

City of Big Lake Fall 2023 Newsletter



Winter Farmers Market Returns!

Join us on the third Saturday of the month from November to April from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at City Hall for the seventh annual indoor Big Lake Winter Farmers Market! Our vendors offer homemade and homegrown products including seasonal produce, baked goods, meat, eggs, syrup, honey, mushrooms, salsa, pickles, jam, sauces, crafts and more! Debit-Credit and SNAP-EBT are accepted, as well as the Market Bucks Match Program. Every month will feature live music, free parking, and the Frequent Shopper Program. Senior Day takes place in the months of December, February, and April where seniors 55+ receive \$3 in tokens to use on any vendor item. Stop by the information booth to see how all of these programs work! Also mark your calendar for free Pictures with Santa on December 16! Follow us on Facebook and Instagram or visit the City website for more details. Looking to get involved? Contact Corrie Scott at cscott@biglakemn.org or 612-297-6331. See you at the market!

Third Saturday from November to April from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

November 18 | *December 16 | January 20 | February 17 | **March 16 | April 20

Big Lake City Hall | 160 Lake Street N, Big Lake, MN 55309

***December Market Featuring Free Pictures with Santa**

****March Market at BLHS with the Chamber Community Fair from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

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City Offices Closed

- ⇒ Friday, November 10 - Veterans Day Observed
- ⇒ Thursday, November 23 - Thanksgiving Holiday
- ⇒ Friday, November 24 - Thanksgiving Holiday Observed
- ⇒ Monday, December 25 - Christmas Holiday
- ⇒ Monday, January 1 - New Year's Day Holiday



Proposed Property Tax Levy 2024

The proposed Property Tax Levy for 2024 is \$5,607,316. The City’s tax rate is anticipated to be 37.23%, which is a decrease of 2.25% over the 2023 tax rate. This is due to an increase in the City’s overall net tax capacity of approximately 11%. With the decrease in the City Tax rate and new construction, most residents will see a 1% or less increase in the City’s portion of the property taxes; however, the average increase in home values is 6%. Below is a summary of estimated City property taxes based on the following home values (assuming 6% increase in home value). If the home values did not increase, the City’s portion of the property tax would be decreased due to the decrease in the City’s Tax Rate. **Mark your calendars!** The 2024 Budget and Levy Public Input Meeting takes place on **Monday, November 27th at 6 p.m.** in the Big Lake City Hall Council Chambers.

What makes my property taxes change each year?

- a. My property’s value
- b. My neighbor’s property value
- c. My city council, county board, and school board
- d. The state legislature

Answer: All of the above

The decisions of your City Council, County Board, and School Board regarding the amount of tax dollars they need to deliver services may be the most obvious factor in your property tax bill. However, the value of your property, the total value of all the property in your community, changes in state programs, and changes in state laws that affect the tax system also play a role. Changes in any of these factors can make your tax bill go up in some years and down in others.

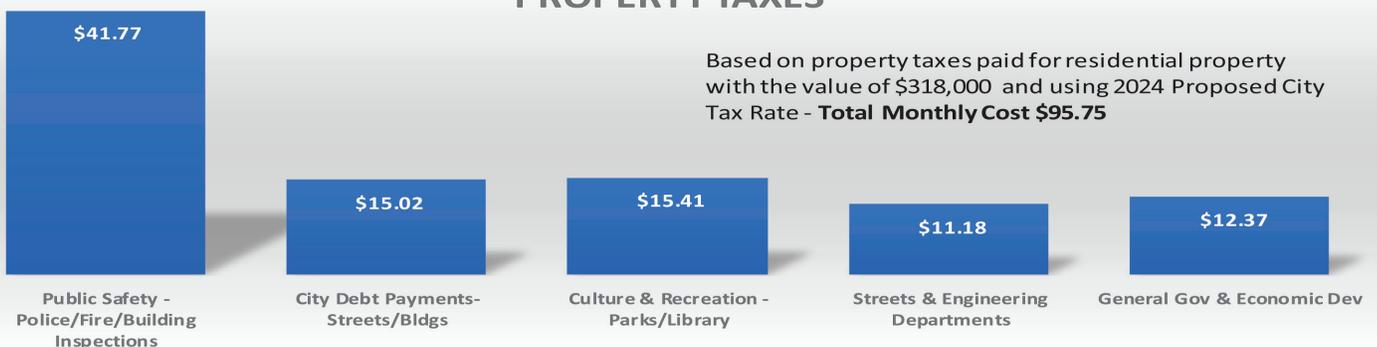
Assessed Value (with 6% Increase)	Estimated Annual City Property Tax	Estimated Annual increase for City Property Tax	Estimated Monthly increase for City Property Tax
\$258,537	\$910.00	\$8.00	\$0.67
\$318,000	\$1,152.00	\$8.00	\$0.66
\$397,500	\$1,474.00	\$8.00	\$0.65
\$424,000	\$1,578.00	\$4.00	\$0.37

