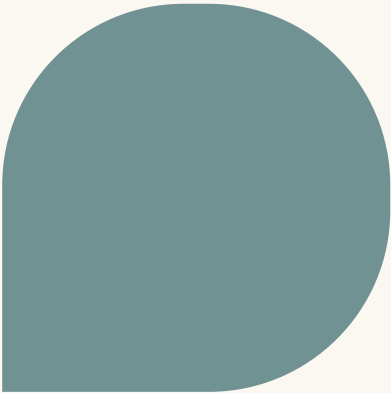
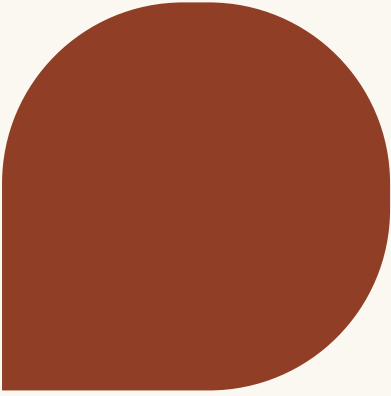
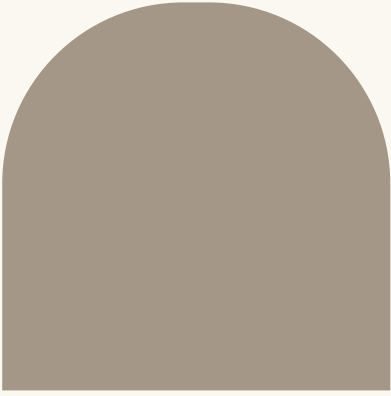
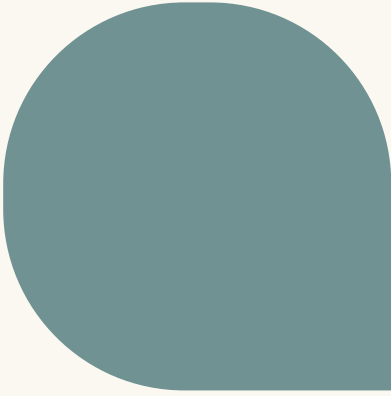


ANOKA COUNTY

NEWS

Volume 2-2025



***Legislative
Decisions,
Local
Impacts
Pgs. 2-4***



County Representatives Advocate for Retention of Transportation Funding

Perhaps some of the most impactful news of the legislative session is what didn't end up happening with transportation funding for metro counties.

When the special session started, metro counties were thrown a curveball with a proposed reduction to the metro counties area sales tax allocation from 17 percent down to 8.5 percent. This shift, which was not discussed during the regular session, and was a last-minute addition made behind closed doors without the knowledge or understanding of any county official, would have been given to the Metropolitan Council for future bus rapid transit buildouts, resulting in a reduction of about \$47 million per year to metro counties.

When this legislation was proposed, there was immediate pushback by leaders from all metro counties — representatives from each of the seven counties testified to the Legislature against the tax shift.



Anoka County Commissioner Julie Jeppson, left, testifies during the special session at the Minnesota State Capitol.

“If this legislation had been approved, we would have had to cancel road projects we had planned to do, and projects in years 2-5 of our Highway Improvement Program would have been delayed or cancelled,” said District 6 Anoka County Commissioner Julie Jeppson, who serves as the county’s lead commissioner on Transportation. “The sales tax allocations for road projects were

carefully negotiated in 2023 among legislators, county elected officials and county staff to come up with a compromised bill, and this legislation would have gone back on that compromise. Thankfully, our commissioners, administration, and several other representatives from metro-area counties made the negative impacts of this proposal clear to the Legislature, and that plan was scrapped.”



Much of Active Transportation Funding Being Allocated to One Project

Some of the metro area sales tax funding Anoka County receives is dedicated to an “active transportation fund” — this money is usually utilized countywide for sidewalk, trail, and bicycle network projects that enhance pedestrian opportunities.

