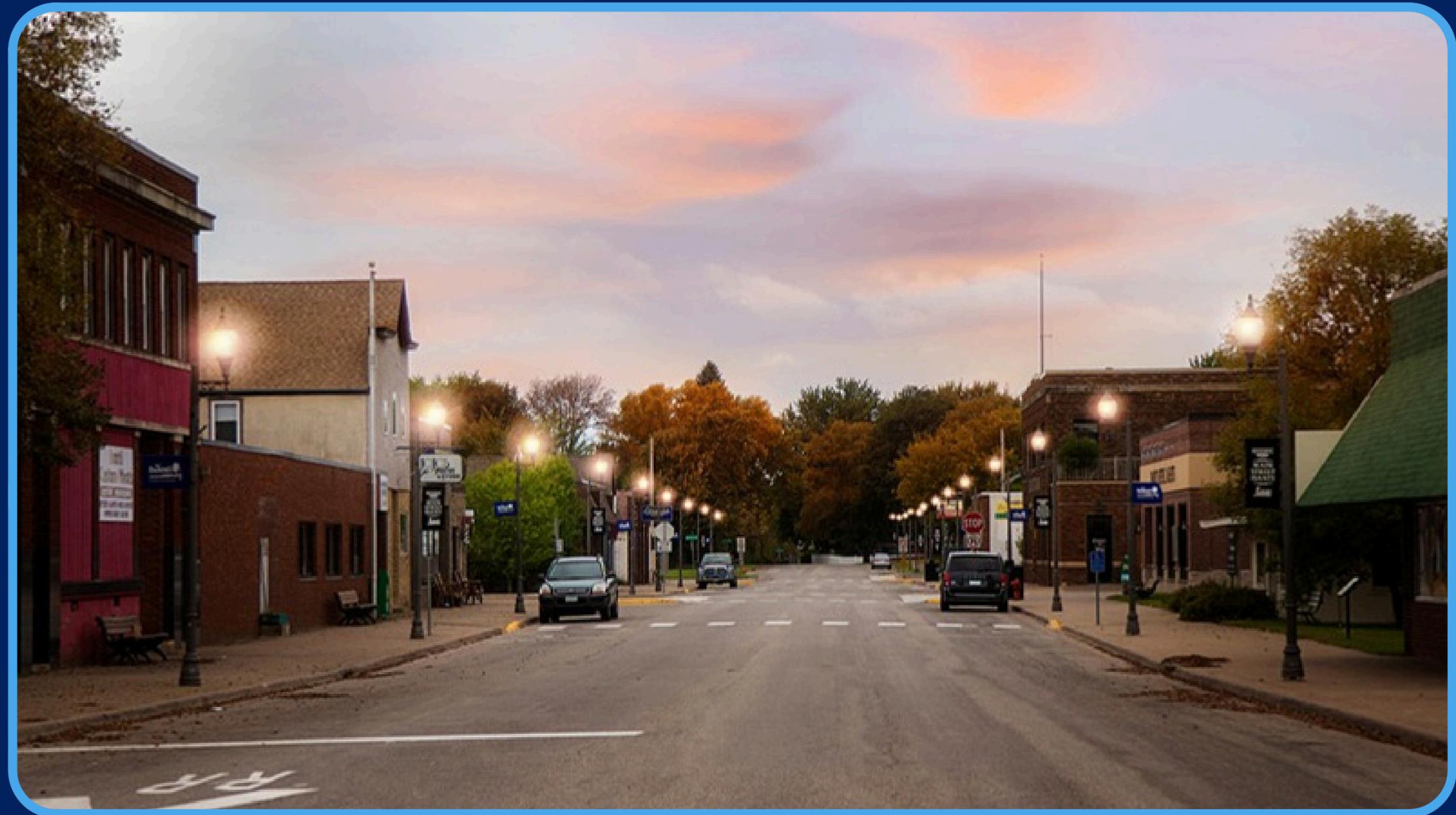


# State of the City 2026



# MAYOR LUKE MERRILL

- Elected as Mayor in 2025
- Elected to the City Council Originally in 2022
- EDA Board and Planning Commissioning Member Prior
- Resident of Isanti for 34 years
- 2 Bachelors Degrees from UMD (Economics and Psychology)
- 10 Years on the Isanti County Parks Board
- Small Business Owner
- Community Business Advocate
- Hobbies include: building hotrods, traveling the world, writing, and getting a tattoo on every continent