Below is the 2024 Proposed Preliminary Tax Levy for the City of Big Lake:

Component of Tax Levy	2023	2024	\$ Change	% Change
General Levy	\$4,118,078	\$4,542,990	\$424,912	10.32%
Property Tax Abatement Levy	\$12,050	\$57,050	\$45,000	373.44%
Debt Service Levy	\$1,086,357	\$877,276	(\$209,081)	-19.25%
Big Lake Economic Development	\$130,000	\$130,000	-	0%
Total	\$5,346,485	\$5,607,316	\$260,831	4.88%

MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD COST FOR CITY SERVICES FROM PROPERTY TAXES

Based on property taxes paid for residential property with the value of \$318,000 and using 2024 Proposed City Tax Rate - **Total Monthly Cost \$95.75**



League of Minnesota Cities Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Some of the local news coverage talks about City budgets and other coverage talks about City levies. Are they the same thing?

A: The property tax levy is the amount of money the city (or other local government) decides it needs to collect from property owners in order to deliver services. However, Property taxes are just part of the overall city budget. The budget includes both discretionary spending (for services the city is free to choose to provide) and non-discretionary spending (to meet obligations such as paying off debt). The budget includes all the dollars the city collects from various sources – fees, grants, revenue sharing, and property taxes.

Q: What do I get for my property taxes?

A: Local governments receive the money they use to deliver services from a few different sources: property taxes, fees, revenue sharing with the state, and grants. Property tax dollars pay for the services that everyone in the community – as well as visitors, commuters, and tourists – can access. This includes things like streets, police and fire services, parks, and libraries. Other services – like economic development programs to help businesses grow and develop, snowplowing, garbage removal, and recycling are also typically paid for with tax dollars.

Q: How does the city – or any local government – decide what services to provide?

A: City Council reviews the services they currently provide and think about what local preferences are and what population trends suggest about the kinds of services people will need. For example, one community might favor running its own pool while another doesn't see the need. Communities with lots of young families need to offer different kinds of services than communities seeing increases in the number of senior residents. Sometimes cities have to provide certain services in order to comply with State or Federal laws. Some common examples include requirements for testing drinking water and making public buildings accessible to people with disabilities.

Q: How does the city decide how much to collect in property taxes?

A: Cities look at their costs – like gasoline, road salt, salaries, and building repairs. They also determine the amount of money the city needs to provide the services residents expect and depend on. Councils then examine the dollars coming into the city from other sources – like fees people pay for building permits or to license their dogs, grants from State and Federal governments, and State revenue sharing. Property taxes make up the gap between money coming in from non-tax sources and the money needed to run the city. Other local governments (e.g., counties, schools) go through a similar process to set their property tax amount.

Q: Are property taxes the only way that the city takes in money?

A: Cities have several sources of revenue, but the two largest are property taxes and State revenue sharing. Property taxes are collected from the owners of homes, businesses, and farms within the city. The sales taxes, income taxes, and gas taxes that we all pay to the state actually fund state aid dollars, such as local government aid and Municipal state aid for roads. Some of these dollars are redistributed to cities through revenue sharing. Another source of revenue for cities is fees. Some examples of common fees people pay to cities are for: dog licenses, building permits, use of the city park facilities, fines for failure to remove snow from sidewalks, and water and sewer services. Cities also get some money from grants, which come from the State or Federal government, and are used for very specific purposes such as a building or equipment improvement.