For next year, all the funding (\$5.1 million) was legislatively allocated to the City of Anoka for the Rum River Dam pedestrian bridge project. The project will include a pedestrian and maintenance bridge, a navigation lock for pontoons and other watercraft to navigate the area, and a sectioned-off area dedicated to the sport of river surfing.

This project will dip into the county active transportation fund again in 2027, taking \$1.1 million in funding to finish the construction.

Legislative Changes Affect Social Services & Behavioral Health Department

Anoka County Human Services, which provides an array of assistance to residents in areas such as Public Health, Economic Assistance, Job Training, and more, is often affected by changes made at the legislative level. This session was no different — some legislative decisions present new opportunities to Anoka County, and some actions have resulted in less funding and more challenges.

One service area of the county impacted this session was Anoka County Community Social Services and Behavioral Health, which provides mental and chemical health services, resources for families, housing and homeless programs, and more.

Funding Allocations

Legislation was passed to create a “Human Services Cost Savings Reform Workgroup” to identify cost savings through future reforms as an alternative to drastic cost shifts to counties. Two county representatives will be at the table to create solutions to the escalating costs of disability services across the state.

Legislators supported \$35 million of funding to begin modernization of the state-operated Social Services Information System (SSIS) that all counties are required to use for Social Service and Behavioral Health programs. This 30 year-old software is out of date and needs to be updated to accommodate new state child welfare system changes that will be implemented at the county in 2027.

Legislators made several changes to Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Services directly affecting Anoka County.

- The first is a transition of the Adult Mental Health Infrastructure Grant to a direct payment allocation, decreasing administrative burden on counties. Anoka County receives more than \$2 million in funds annually for this grant.
- The State department of Direct Care and Treatment will be funded to expand the Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center by 50 beds to alleviate wait lists for admission.

Funding Reductions

- Anoka County is seeing an increase in costs for patients served by State Department of Direct Care and Treatment facilities when discharges are delayed. This increase started in July. The cost to Anoka County is estimated at an additional \$250,000 annually of new expenditures.
- Starting July 2026, the state Department of Human Services will take over intake eligibility for publicly funded substance use disorder treatment through the Behavioral Health Fund from counties. Along with the transfer of duties, a state allocation to Anoka County to do this work will be a loss of just over \$100,000.
- The state has added a new cost share to counties for Chapter 611 Competency Attainment Services at Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center — these services are ordered when a court deems a defendant incompetent and the charges have not been dismissed. The court requires the defendant to participate in programming to assist in attaining competency to stand trial. The new cost to Anoka County is estimated to be \$280,000 per year.

"Some of the legislation passed this session is certainly a positive for our Community Social Services and Behavioral Health Department and will hopefully help us avoid substantial cost shifts in the future," said District 7 Anoka County Commissioner Mandy Meisner. "It wasn't all positives, though — moving forward, our staff and commissioners will have to figure out how to deal with funding decreases in several areas."



Anoka County
HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION
Community Social Services and Behavioral Health

Federal Legislation to Affect Counties

The U.S. House voted to pass a sweeping reconciliation bill, known as the “One Big Beautiful Bill,” July 1 that will impact Anoka County and other counties across the state and nation.

One of the most talked about aspects of the bill is the impact on Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Minnesota is one of ten states across the nation where counties administer Medicaid and SNAP benefits. The federal government currently covers the cost of SNAP benefits, but the legislation is shifting up to 15 percent of that cost to states. It also cuts the federal reimbursement that states receive to administer the program from 50 to 25 percent.

For the SNAP change alone, the Association of Minnesota Counties estimates there will be an average 3.25-percent increase in property taxes for counties, once the provisions of the federal legislation take effect. However, that amount will likely vary from county to county.

How the federal changes to Medicaid are going to affect Anoka and other counties is more difficult to ascertain. Those changes are expected to result in a workload increase for counties, since the bill adds a work requirement for Medicaid, which county workers will have to verify, and counties will have to review eligibility twice a year instead of once.