# COUNCIL MEMBERS



George Hemen



Steve Lundeen



Nick Pedersen



Erika Zdon

# LIQUOR



# POLICE



# MEET OUR TEAM



# PUBLIC WORKS



# ADMINISTRATION





YEAR IN REVIEW

2025

# COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## New and Growing Businesses in Isanti:

- Ohana Chiropractic and Wellness
- Plugs Garage
- Wolf River Electric
- Pump Republic
- Holiday
- Color Craft
- BP Metals Inc.
- JuneBug Music and Lessons
- ReelVision
- Dana's Bookstore
- Northern Light's Toys
- Berres Excavating
- Delightful Acres Weddings and Events
- Gillespie Law Firm
- Dominoes
- Precision Window Tint
- Turpen Realty
- Tony Zerwas - Mortgage Broker
- Main Street Hair Salon
- Rose Works Pest Control



# RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 44 Single Family Home permits approved.
- 69 new single family lots platted and under construction.
- Centennial Apartments - 28 unit building was approved to begin construction.
- The final phases of Park Brook Apartments and the Commons on Whiskey Road were constructed.
- Continue to see a strong interest from residential developers for future development.



# Main Street

ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION FUND

**CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SUCCESSFULL APPLICATIONS!**



PROJECTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY MAY 31, 2026

The City of Isanti EDA was the recipient of MN DEED Main Street Redevelopment Program dollars through the Initiative Foundation and was able to support all applicants who sought funding, distributing the full \$96,000 to three key downtown properties. The specific allocations are as follows:

- **The Creamery Building:**  
Received its full request of \$75,000.
- **The HearSwell Building:**  
Received its full request of \$9,000.
- **The Rockstad Building:**  
Received \$12,000, a portion of its original \$30,000 request.

# RESTAURANT RECRUITMENT

## The EDA Created the Restaurant Recruitment Program

- The primary goal is to bring in "destination" restaurants that:
  - Attract customers from outside Isanti.
  - Do not have another location within a 5-mile radius, ensuring new experiences.
  - Complement the existing restaurant landscape.
- Both restaurants and developers/owners leasing to qualifying restaurants can apply. A minimum five-year lease is required for the restaurant to be eligible for incentives.
- Applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the City of Isanti Economic Development Authority (EDA) and the City Council.



# BLUEBIRD PARK UPGRADES

**In 2025, playground equipment was upgraded using Park Dedication funds and a grant from Gametime.**



- **Old equipment was from 2004 and parts were getting very expensive or impossible to replace.**
- **City salvaged all parts that were useful to be used at our other playgrounds in the City of the same model.**
- **Poured in place surfacing was added to the park to make the structures inclusive.**
- **Shade structures and trees were added to the park.**

# COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATES

- **Modernized Exterior:** New windows, siding, and doors installed in 2025.
- **Enhanced Access:** New South-side doors added to bridge indoor/outdoor use.
  - New sidewalk completion in 2026.
- Ideal for weddings, showers, meetings, and city events.
- Affordable rates for all residents.
- Discounted rates for nonprofit organizations.
- **New Booking Process:** Fast and easy online reservations now live.





LOOKING AHEAD

2026

ESTIMATED POPULATION 7,694



# 2026 TAX RATE AND FINANCIALS

**Since 2017 the Isanti tax rate has changed -47.22 %**

2020	-	61.818 %
2021	-	60.399 %
2022	-	59.012 %
2023	-	52.682 %
2024	-	44.789 %
2025	-	43.983 %