Business Spotlight: Ember Coffee Company



Founded in April 2022 by Elisa and Matt Berry, Ember Coffee Company stands as more than just a coffee shop in Big Lake; it's also a thriving coffee roastery. What sets Ember's coffee apart is their distinctive air-roasting technique, which significantly minimizes the acidity and bitterness typically present in coffee. This method ensures a smoother cup that's gentler on the stomach. Additionally, Ember crafts their own in-house syrups, which further enhance their enticing signature drink selections.

More than just serving delightful coffee, Ember is committed to making a difference. They allocate a portion of their profits to support organizations aiding orphans, human trafficking victims, and those marginalized in society. Their remarkable endeavors didn't

go unnoticed, as they were honored as both Minnesota's Best Coffee and Coffee House in the 2023 Star Tribune Readers' Choice Awards. You can savor their award-winning coffee fresh at their shop, buy bags of coffee and K-pods, or place orders online at [Embercoffee.co](https://embercoffee.co). Furthermore, Ember Coffee extends its reach by offering wholesale services to cafés, offices, and retailers throughout Minnesota. A heartfelt thank you to Ember Coffee Company for making Big Lake shine brighter!



Holiday Lighting Contest

Enter your outdoor lighted displays into the Holiday Lighting Contest and get added to our online map! Let the public see your beautiful décor and decide the winners! Below are details on this year's event.

1st Place: \$50 Gift Card to Lake Liquors | 2nd Place: City of Big Lake Beach Towel, Mug, and swag bag

Area residents can vote for their favorite lighting display online between December 12 - 17, 2023 and winners will be announced on December 18, 2023 on the City Facebook Page and at biglakemn.org.

- ⇒ Outdoor displays only.
- ⇒ Open to any residential address located within Big Lake City boundaries.
- ⇒ First place winners cannot win a prize more than one consecutive year in a row.
- ⇒ Register for the contest by Monday, December 11, 2023. Registration forms can be found at City Hall or online at biglakemn.org.



Development Happening in Big Lake



Marketplace Crossing Apartments are located north of Marketplace Drive and east of 172nd Street. This project has been completed, adding a total of 60 new rental units to the community. Marketplace Crossing offers one, two, and three bedroom affordable and market rate apartment homes for rent with shared indoor and outdoor amenities.

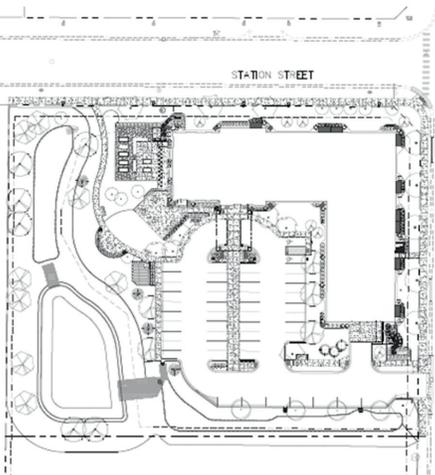
Beautiful You Dermatology is a new clinic now open at 310 Lake Street South in the former Montessori School. The building has undergone extensive renovation as it has converted into a medical building that will house multiple clinicians.

Blackbird Laundromat will be a new two-story full-service laundromat with two apartment units on the second floor located on the southeast corner of Martin Avenue and Fern Street. Construction on this project is planned to be completed in 2024.

MegaStorage USA is located south of 198th Ave between LISI Medical and Howmet Aerospace and is currently under construction. Upon completion, this 20-acre site will provide large storage units for rent to the community.

Prairie Meadows 3rd Addition

is located east of Prairie Drive and Bluff Park. This project is nearing completion, adding 18 new owner-occupied twin-homes to the city’s housing stock. The fourth addition of this neighborhood is currently being designed with construction anticipated to begin in the near future.



