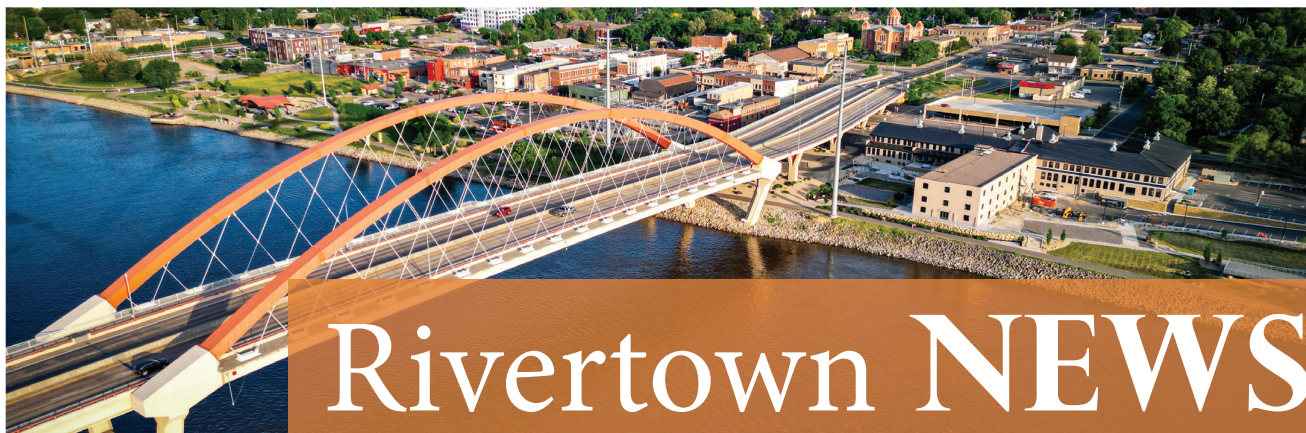




Rivertown NEWS

Issue 03 | Fall 2026

ELECTION SEASON IS HERE: BE READY TO VOTE THIS FALL

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Hastings residents will vote for federal, state, county, school district, and local offices.

This year's municipal election includes:

- Mayor
- Two At-Large City Council seats

Make a Plan to Vote

Before Election Day, residents are encouraged to:

- Verify or update their voter registration
- Confirm their polling location
- Review their sample ballot
- Learn about absentee and early voting options if they are unable to vote on Election Day

2027 BUDGET

Planning for the 2027 City budget is underway. The City of Hastings values resident participation in the budget process. See the budget process timeline below and view City Council documents for meeting times, agendas and packets at www.hastingsmn.gov.

The City's budget is structured to provide quality public services to residents and businesses. The budget process follows a timetable established by state law, and the City uses an open and public process to adopt its annual budget. The process typically follows this timeline:

- June: Departments prepare budget requests; City Council Workshop is held to discuss priorities
- July: Department budgets reviewed by City Administrator
- August: Finance Committee and City Council review budget requests
- September: Council adopts preliminary budget and tax levy
- November: Proposed property tax statements are mailed and list the dates of budget hearings of the taxing districts
- December: Council reviews the budget at a public Truth in Taxation meeting and adopts final budget and tax levy



CITY RECEIVES 'CLEAN' AUDIT OPINION

The City of Hastings has received an unmodified, or "clean," opinion on its 2025 Annual Financial Report from BerganKDV, the City's independent auditing firm. This is the highest level of assurance an auditor can provide, confirming that the City's financial statements are accurate, complete, and in accordance with accounting standards. The clean audit reflects the City's commitment to responsible financial management and transparency.

In 2025, the City successfully completed two federal single audits after receiving federal grant funding that exceeded \$1 million. These audits help ensure federal funds are used appropriately and in compliance with program requirements.

One audit covered the City's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, which was fully spent in 2025. The

\$2.5 million award was primarily used to restore and repair the historic City Hall building, with approximately \$1.3 million invested during the final year of the project.

The second audit focused on federal funding received through the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority for the first of the City's three planned water treatment plants. Because additional federal funding will support future water treatment projects, similar audits are expected each year until all three facilities are complete.

The good news is that both audits found no compliance issues, demonstrating the City's continued commitment to responsible stewardship of public funds.