**The City of Isanti Tax Rate is 41%  
With a levy of \$3,615,462.**

# COUNCIL INITIATIVES



- **Top Priorities:**

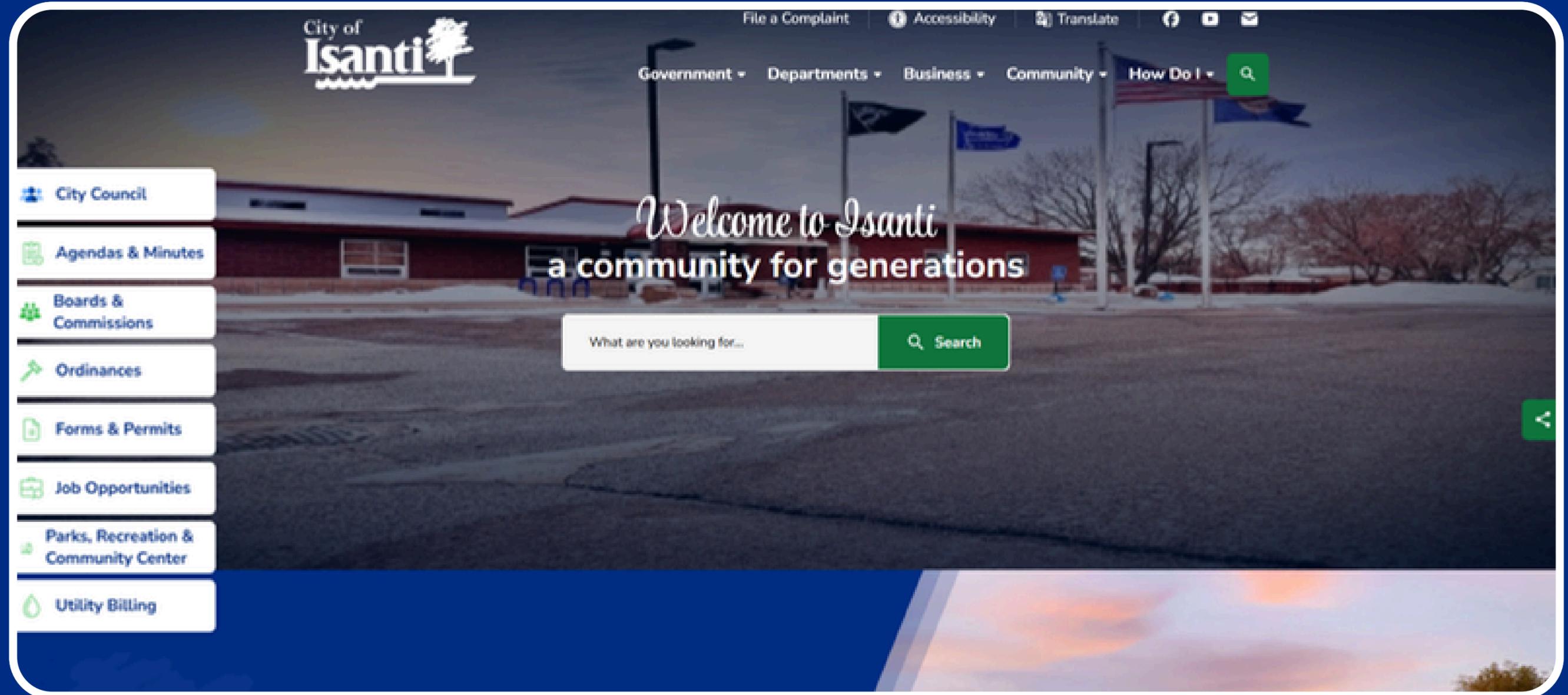
- Taxes
- Property Rights
- Long-Term Planning
- New Revenue Streams
- Liquor Store Sign

- **Established Goals:**

- Department Videos Narrated by the Mayor
- Buying in Bulk
- Sidewalk Infill
- Street Lighting Infill
- Liquor Store Sign
- Continued Contractor Interactions for Competitive Bids
- Continued Public Outreach & Surveys
- Review Policies by Resolution Prior to 1980
- Improve & Maintain Services
- Multi-casting to YouTube & Facebook
- Make Information More Accessible
- Veterans Memorial

# New Website Officially Launched January 2026!

# MAJOR PROJECTS



The City Website and Emails will be moving to a **.gov** url in 2026.