Goldenrod Glen Senior Apartments is a new senior apartment complex planned to start construction later this year to be located east of Station Street and south of the NorthStar Station. This will add 74 new affordable apartment rental units for qualifying seniors. This new senior community will offer one and two-bedroom units and shared indoor and outdoor amenities.

Jerry’s of Elk River and Nord Excavating is welcomed to the Innovation Industrial Park! This industrial park, which is located east of 166th St NW, south and west of HWY 10 and north of the BNSF railroad, provides flexibility for outdoor storage and building materials. Jerry’s of Elk River, a classic car dealership, and Nord Excavating are the first businesses to build in the park.

Contact City Planner City Planner Lucinda Spanier for more information about these developments at 763-251-2977 or lspanier@biglakemn.org.

Meet Your Liquor Store Manager: Greg Zurbey



Greg Zurbey began working at Lake Liquors in March of 2017 and has been the Liquor Store Manager for the past six years. Greg wears many hats and does everything from being a cashier at the registers to budgeting and financial planning for the store. One thing most people don't realize is that when he purchases products from vendors, the prices and quantities can change on a weekly basis. Greg strives to find the best price at a quantity that is available from vendors who have products in stock. This is also Greg's favorite part of the job. He loves forecasting and reviewing data from previous days, months, and even years to find the best deals available for the public. Working with vendors to find specials he can offer in the store at a reduced or everyday lower price is challenging but rewarding. Greg also enjoys helping customers navigate the wide range of options at Lake Liquors, whether they are shopping for a gift or special event, he loves to hear back from a customer when the recommendation made was a hit!

Outside of work Greg enjoys fishing, cooking, and visiting the family cabin during the summer months. After selling his snowmobile and giving up on ice fishing, Greg is an indoor person during the winter. He would like the public to know that Lake Liquors appreciates your support of the store. Whether it is through purchasing products or donating toward fundraisers, all residents benefit from Lake Liquors' profits as they reduce tax rates, provide services at a reduced rate, and fund special projects within the Big Lake community!

Fall Photo Contest

Big Lake Residents are invited to submit pictures that highlight their favorite happenings in Big Lake for the 2023 Fall Photo Contest!

Submission of a photo will release the photo to the City of Big Lake. The photo may be used on the City website, Facebook, and other marketing materials. All photos can be submitted to Corrie Scott, at cscott@biglakemn.org by November 30, 2023.



Coffee with the Mayor

Enjoy free coffee and conversation with your Mayor Paul Knier about happenings in the City of Big Lake. This series takes place on select Saturdays throughout the year at Ember Coffee Company (450 Jefferson Blvd, Big Lake, MN 55309) from 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.

Upcoming Dates:

November 11, 2023 | January 13, 2024



Municipal Liquor Store

The Lake Liquors Annual Fall Wine sale will take place from Sunday, November 12 through Saturday, November 18. During this sale you can take 25% off all regular priced wine along with many other in-store specials. There will also be in-store tastings throughout the week. Please consider planning ahead for all of your holiday purchases as we are still working through delivery and inventory issues.

Lake Liquors would like to welcome Megan Knopik and Renee Klinkner to the team! Megan is the new Assistant Manager and brings with her years of experience working at several other Municipal liquor stores. Renee most recently worked at the Municipal liquor stores in Elk River. They are both welcomed additions and bring knowledge and experience to Lake Liquors. Be sure to say Hi to Megan and Renee next time you stop by!

Discount Days:

- ⇒ Monday: Senior Discount (age 62+) - 10% off regular priced items
- ⇒ Tuesday: Wine Day - 10% off regular priced wines

Holiday Hours:

- ⇒ Thursday, November 23: Closed
- ⇒ Sunday, December 24: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ⇒ Monday, December 25: Closed
- ⇒ Monday, January 1: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



Regular Store Hours:

- ⇒ Monday - Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- ⇒ Sunday: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sidewalk Snow Removal



Winter is quickly approaching and the City wants to make sure you have ample time to plan for keeping your sidewalk free of ice and snow. If you are not able to shovel or snow blow your own sidewalk this winter, you will need to contract with a snow removal service, work out an agreement with a neighbor, or find some other way to ensure compliance with the City's sidewalk ordinance. Big Lake is a walkable community and many residents, especially children and those with physical

handicaps, rely on the sidewalk system to safely navigate their neighborhoods and access community resources. It only takes one icy sidewalk section to force pedestrians into the road where their safety is compromised.