The bill, according to the National Association of Counties (NACo), does have some positive provisions for counties, including:

Municipal Bonds Preserved

- Leaves municipal bonds untouched, preserving the tax exemption for all bonds and protecting counties’ ability to finance critical infrastructure at lower costs.

Conservation Funding

- Integrates \$13 billion in unobligated Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding to provide mandatory funding for U.S. Department of Agriculture conservation programs, empowering counties and local partners to invest in soil, water and land stewardship.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit

- Permanently increases the volume of tax credits available for low-income housing by 12.5 percent and lowers the private activity bond financing required to access the credit to 25 percent through calendar year 2029.

New Markets Tax Credit

- Permanently extends the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) that promotes community development and economic growth by attracting private investment in low-income communities with high unemployment and poverty.

To read more information from NACo on the federal legislation’s impact on counties, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ImpactNACo> or scan the QR code.



Anoka County
MINNESOTA

Sheriff’s Office Open House

13301 Hanson Blvd. NW, Andover
Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025
4 to 7 p.m.

Demonstrations, displays,
opportunities to interact with
some of the county’s public
safety partners. Food and
drinks available for purchase.





Proposed design of the 109th Avenue area in Blaine

Design Work Commencing on Highway 65


MnDOT, in partnership with the City of Blaine and Anoka County, continues to advance the design of the Highway 65 improvement project between 99th Avenue NE and 117th Avenue NE/Cloud Drive NE.

The project aims to enhance safety, reduce crashes and travel time and improve pedestrian connections by replacing current intersections with new grade-separated interchanges.

Design work is nearing completion, and planning is underway to prepare for construction activities, including coordination of utility relocations, project phasing, and providing alternative traffic routes for residents and businesses.

Construction will be completed in multiple phases and will include new bridges, frontage roads, and roadway improvements to support long-term traffic flow and safety. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2026 and continue into the construction season of 2029. As part of the planning process, nearby parallel roads like University Avenue, Radisson Road, and Lexington Avenue are being evaluated to help manage increased traffic during construction. Improvements, such as pavement resurfacing, signal updates and added turn lanes, are already in planning and development, with more changes expected to roll out by spring 2026.


Visit <https://tinyurl.com/BlaineMNproject> to sign up for future updates as the project moves toward construction.



Survey live until Aug. 15

We Want to Hear From Your Family

Anoka County is exploring the need for a Family Resource Center for families with children who live in our community. Help us understand your family's strengths and needs by taking a short survey. Visit www.wilderresearch.org/go/anokasurvey or scan the QR code. Participants will be entered into a drawing for one of ten \$50 gift cards.




Family Child Care Resource Fair Planned Aug. 16

Anoka County Family Child Care Licensing is hosting a free family child care resource fair 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Aug. 16 at Northtown Library, 711 County Hwy. 10 NE, Blaine. Attendees can learn how to apply to become a licensed child care provider; be presented with information about grants and financial support to help start or grow a child care program; be directed to educational resources and curriculum, make one-on-one connections with local agencies; have fire extinguishers serviced; and more.

For more information, contact Anoka County Family Child Care Licensing at rs-hs-childcarelicensing@anokacountymn.gov or 763-324-1235. There is no pre-registration required for this event.

Job Seeker OPEN HOUSE

12:30-3:30 P.M.
SEPT. 24

- Career training breakout sessions
- 1:1 walk-in job search assistance
- Job search in career lab and more!



Anoka County
JOB TRAINING CENTER
Proud PARTNER | CareerForce

CareerForce Blaine
1201 89th Ave. NE
Second floor

Earlier Deadline for Absentee Ballots on Election Day

During the last election cycle, reporting of results were delayed significantly, primarily due to the enactment of a new Minnesota law that allowed voters to return absentee ballots to city halls, town halls, and government centers up until 8 p.m. on Election Day. Prior to 2024, that deadline was 3 p.m.