# MAJOR PROJECTS

## East Dual Blvd. and Heritage Blvd. Round-a-bout Completion



# Emerald Ash Borer

# MAJOR PROJECTS

- The City of Isanti has inventoried 477 Ash Trees
- University of MN Project Working on Killing Beetles with MN Sourced Fungi



# MAJOR PROJECTS

Coming Soon!



## Woodland Park

Grand Opening  
Fall of 2026

### NATURE INSPIRED PARK FEATURES:

- Hollow Log
- Log Mazes
- Stepping Stumps
- Shallow Wooden Cave
- Wooden Boat
- Teepee
- Embankment Slide with Rock Scramble and Rope Pull Up
- Picnic Tables
- Slab Benches
- Swings and ADA Swing Set
- Net Climb to Tree Deck
- Notched Log Stepper

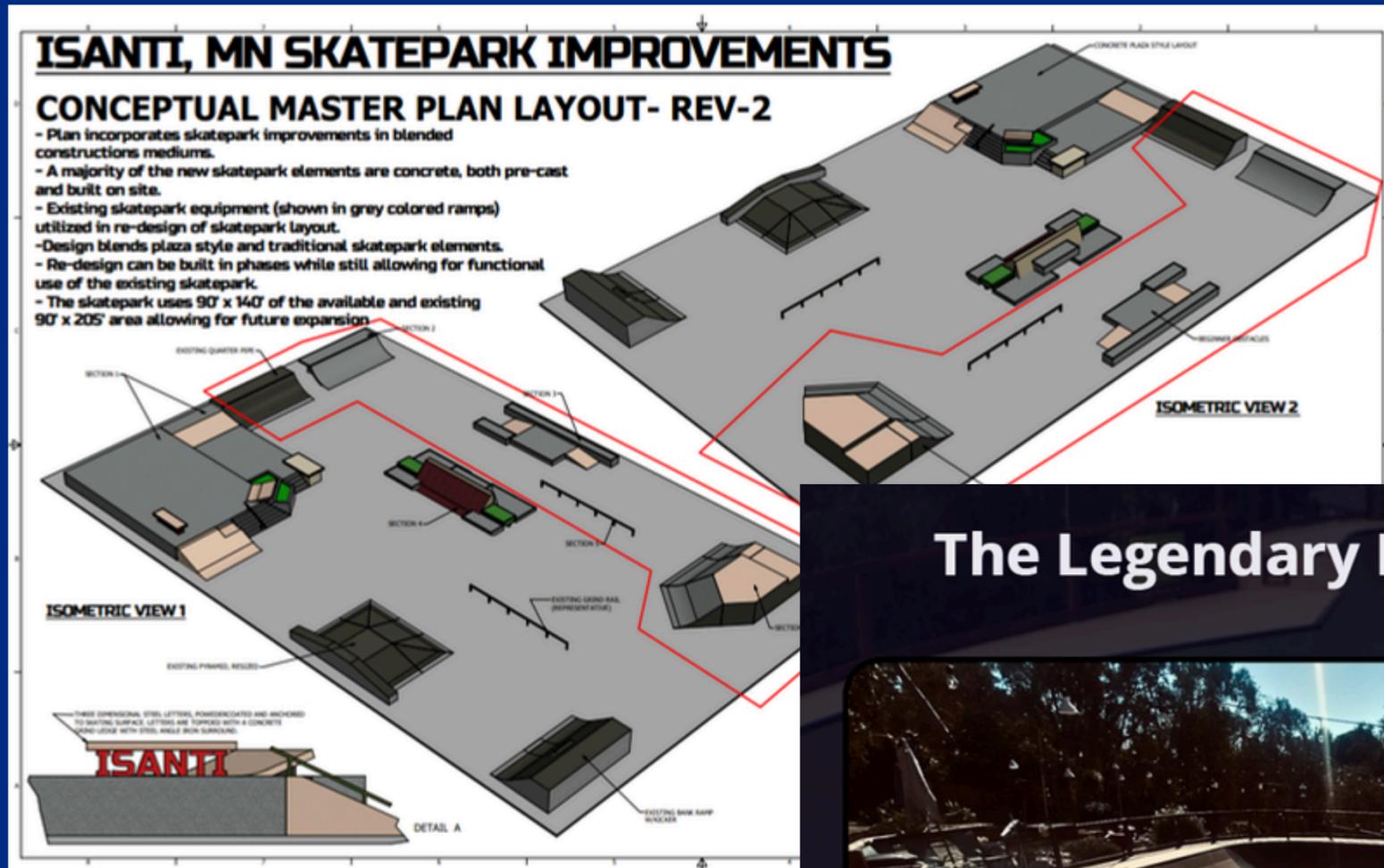


For more information go to [www.cityofisanti.us](http://www.cityofisanti.us)