The City will be sending out Public Works staff after each snowfall this winter to ensure that all sidewalks are being cleared in accordance with the ordinance. Public Works will clear all sidewalks that are not in compliance with the ordinance, and the property owners will be billed for the service per the adopted City Fee Schedule. The City will always wait at least 24 hours after a snowfall of two inches or more before a sidewalk sweep.

The day before Public Works is sent out to "sweep" the City and clear the non-compliant sidewalks, the City will make a public announcement via Facebook. In addition to this, you can sign up to receive a text message or email alert prior to a scheduled sweep. Sign up for alerts by scanning the QR code or visiting the City website.

Questions? Contact Streets, Parks, and Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels at 763-251-8011 or nmichels@biglakemn.org.



Community Outreach Program

The Sherburne County Community Outreach Program is at Big Lake City Hall from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. every third Wednesday of the month offering free services! No appointment is necessary and services offered include:

- ⇒ Food and Case Support
- ⇒ Evictions
- ⇒ Disconnects
- ⇒ Housing
- ⇒ Child Care Assistance
- ⇒ Health Care Assistance
- ⇒ Social Service Programs including Mental Health, Disability, Aging, and Parenting

Note that in the winter they setup inside of City Hall and in the summer they feature their Wellness Bus in the parking lot.



Chamber Tree Decorating at Browns Park



Registration for the Big Lake Chamber of Commerce and Industry's annual Tree Decorating at Browns Park event is now open! The \$80 sponsorship fee covers the costs of your tree, stand, electrical fees, hookup, and recognition sign as well as removal and disposal of your tree. This is a great way to get into the holiday spirit and show off your decorating skills to the community. To register contact the Chamber office at 763-263-7800 or info@biglakemn.org by November 9, 2023. More information can be found at biglakechamber.com.

Tri-CAP | Helping People. Changing Lives.



Basic Needs

- ⇒ Bus rides
- ⇒ Paying energy Bill
- ⇒ Connecting to housing and other community resources
- ⇒ Applying for food support

Building Stability

- ⇒ Home weatherization
- ⇒ Furnace cleaning and repair

Self Sufficiency

- ⇒ Low cost vehicles for sale
- ⇒ Energy consumption assessment and education
- ⇒ Budgeting, credit, and banking classes and coaching
- ⇒ Apartment rental class
- ⇒ Tax preparation by appointment
- ⇒ Support and training to get back into the workforce
- ⇒ Vehicle repair assistance

Tricap.org | 320-251-1612 or 888-765-5597

Fall Traffic Update from the Big Lake Police Department



With the 2023-2024 school year in place, the Big Lake Police Department would like to express the importance of traffic safety. Speeding and inattentive driving continue to be a major contributing factor causing motor vehicle accidents. There have been a total of 237 fatalities reported to the State of Minnesota in 2023 alone. The Big Lake Police Department has heard residents' requests for patrols regarding speeding within areas of concern and have found that educating drivers along with enforcement is vital when contacting drivers who are driving hazardously.

With the County Road 43 construction taking place during the Fall of 2023, it is anticipated that there will be an increase of pedestrian, vehicular, and bus traffic. The bus routes will be altered due to the construction and motor vehicle traffic will increase along adjacent neighborhood residential roads as well as on Eagle Lake Rd (Co Rd 5). We will do our best with directed patrols along neighborhood side streets, Eagle Lake Rd, and other areas throughout Big Lake. Citations for speeding, careless driving, and reckless driving carry heavy fines as well as repercussions regarding insurance coverage and elevated insurance rates. Overall, safety for our community is the most important. Please be attentive, proceed with caution, and drive safely this Fall. Yours and others' safety is the most important!