The Minnesota Legislature has sought to correct this issue by requiring in-person absentee ballot drop-offs to be returned to county auditors or municipal clerks by 5 p.m. on Election Day. Absentee ballots returned by mail or agent delivery in Anoka County will still have an 8 p.m. deadline on Election Day.



For more info
on voting
absentee

CareerForce Job Seeker Services



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Apply Today! We're here to serve young adults, dislocated workers and those transitioning to a new career. Eligible applicants may receive training assistance. Reach out today! <https://tinyurl.com/bdhfbt9v>



CAREER SERVICES

Get ready! Get set! Get hired! www.careerforcemn.com Log in for the latest in career tips, area employer connections, resume tricks and interview preparation. Also, check out Minnesota's largest listing of available job openings across the state www.minnesotaworks.net



WORKSHOPS

Sharpen Your Skills! CareerForce now has in-person workshops on job searching, resume writing and interview skills along with links to several online resources. <https://tinyurl.com/4ye2mr7m>



RESUME REVIEW

Get resume tips from our expert team! CareerForce professionals will review your resume or cover letter and provide feedback. Email your resume to: careerforce.blaine@state.mn.us



JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE

One-on-one job search assistance! Schedule a job search appointment to meet in person, over the phone or online to get help with your job search and learn about other available resources. Schedule an appointment at www.careerforcemn.com/blaine us at or call 763-324-2300.

Is Operating a Small Food Business for you?

Posts or ads on social media for foods being sold locally may have begun popping up across your feed, but it's important to know these vendors need a license to sell food-related goods. Perhaps you are also thinking of starting a small food business and aren't sure if you need a license or not. Anoka County's Public Health and Environmental Services Department aims to answer these questions and more.

Very limited types of foods can be prepared at home under the Minnesota Cottage Food Law, which went into effect in 2015 and includes information, training, and registration on the types of food allowed to be sold, food labeling, types of sales locations, and amount of sales allowed.

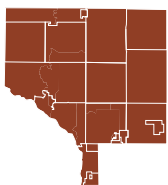
The law states individuals can sell non-potentially hazardous foods such as baked goods, certain jams and jellies, and/or certain home-canned pickles, vegetables, or fruits. Training and registration with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture as a Cottage Food Producer are required. Visit tinyurl.com/foodcottage for more information.

Potentially hazardous foods such as milk-containing products, meats, poultry, fish and seafood, cooked vegetables, or other cooked food items do not qualify for the cottage food exemption. A food license from a licensing authority is required (this could be the state's Department of Agriculture, Health Department, or local jurisdiction). These foods cannot be prepared in home kitchens and must be prepared in a licensed commercial kitchen.

There are many shared commercial kitchens located throughout Minnesota for small food businesses to utilize to prepare their foods. Visit tinyurl.com/kitchendirectory to see a comprehensive list.

If you would like to start a small food business based in Anoka County, visit tinyurl.com/AnokaCountyhealth or contact Anoka County Public Health Environmental Services at (763) 324-4260.

Non-Sanctuary Resolution Affirms Rule of Law



The Anoka County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution "Affirming the Rule of Law" at its June 10 meeting.

This resolution clarifies and confirms that at no time has Anoka County passed any ordinance, adopted any resolution, or set any policy or procedure aimed at, or resulting in, the county being a "sanctuary jurisdiction" for illegal or otherwise undocumented immigrants.

On May 30, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security published on its website a list of what they identify as sanctuary jurisdictions, as it relates to immigration enforcement. Anoka County was on that list, but within a few days this list was taken down. The inclusion of the county on this list was erroneous. The adopted resolution is simply a statement of fact and is not the result of any sort of policy shift or change.