Located in the Fairway  
Greens North  
Neighborhood ~ Funded  
with Park Dedication  
Dollars



# MAJOR PROJECTS



Based on community feedback and a careful look at our existing layout, we are thrilled to be expanding our skate park!

Rather than just replacing what's there, we are adding new, modern features to our current footprint to better serve the next generation of skaters.

Phase 1 & 2 improvements are officially underway for a 2026 installation!

Follow the City Facebook page for closure updates.

## The Legendary Boomerang Bowl



# 2026 STREET PROJECTS

## Railroad Avenue & Main Street Walk Improvements

Hearings were held March 3, 2026.  
Plans are currently being prepared and will be out for bid soon.

### Project Funding Sources

- MSAS Funds: Leveraging State-Aid Route status; eligible for up to 4 additional years of advanced funding (\$301,623/year).
- Special Assessments: Levied per City Policy (up to 25% of reconstruction costs).
  - Railroad Ave Walk: Not assessable.
  - Main Street Walk: 100% deferred assessment (payable upon future parcel development).
- City Funds: To cover all remaining project balances.



# 2026 PARKS AND EVENTS

Another year of great events in Isanti!

- Street Dances
- Splish Splash Summer Bash
- Fireworks
- Archery Day
- Summer Family Entertainment Series
- Fall Family Day
- Earth Day Clean-Up
- Isanti Community Center Rentals
- Community Garden
- Illuminate Isanti
- Night to Unite
- Mayor's Luncheon



# FOR BUSINESSES

Join us! All businesses and entrepreneurs welcome!

Thank you to those of you who have donated your time and expertise to making these a success!

Thanks to the Chamber and ECRDC for partnering with us to make these possible!



The graphic features a dark blue background with a light blue geometric shape on the left. At the top, there are three logos: the City of Isanti Minnesota logo, the North 65 Chamber of Commerce logo, and the East Central Regional Development Commission logo. Below the logos, the text 'MONTHLY ENTREPRENEUR Workshops' is displayed in a mix of bold sans-serif and cursive fonts. A white horizontal bar contains the text 'ISANTI COMMUNITY CENTER • 4:30PM - 6:30PM'. The bottom section lists workshop topics under three categories: Foundational Concepts, Operations & Management, and Sales and Marketing.

**City of Isanti** Minnesota

**NORTH 65 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**EAST CENTRAL** Regional Development Commission

## MONTHLY ENTREPRENEUR Workshops

**ISANTI COMMUNITY CENTER • 4:30PM - 6:30PM**

**Foundational Concepts**

- January 6, 2026 - Idea to Execution: What Problem Does Your Business Solve?
- February 3, 2026 - How to Write a Business Plan (That You'll Actually Use).
- March 3, 2026 - Financing Your Business: Boots & Beyond
- April 7, 2026 - The Business Structure: Legal Steps to Legitimacy

**Operations & Management**

- May 5, 2026 - Basic Bookkeeping and Budgeting for the Non-Accountant
- June 2, 2026 - Pricing Your Product or Service (Profit 101)
- July 21, 2026 - Simple Systems: Time Management & Productivity Tools
- August 4, 2026 - Hiring Your First Employee/Contractor: Rules of the Road

**Sales and Marketing**

- September 15, 2026 - Marketing on a Shoestring: Local and Low-Cost Tactics
- October 6, 2026 - Beginner Digital Marketing: Website, Social and Reviews
- November 4, 2026 - Customer Service that Keeps Them Coming Back
- December 1, 2026 - Protecting Your Idea: Trademarks, Copyrights & Patents



**THANK YOU!**

**NORTH 65**  
**CHAMBER**   
**O F C O M M E R C E**



**QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?**