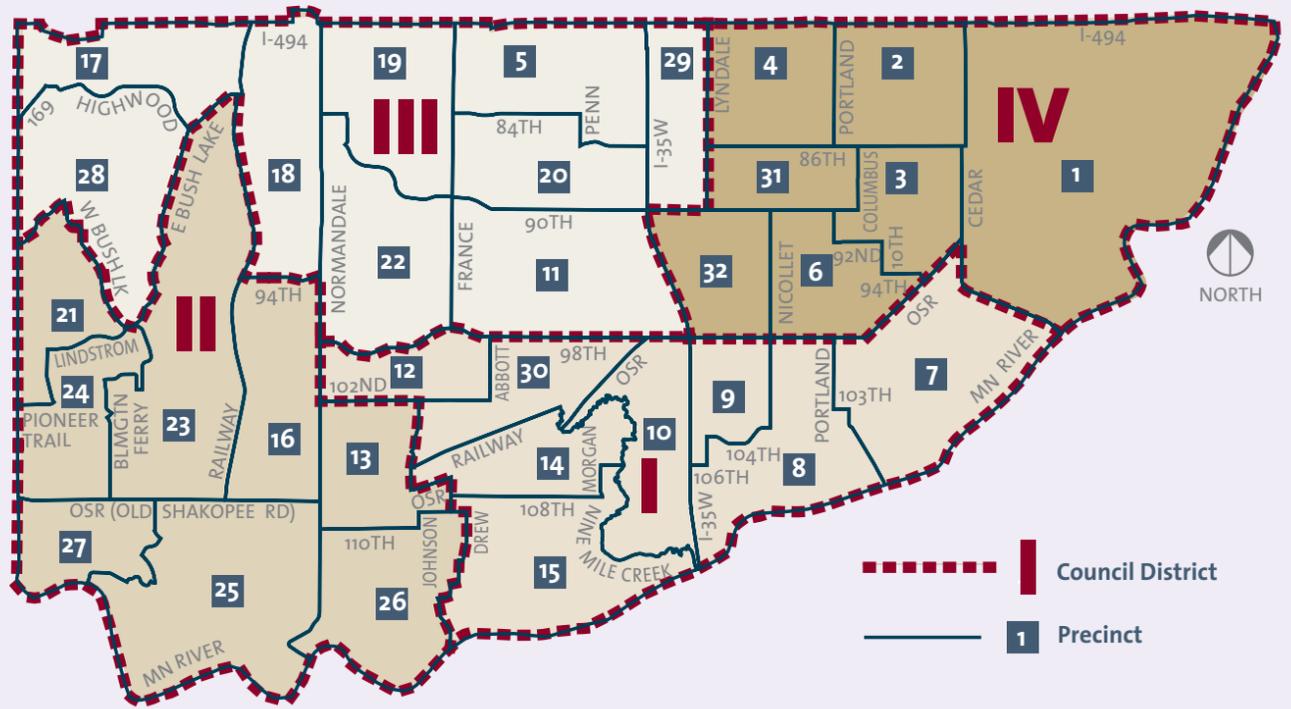
### ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Anyone is eligible to vote by absentee ballot. Applications for absentee ballots are available at Civic Plaza or on the City's website. Civic Plaza will be open additional hours for absentee voting on Saturdays, October 25 and November 1, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Check the status of your absentee ballot through the Secretary of State's website at <http://blm.mn/myballot>.

View sample ballots by visiting the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: **SAMPLE BALLOT.**



## 2014 BLOOMINGTON POLLING PLACES

POLLS ARE OPEN FROM 7 A.M. TO 8 P.M. ON ELECTION DAY.

Precinct/Polling location	Entrance/Parking	Precinct/Polling location	Entrance/Parking
1 Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center 3815 American Boulevard East	West entrance Visitor lot (W)	21 Hyland Visitors Center 10145 Bush Lake Road	West entrance West lot
2 Portland Avenue Methodist Church 8000 Portland Avenue South	Main entrance West lot	22 St. Michael's Lutheran Church 9201 Normandale Boulevard	Main entrance (E) Southeast lot
3 Cedar Valley Church 8600 Bloomington Avenue	East entrance Door 1 South lot	23 Community of the Cross Lutheran Church 10701 Bloomington Ferry Road	Main entrance (N) North lot
4 Unity South Church 7950 1st Avenue South	Main entrance South lot	24 Bloomington Lutheran School 10600 Bloomington Ferry Road	Main entrance (S) South lot Disabled: East side
5 Southtown Baptist Church 2600 West 82nd Street	Main entrance (W) Northwest lot	25 Bethany Missionary Church 6900 Auto Club Road	West entrance West and North lots
6 Bloomington Lutheran Church 9350 Portland Avenue South	Main entrance North lot	26 Transfiguration Lutheran Church 11000 France Avenue South	Main entrance (W) West lot
7 Atonement Lutheran Church 601 East Old Shakopee Road	Southwest entrance South lot	27 Bethany Missionary Gymnasium 6900 Auto Club Road	Main entrance South lot
8 Riverside Reformed Church 10201 Nicollet Avenue South	Southeast entrance East lot	28 Bloomington Fire Station #6 8601 Lakeview Road	Main entrance North lot and street
9 Nativity of Mary Church 9900 Lyndale Ave South (located in new building)	Main entrance Door 9 South lot	29 Christ the King Lutheran Church 8600 Fremont Avenue South	Southwest entrance Southwest lot
10 St. Luke's Lutheran Church 1701 West Old Shakopee Road	Northeast entrance North lot	30 Oak Grove Presbyterian Church 2200 West Old Shakopee Road	Main entrance Northeast lot
11 Bloomington Nat'l. Guard Armory 3300 West 98th Street	Main entrance (W) West lot	31 St. Bonaventure Catholic Church 901 East 90th Street (Social Hall)	Main entrance East lot
12 Crosspoint Church 9801 France Avenue South	Main entrance (E) East lot	32 Oxboro Evangelical Free Church 9431 Nicollet Avenue South	North entrance North lot
13 Hubert Olson Elementary School 4501 West 102nd Street	Main entr. (NW) West lot Disabled: front driveway		
14 Mount Hope Lutheran Church 3601 West Old Shakopee Road	Main entrance (S) South lot		
15 Westwood Elementary School 3701 West 108th Street	Main entrance (N) West lot		
16 Normandale Hylands United Methodist Church 9920 Normandale Boulevard South	Northeast entrance (Left doors) North lot		
17 Peace Lutheran Church 8600 East Bush Lake Road	Main entrance North lot		
18 The Church of St. Edward's 9401 Nesbitt Avenue South	SW entrance Upper level, SW lot		
19 St. Stephen Lutheran Church 8400 France Avenue South	Main entrance (W) West lot		
20 Washburn Elementary School 8401 Xerxes Avenue South	Main entrance Northeast lot		

### POLLING PLACES

Election Day voters must vote at the polling place assigned to their legal residence, so be sure to verify your polling location beforehand.

See the map above, or visit <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us>. You can also find your polling place on the City's website, keyword: Polling place.



VOTING INFORMATION: 952-563-8729; BLOOMINGTONMN.GOV, KEYWORD: VOTING.