Commissioner Jeff Reinert supported the introduction of the resolution and stated, "We need to act on the misrepresentation of our county being listed as a sanctuary county." Commissioner Julie Braastad, the board's lead commissioner on Public Safety, upon recommendation of the Public Safety Committee, introduced the resolution at the June 10 board meeting.

Anoka County Sheriff Brad Wise noted and the county does not impede the work of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

"ICE has adequate staffing and does not need our help," Wise said. "It does its thing and we do ours. The county will continue to follow the law."

Anoka County Attorney Brad Johnson had a similar sentiment and noted that following the law is at the forefront when it comes to decisions made by Anoka county leadership.

"Anoka County has taken pride in its respect for the rule of law in all that we do," he said.





PADDLE THE PARKS

BIRDING BY BOAT

Ages 12+ • \$10/person +tax

Experience a new level of bird watching while paddling.

Tuesday, Aug. 19, 9 a.m. - noon
Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park

STAND UP PADDLE BOARDING

Ages 15+ • \$25/person +tax

Enjoy time on the water with no hassle of hauling equipment.

Saturday, Aug. 9, 3-4:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Aug. 13; 4-5:30 p.m.
Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park

Wednesday, Aug. 20, 4-5:30 p.m.
Rice Creek Chain of Lakes

Ages 13+ • \$7/person +tax

Take a ride in a 30-foot-long voyageur canoe to enjoy the fall colors on the Mississippi River

Saturday, Oct. 4, 10 a.m. - noon
Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park



**ADAPTIVE & INCLUSIVE
ACTIVITIES & EQUIPMENT**



**SCAN TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT NEW OFFERINGS**

ADAPTIVE PADDLING

Thursday, Aug. 14
Lake George
1-3 p.m.



**BUNKER BEACH
WATER PARK**

**OPEN DAILY: 11 AM - 7 PM
THROUGH SUNDAY, AUG. 24**

NOW CASHLESS

Learn what you need
to know for your visit.



BUNKERBEACH.COM  



LEARN AND EXPLORE

LUNCH WITH A NATURALIST

Wednesdays; 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Wargo Nature Center

Ages 16+ Bring your lunch and listen to a naturalist present

Aug. 6 – Loons

Sept. 3 – Animal Ambassadors

Oct. 1 – Black Bears

- *More Sessions Online* -

LAKE SUPERIOR AGATES

Saturday, Aug. 9, Noon-1 p.m.
Bunker Hills Campground
Visitor Center

All Ages Discover Minnesota's state gemstone. Learn how to identify them, where to find them, and more. Take home samples also provided. **FREE**

FALL FESTIVAL

Saturday, Oct. 18, 1-3 p.m.
Wargo Nature Center

All Ages We'll crank up the cider press, play pioneer games, and have self-guided nature activities. **FREE**



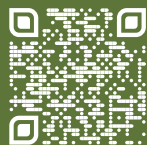
DISCOVER MORE ONLINE
& REGISTER FOR ACTIVITIES



ANOKACOUNTYPARKS.COM
OR CALL 763-324-3350



WARGO
NATURE
CENTER



Extended Hours

Through MEA (Oct. 19)
Daily: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Regular Hours

Monday - Friday:
9 am - 4:30 p.m.

7701 Main Street, Lino Lakes, MN 55038

CHOMONIX GOLF COURSE

- 18 HOLE, PAR 72 COURSE
- DRIVING RANGE
- PUTTING GREEN
- PLAYERS CLUB
- MEMBERSHIPS
- SMALL GROUP RATES
- TOURNAMENTS
- BLUE HERON ROOM

CHOMONIX.COM
763-324-3434
700 AQUA LANE, LINO LAKES

ANOKA COUNTY LIBRARY

Johnsville Library - back & better than ever!



Johnsville Library reopened June 2025 after renovations with a fresh new look including paint, carpet, lighting, and furnishings. Come in and check out the improved spaces including:

- A study room for a quiet place to work.
- Book bins for our smallest patrons to more easily find items to take home.
- A refreshed play space including a Lego table for families to enjoy during their visit.
- An improved layout for better flow and patron experience.