2026 CONSTRUCTION SEASON RECAP

From streets and utilities to trails and public facilities, the City of Hastings continues to invest in infrastructure that keeps the community safe, connected, and prepared for the future. Throughout the 2026 construction season, crews have been working on projects that improve transportation, maintain essential public services, and enhance quality of life for residents.

This year's work includes neighborhood street improvements, ongoing planning for the Highway 61 Reconstruction Project, water infrastructure upgrades, and continued investment in facilities that support the City's long-term needs. While construction can bring temporary inconveniences, these projects are designed to provide lasting benefits by improving safety, reliability, accessibility, and efficiency throughout the community. Many of these improvements are part of the City's long-range Strategic Priorities, which prioritizes projects based on infrastructure needs, public safety, available funding, and future community growth. By planning ahead and making strategic investments, Hastings is working to maintain the high level of service residents expect while preparing for the future.

As projects continue into the fall, residents are encouraged to stay informed through the City's website, social media channels, and project updates.

HIGHWAY 61 PROJECT UPDATE

Planning continues for the future reconstruction of Highway 61 through Hastings, with a focus on improving safety, mobility, and long-term reliability for everyone who travels the corridor.

The project includes new concrete pavement from 3rd Street to Hwy 316 and new blacktop pavement from Hwy 316 to 36th Street. Planned improvements also include full-size roundabouts at Hwy 316 and 36th Street, a new traffic signal at 18th Street, upgraded sidewalks and trails, safer pedestrian crossings to better connect neighborhoods on both sides of Hwy 61, a new pedestrian bridge over the Vermillion River, public utility and drainage improvements, accessibility upgrades, and replacement of the Todd Field retaining wall.

Safety is the primary driver behind the project. This section of Hwy 61 currently experiences a crash rate of 3.9 crashes per million vehicle miles traveled—more than twice the average for similar highways, which is 1.8 crashes per million vehicle miles traveled. A significant contributor to these crashes is the large number of driveways and access points connecting directly to the highway. The project will reduce these access points and eliminate several left turns onto Hwy 61, helping to decrease conflict points and improve safety. New roundabouts, dedicated turn lanes, and improved traffic signal timing are also expected to reduce delays while making travel more predictable.

The improvements are also designed to support future traffic demands. Without these changes, southbound travel times during the afternoon peak period are projected to become more than four times longer than they are today. With the planned improvements in place, travel times are expected to remain close to current levels while providing a safer and more accessible corridor for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

The project is in the design phase as planning continues toward future construction. Additional updates will be shared with the community as the project progresses.

Construction is anticipated in 2028 and will continue in 2029. For more information, visit hastingsmn.gov/hwy61



The roof being installed on the Central Water Treatment Plant in July.

PFAS WATER UPDATE

Hastings continues work to address PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals,” in the city’s drinking water. New federal drinking water standards require the city to reduce PFAS levels, and Hastings is taking action to ensure residents continue to receive safe, reliable drinking water.

To meet these standards, the City will construct three new water treatment plants that will remove PFAS and nitrates from the municipal water supply. Construction will be completed in phases through 2028, allowing the City to meet the federal compliance deadline in early 2029.

What are PFAS?

PFAS are a group of human-made chemicals that have been used in a variety of consumer products and industrial processes for decades. Because they break down very slowly, they are often referred to as “forever chemicals.”

Why is the City building new treatment plants?

Recent federal regulations require lower PFAS levels in drinking water than were previously allowed. New treatment facilities are the most effective long-term solution for meeting these standards.

How much will the project cost?

The three treatment plants are estimated to cost approximately \$70.3 million in total, making this one of the largest infrastructure projects in Hastings’ history.

How is the City helping reduce costs?

The City has secured grant funding for planning and design and continues to

pursue additional state and federal funding opportunities to help offset project costs and lessen the impact on utility ratepayers. To date, the following funding assistance has been confirmed:

- \$3.2 million Planning and Design Grant
- Estimated \$15 million from the 3M Settlement Funds for treatment of Well No. 5
- \$5 million from the State’s Emerging Contaminants Funds
- \$17.5 million in the 2026 Legislative Session in State Bonding

Staying Informed

The City remains committed to providing regular updates as planning, design, and construction continue. Residents can find project updates, water quality information, frequently asked questions, city council presentations, and additional resources by visiting www.hastingsmn.gov/PFAS.