John Kaczmarek - Chief of Police

Snow Season Reminders

- ⇒ Please keep in mind property owners are responsible to clear snow around their mailbox. The City will consider making repairs only if the snowplow equipment *physically* hits the mailbox or post, and only if the mailbox conforms to City Ordinance installation requirements. Contact Big Lake Public Works at 763-263-2268 with mailbox complaints.
- ⇒ To prevent damage to lawns, landscape, irrigation heads or other items that will get buried under the snow along the curb or edge of the road, it is recommended that residents clearly mark these areas with reflective stakes.
- ⇒ It is illegal to deposit snow on any City street.



Winter Parking

Parking is not allowed on any City street or roadway between November 1 and April 15 of each year during the hours of 12:01 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.

- ⇒ After a snowfall of two inches or more, all streets in the City will be cleared of all motor vehicles for snowplowing and/or snow removal.
- ⇒ If your vehicle should have mechanical failure and cannot be removed from the street during the required dates/times, please contact the Big Lake Police Department at 763-251-2996 and advise the officer on duty. This may help in avoiding a citation and/or your vehicle being impounded.



Fire Prevention Week and the Fire Department Open House



The first week of October is Fire Prevention Week. Our members will be visiting with our schools, meeting with students to talk about fire safety, and educating them about what it is like to be a fire fighter. Our message comes together when we host one of the largest attended fire prevention open houses in the state. This event will be held on Saturday, October 14,

2023 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Big Lake Fire Hall. Several outside agencies will have representatives on hand to answer questions regarding anything from natural gas leaks to medical questions. We will have a simulation trailer onsite as well as the “Jaws of life” for auto extraction. Stop by to see what your fire department has to offer and ask any questions about how we operate. Note that road construction on County Road 43 could lead to changes in this event and those updates will be posted on social media and the City’s website.

The Department would like to remind residents that it is the time of the year to change your smoke detector and carbon monoxide batteries. Have your furnace and flue pipes inspected if you burn wood, and have your chimney checked for any cracks or creosote buildup. When ‘old man winter’ arrives and we experience heavy snow falls, please consider helping by shoveling out any fire hydrants in front of your house or business. Thank you for the continued support from the community!



Seth Hansen - Fire Chief

City Staff Length of Service Recognition

We would like to thank the following staff for their years of services to the community:

- ⇒ **Randy Bader:** 20 years with the Streets and Parks Department
- ⇒ **Tina Peterson:** 20 years as Police Support Staff



October is Manufacturing Month



In recognition of the critical importance of Manufacturing to Minnesota’s economy, CareerForce in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), has deemed October “Manufacturing Month.” CareerForce and manufacturing industry associations will be hosting virtual and in-person events to celebrate Manufacturing Month. October will be a great time to highlight the many career opportunities in the industry. Keep an eye out on the CareerForce website and City of Big Lake social media platforms for information on events happening in the area.



160 Lake Street North
Big Lake, MN 55309

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Dated Material

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The Big Lake City Newsletter is published quarterly to update Big Lake residents and businesses on city government news.

City Council

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Kim Noding, Council Member

763-238-1875, knoding@biglakemn.org

Paul Seefeld, Council Member

612-801-7731, pseefeld@biglakemn.org

Notify Me

Looking for updates on events, meetings, jobs, or emergency alerts? Sign up for text or email alerts at: biglakemn.org/list.aspx.

Contact the City

Phone: 763-263-2107

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday: 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

View Meetings

Live on Channel 180 | On-demand video link at City website

City Council: October 11, 25 | November 8, 27 | December 13
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

Planning Commission: October 2 | November 1 | December 6
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

BLEDA: October 9 | November 13 | December 11
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

Parks Advisory Committee: October 23 | Nov. 28 | Dec. 18
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

Connect with City of Big Lake

 www.biglakemn.org

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Follow the Big Lake Police Department on Facebook



Big Lake Winter Farmers Market

Third Saturday
Big Lake City Hall
10 AM - 1 PM

November 18 | December 16 | January 20
February 17 | *March 16 | April 20
*March Market at BLHS from 10AM-2PM




biglakemn.org