FALL FUNDRAISER - An Evening with Friends and Authors Dinner & Silent Auction

Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025, 5 to 9 p.m.

Majestic Oaks Golf Club

All proceeds benefit the Anoka County Library.

Authors include:

- **Allen Eskens** (keynote)
- **Lorna Landvik**
- **Loretta Ellsworth**
- **June Gossler Anderson**

Tickets on sale now

tinyurl.com/FriendsACLevent102325



Donor Spotlight

Thank you for supporting the library in connecting our community to ideas, information, and inspiration!



\$1,500 in memory of Elinor Deemer

for summer reading - celebrating a wonderful sister, friend, and book lover.



\$20,000 from Friends of the Anoka County Library

for programs & services including Summer Reading, Park Packs, Book Club Kits, & Reading Bridge.

Visit tinyurl.com/SupportingACL to help us create a county where knowledge, creativity, and opportunity thrive.



Club Book | Elle Cosimano

Monday, Oct., 20, 6 p.m.

Northtown Library

Best selling author of the Finlay Donovan Mystery Series

ALWAYS FREE - Visit your local library in person or online at anokcountymn.gov/library

NEW THIS SUMMER

Induction Cooking Kit

Try induction cooking and enjoy its benefits before you purchase a unit. Kit includes a guide to induction cooking, induction cooktop, steel pot and pan.

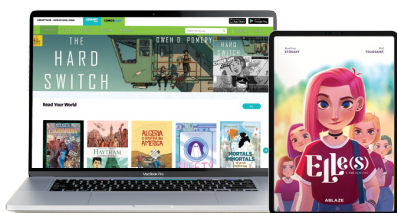
tinyurl.com/ac1KitInduction



Comics Plus - LIBRARY EXCLUSIVE

Check out thousands of digital comics, manga, and picture books for readers of all ages. All titles are available for unlimited access – no waiting in line!

tinyurl.com/ac1ComicsPlus



Consumer Reports



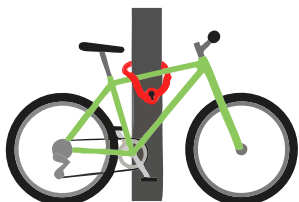
Online access to ratings, reviews, and recommendations for thousands of products & services, including cars, appliances, electronics, and more.

tinyurl.com/ac1ConsumerReports

Bike Locks

Place a hold in the catalog
3-week loan period.

tinyurl.com/ac1BikeLocks



EVENTS & CLASSES

Visit the online event calendar to register for classes including creative arts, concerts, book clubs, and more. tinyurl.com/ACLeventcalendar



- **Artificial Intelligence—an Introduction**
Saturday, Aug. 9, 2 p.m., Crooked Lake Library
- **Resource Fair for Family Child Care Providers**
Saturday, Aug. 16, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Northtown Library
- **Romance Writing Workshop**
with Featured Author Laura Ashwood
Thursday, Aug. 21, 5:30 p.m., Mississippi Library
- **Naloxone Training**
Saturday, Sept. 20, 1 p.m., Crooked Lake Library
- **Live Scandinavian Music**
Monday, Sept. 22, 5 p.m., Northtown Library
- **Wicked “What is this Feeling?” Line Dance**
Monday, Sept. 22, 5 p.m., Mississippi Library
- **Succession Planning for Digital Assets**
Monday, Sept. 22, 5:30 p.m., Crooked Lake Library
- **Norwegian - Minnesotan Fiddling**
Thursday, Sept. 25, 6 p.m., Northtown Library

Anoka County Included in Prestigious List

Anoka County has been included in Forbes' list of America's Best Midsize Employers for 2025. This is Forbes 10th year producing a list of America's Best Midsize Employers and America's Best Large Employers.