FIRE DEPARTMENT



E-BATTERY

As electric vehicles become more common, the Hastings Fire Department is staying prepared through specialized training on electric vehicle and battery-related emergencies. This ongoing training ensures firefighters have the skills and knowledge needed to respond safely and protect the community.



ROPE RESCUE

Hastings firefighters participated in Dakota County Special Operations Team rope rescue training to strengthen their skills and preparedness for emergencies in areas where technical rope rescue techniques may be needed.



WATER RESCUE

Hastings firefighters participate in hands-on water rescue training to strengthen their skills in responding to emergencies on rivers and other waterways. Regular training helps ensure crews are prepared to perform safe, effective rescues when every second counts.

LITHIUM-ION BATTERY SAFETY

Lithium-ion batteries power many of the devices we use every day, including e-bikes, e-scooters, power tools, laptops, cell phones, and cordless yard equipment. While these batteries are generally safe, they can pose a serious fire risk if they are damaged, improperly charged, or used with incompatible equipment.

How to Stay Safe

- Use the manufacturer's charger. Always use the charger designed for your device. Using the wrong charger can damage the battery and increase the risk of fire.
- Charge in a safe location. Charge batteries on a hard, flat surface away from flammable materials. Avoid charging on beds, couches, or inside garages near combustible items.
- Never leave batteries charging unattended. If possible, unplug the charger once the battery is fully charged.
- Inspect batteries regularly. Stop using a battery if it is swollen, leaking, damaged, has an unusual odor, or becomes excessively hot while charging or in use.
- Store batteries properly. Keep batteries in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight and extreme temperatures.
- Recycle batteries safely. Never place lithium-ion batteries in your household trash or recycling cart. Take them to a designated battery recycling or household hazardous waste collection site.

In Case of a Battery Fire

If a lithium-ion battery begins to smoke, spark, or catch fire, move away from the area immediately and call 911. Battery fires can spread quickly and may reignite even after they appear to be extinguished.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Open House

The Fire Department Open House will take place on Tuesday, October 6, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hastings Fire Department. Meet firefighters and EMS providers, explore emergency equipment, and enjoy live demonstrations on kitchen fire safety and auto extrication. Join us for a fun, educational, and family-friendly evening!

Booya

Join the Hastings Fire Foundation for its 85th Annual Booya on Saturday, September 12, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church. Take-home Booya sales begin at 10a.m. with dine-in service starting at 11 a.m. This annual fundraiser supports scholarships, Hastings Family Service, and other local community programs. Come enjoy a great meal while supporting a longtime Hastings tradition.

POLICE DEPARTMENT



E-BIKES IN HASTINGS: KNOW THE RULES BEFORE YOU RIDE

Electric bikes (e-bikes) have become an increasingly popular way to travel around Hastings. Whether you're commuting, exploring the parks and trails, or simply enjoying a ride through the community, e-bikes offer a fun and efficient transportation option. As their popularity continues to grow, it's important for riders and parents to understand the local rules that help keep everyone safe.

In Hastings, riders must be at least 15 years old to operate an e-bike. A legal e-bike has two or three wheels, fully functional pedals, an electric motor with a maximum output of 750 watts, and a top assisted speed of 28 mph or less. Devices that exceed these limits may be classified as mopeds or motorcycles and are subject to different laws and licensing requirements.

E-bikes may be ridden on city streets and park trails, but riders must follow the same traffic laws as traditional bicyclists. On city trails and in parks, the maximum speed is 15 mph. Riders should travel as close as safely possible to the right side of the roadway, always yield to pedestrians, and use proper front and rear lights when riding after dark. Riding on sidewalks is not permitted within Hastings and carrying

more than one person on an e-bike is illegal. While helmets are not required for adult e-bike riders, they are strongly recommended for every ride.

Parents are encouraged to make sure the e-bike their child (age 15 or older) is riding meets Minnesota's legal definition of an e-bike. Some products marketed as "e-bikes" are actually electric motorcycles or mopeds, which require different licenses, registration, and insurance to operate legally. Knowing the difference can help prevent unsafe riding and avoid potential citations.

"E-bikes are becoming more popular in our community, and with that comes the responsibility to ride safely.