To create the lists, Forbes partnered with market research firm Statista to survey more than 217,000 employees working at companies within the U.S. that employ more than 1,000 people. Companies with 1,000 to 5,000 employees are considered midsize, while companies with more than 5,000 employees are considered large employers.



"The inclusion of Anoka County on this list is a testament to the employees who show up day in and day out to serve their community," said Mike Gamache, chair, Anoka County Board of Commissioners. "Anoka County is the only government services employer in Minnesota included on the list, which proves that what we're doing here is working."

Anonymous survey respondents were asked if they would recommend their employer to others and to rate it based on a range of criteria, including salary, work environment, training programs, and opportunities to advance. Participants were also asked if they would recommend their previous employers, within the past two years, and the employers they knew through their industry experience or through friends or family who worked there.

Companies pay no fee to participate in the survey or to be selected by Forbes. Submissions to be included on these lists are not accepted by Forbes. Employer lists are published annually.

License and Passport Centers Offer Expanded Options for Payment

Anoka County License and Passport Centers now has the option for customers to pay for motor vehicle registration renewal on the county's website.

Use of this online payment option, called PayIt, allows filing fees to be retained by Anoka County, which helps offset the License and Passport Centers' operational costs. With traditional online renewal processes via the state of Minnesota, all fees are collected by the state.

- Blaine: 10955 Club W Pkwy. NE, Suite 600, Blaine
- Columbia Heights: 3982 Central Ave. NE, Columbia Heights



- Coon Rapids: 455 99th Ave. NW, Suite 100
- Ham Lake: 17565 Central Ave. NE, Suite 330
- Ramsey: 7550 Sunwood Dr. NW, Suite A, Ramsey

In addition to making payments on the Anoka County website, customers can also conduct business in person or via drop boxes located at the five available locations in the county.

**SCAN ME
TO PAY
ONLINE**



A payment link is available on the Anoka County website, which can be used to make other select online payments to Anoka County. Requests are processed locally. Customers now also have the option to use Apple Pay and American Express online.

Vehicle tabs can be mailed to the owner's residence or be picked up at a license center location the next business day. Renewals requiring new license plates will not be mailed and must be picked up at one of the five locations.

Those with questions about the new payment system can call Anoka County License and Passport Centers at 763-324-2100.

Anoka County

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Anoka County's new 42,000-square-foot Emergency Communications Center (ECC)/Radio Shop became fully operational in early 2025. The new facility gives the county the ability to meet the growing needs of emergency services in the area.

The facility combines both 911 emergency telecommunications operations and the county's radio shop, which provides and maintains all radio equipment used by law enforcement and emergency telecommunicators in Anoka County.

"The ECC has a setup for staff conducive to learning and distraction reduction, a wellness-fitness room to reduce stress, an outdoor break area, a quiet room for staff to step away and collect themselves privately, and more," said District 4 Anoka County Commissioner Scott Schulte. "Prior to construction of the new ECC, Anoka County Emergency Services employees worked in the basement of the Anoka County Courthouse, which was built more than 30 years ago and is only 5,000 square feet — the space was cramped, outdated, and there was no access to windows or natural light."

Much of the capital for this project came from American Rescue Plan Act funds. Wold Architects and Engineers and ICS Consulting handled the design and construction of the ECC.

"The new Emergency Communications Center is definitely an asset to public safety for our area," said District 2 Anoka County Commissioner Julie Braastad. "Staff are now working in a much better environment, and there's plenty of room to grow to meet future needs."

 **In 2024, 911 staff answered more than 400,000 calls for help — 95 percent of those calls were answered within 10 seconds.**

Now Open



1. The outside of the new Emergency Communications Center in Andover.
2. Anoka County Commissioners and County staff tour the building April 8.



3. Commissioners and staff check out the break room.
4. From left: Commissioners Mike Gamache, John Heinrich, and Mandy Meisner explore the building's outdoor space.