Following the rules, wearing a helmet, and respecting others on our streets and trails helps keep everyone safe."

— Police Chief Linscheid

understanding the law, we can all help keep our community safe while enjoying the many benefits of e-bikes.

To learn more about e-bike classifications, local regulations, and safe riding practices, visit hastingsmn.gov/e-bikes

FALL DRIVING SAFETY: SLOW DOWN AND STAY ALERT

As the seasons change, so do driving conditions. Shorter days, changing weather, increased school traffic, and more wildlife activity can make fall a challenging time to be on the road.

Watch for children

School is back in session, so be extra alert in school zones, near bus stops, and around parks and neighborhoods. Always stop for school buses when required and watch for children crossing the street.

Be prepared for changing weather

Rain, fog, frost, and fallen leaves can create slippery roads and reduce visibility. Slow down, increase your following distance, and use your headlights when conditions warrant.

Avoid distractions

Keep your attention on the road by putting away your phone and limiting other distractions while driving.

Share the road

Be mindful of pedestrians, bicyclists, and especially people using e-bikes, especially on neighborhood streets and at intersections. Give everyone plenty of space and always yield when required.



HASTINGS CIVIC ARENA

The Hastings Civic Arena is excited to welcome the community back for another great skating season!

The West Rink is now open and available for ice rentals. The McGree East Rink will open for the hockey season on October 19th.

Public skating has resumed and everyone is welcome!

- Wednesdays: 1:00–2:30 p.m.
- Fridays: 10:00–11:30 a.m.
- Sundays: Beginning October 25, 4:15–5:45 p.m.

The Hastings Hockey Association will kick off its fall clinics in September, with team tryouts taking place in October. Interested in learning to skate? Visit River Blades Skating School at www.riverbladesskating.com for lesson information.

Throughout the season, the arena will also offer freestyle and stick & puck sessions at various times.

Planning a birthday party, team practice, or special event? Ice rentals are available throughout the season.

To view the arena schedule, reserve ice time, or learn more about programs and events, visit www.hastingsmn.gov/arena, call 651-480-6195, or email conken@hastingsmn.gov.

PARKS & RECREATION

As summer transitions into fall, the Hastings Parks & Recreation Department continues to offer opportunities for residents of all ages to get outside, connect with the community, and enjoy local events. Mark your calendar and join us for these upcoming activities!

Storytime in the Park: 10 a.m.

Wednesday, August 19 | Levee Park
Wednesday, September 16 | Levee Park

Music + Market: 6 p.m.

Thursday, August 20 | Glycerin Tears
Thursday, August 27 | Sir Psycho,
Red Hot Chili Peppers Tribute

Comedy in the Park: 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, August 25: C. Wili Myles
Tuesday, September 15: Comic
Ventriloquist

Movie in the Park: 7:30 p.m.

Friday, September 11 | Levee Park
Lilo & Stitch

Paws in the Park: 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, September 24 | Rivertown
Dog Park

Halloween Party: 6:00 p.m.

Friday, October 30 | Hastings High
School

Thank You, Sponsors!

The City of Hastings Parks & Recreation Department extends a heartfelt thank you to The Ruth & George Doffing Charitable Fund for its generous support of the Music + Market series. Their sponsorship helps bring outstanding live music to Levee Park each summer while keeping the events free and accessible for everyone. Thanks to their continued investment in our community, residents and visitors can enjoy memorable evenings filled with music, local shopping, great food, and family-friendly activities.

The Parks & Recreation Department also thanks SC Toys for sponsoring the Rec+Art+Police summer series, along with valued community partners and donors including Country Financial, Hastings Lions Club, Hastings Family Service, Hastings Community Education, and the Hastings Prescott Arts Council.

Their support helps provide free activities, entertainment, meals, and educational experiences that make these programs a success for Hastings families year after year.



Hastings Adult Pickup Soccer League. Interested in playing or looking for other adult leagues? Visit the City's website at hastingsmn.gov/athletics

PUTTING FOOD SCRAPS BACK TO WORK

An easy and free way to reduce your trash is by joining Dakota County's food scraps drop-off program. Just by dropping off food scraps like spoiled produce, vegetable cuttings, coffee grounds or bones, a typical household can divert almost one-third of its trash. Plus, the food scraps that are dropped off serve a greater purpose—they are used to make compost. Compost is a soil-like material that is packed with nutrients that can help plants grow healthy and strong.

There are 11 organics drop-off sites located throughout the county — in Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, Farmington, Hastings, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Mendota Heights, Rosemount (two) and West St. Paul. Each site has free BPI-

certified compostable bags.

Sign up and get started today by visiting www.dakotacounty.us (search food scraps), email foodscraps@co.dakota.mn.us or call 952-891-7557.

After you sign up, you'll receive more information and free BPI-certified compostable bags in the mail.

Partially funded by Dakota County and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.



ENVIRONMENTAL & SEASONAL REMINDERS



Give your furniture and building materials a second life:

Have usable furniture or leftover building materials you no longer need? Before putting them in the trash, consider donating them. Many local businesses and nonprofits accept gently used items, and some even offer free curbside pickup.

Donating keeps valuable materials out of the landfill, supports community organizations, and makes reuse easy. And if you're looking for project supplies or household items yourself, consider buying reused. Many reuse retailers offer high quality furniture, fixtures, and building materials at a fraction of the cost of buying new, saving you money while reducing waste.

To find reuse options near you, visit https://bit.ly/Reduce_Reuse. For donation options, explore the Dakota County Recycling Guide at https://bit.ly/Recycling_Guide.



Pumpkin Collection Set for November 7-8:

After all the carving, decorating, and spooky send off, give your pumpkins a proper send off! Residents are invited to drop off their pumpkins in the labeled bins anytime from Saturday, November 7 through Sunday, November 8.

Please remove candles, wax, and any non pumpkin materials before dropping them off. Painted or glittered pumpkins can't be accepted and should go in the trash. Pumpkins and gourds only, please—no other items in the container. All collected pumpkins will be used as feed for hogs at a local farm, so your jack o'-lantern gets a second life!

Dakota County Highway Shop
(900 County Road 47)



Do Not Blow or Rake Leaves into the Street:

As the leaves begin to fall, please help keep our streets and waterways clean by keeping leaves out of the road. Raking leaves into the street is prohibited by City ordinance because they can clog storm drains, contribute to localized flooding, and pollute local waterways.

Instead, bag your leaves for curbside pickup, bring them to a designated drop-off site, or compost them to create nutrient-rich material for next spring's garden. Thank you for doing your part to help keep Hastings clean and protect our environment.



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 CITY OF HASTINGS, GOVERNMENT

 CITYHASTINGSMN

CONTACT YOUR CITY COUNCIL

Mayor: Mary Fasbender 651-587-4867
mayormary@hastingsmn.gov

Ward 1: DawnMarie Vihrachoff 651-587-7458
dvihrachoff@hastingsmn.gov

Ward 2: Mya Beck 612-263-6012
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Ward 3: Lisa Leifeld 651-334-0306
lleifeld@hastingsmn.gov

Ward 4: Timothy Lawrence 651-253-6503
tlawrence@hastingsmn.gov

At-Large: Angie Haus 651-283-8364
ahaus@hastingsmn.gov

At-Large: Dave Pemble 651-303-2432
dpemble@hastingsmn.gov

Contact City of Hastings

City Administrator
Dan Wietecha 651-480-2326
dwietecha@hastingsmn.gov

Aquatic Center:	651-480-2385
Building Safety:	651-480-2342
Civic Arena:	651-480-6195
Code Enforcement:	651-480-2376
Community Development:	651-480-2350
Fire Business Office:	651-480-6150
Parks & Recreation:	651-480-6175
Police Business Office:	651-480-2300
Public Works:	651-480-6185
Utility Billing:	651-480-2351

COUNCIL MEETINGS

All city council meetings are held at City Hall at 7 p.m. Check the City calendar for changes, agendas and minutes at [events.hastingsmn.gov](https://www.hastingsmn.gov/events).

September 21

October 5

October 19

November 2

November 16

Apply to be on a Commission!

City commissions play an important role in supporting the work of the Hastings City Council. These bodies are assigned duties by the City Code and serve to provide informed input on a variety of issues affecting the community.

Apply at [hastingsmn.gov/commissions](https://www.hastingsmn.gov/commissions)



Sign-up for the Hastings City Update e-newsletter to receive weekly news and events right to your inbox.