TURNING WASTE INTO A RESOURCE: Anoka County's Organics Program

Anoka County is proving that with a little effort and community engagement, food waste can become a valuable resource. Over the past year, the county's organics drop-off program at the Bunker Hills and Rice Creek compost sites has transformed nearly 600 tons of food scraps into nutrient-rich compost — all thanks to the growing number of residents committed to reducing what they throw in the trash.

The small-scale organics processing facilities at the two Anoka County compost sites allow residents to drop off their food scraps and other compostable items free of charge. The collected materials are processed on site, where they are turned into compost. That compost is then offered back to the community at no cost, creating a closed-loop system that benefits both the environment and local gardens. "The program has really taken off," said Jill Curran, the county's Recycling & Resource Solutions supervisor. "We're thrilled to see how engaged the community has become. Diverting food scraps from the trash not only helps reduce landfill waste, but also creates a valuable product that goes right back into the hands of the people who made it possible."

Residents who participate say they appreciate the simplicity of the program and the tangible results. "It's really satisfying to know that my food scraps are being put to good use," said Andover resident Julie Doten. "I picked up some of the finished compost this spring, and it's making a huge difference in my garden."

To make it easier for people to get involved, the county provides educational materials and starter kits for new participants. Compost drop-off locations are clearly marked and accessible, with staff available to answer questions and ensure only compostable items are accepted.

Residents who are interested in participating in the county's organics drop-off programs can find more information, including a list of accepted items and drop-off site locations, by scanning the QR code or visiting:

AnokaCountyMN.gov/organics



Anoka County
RECYCLING & RESOURCE SOLUTIONS

TPC Twin Cities

Where the pros play!

Anoka County
Proud Home to the 3M Open!
#GolfThatMatters

Property Tax Refund Claims due Aug. 15

The due date for filing a property tax refund is Aug. 15. Minnesota residents can file for the refund up to a year after the due date. For more information on filing, visit revenue.state.mn.us/filing-property-tax-refund

Mighty Mississippi Cleanup: An Annual Success



Anoka County Parks staff collaborate with other counties that border the Mississippi River to host the Mighty Mississippi Cleanup Challenge annually in spring. The event aims to help improve the quality of the river by removing refuse from its banks.

Officials in Goodhue County were initially made aware of a large buildup of garbage along the banks of the Mississippi in 2022 and decided to organize a river cleanup and challenge other governments in Minnesota that border the river to do the same.

This year, cooperative weather brought out many volunteers to assist in picking up trash at four cleanup events. Collectively, 131 volunteers removed 108 bags of trash and 27 bags of recycling from the riverbank, including:

- At Coon Rapids Dam, 15 volunteers and staff picked up 20 bags of garbage and eight bags of recycling.
- Partners at Mississippi Park Connection brought a group of 80 volunteers from Target who picked up 45 bags of garbage at Manomin.
- At Riverfront, 30 volunteers collected 35 bags of garbage and 15 bags of recyclables.
- Six volunteers picked up eight bags of trash and four bags of recycling at Mississippi West.

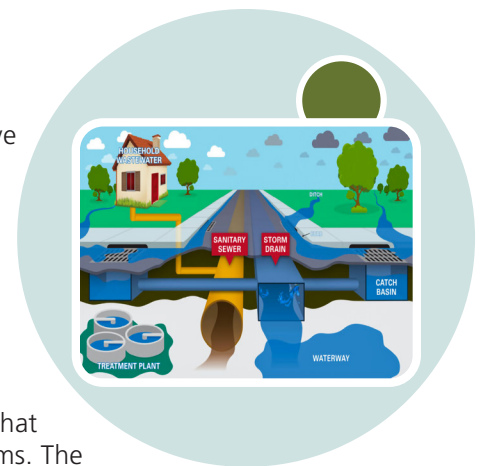
“This annual cleanup challenge has brought out hundreds of volunteers to our local parks that border the Mississippi, and they’ve made a big impact on the health of the river by removing garbage and recyclables, said District 1 Anoka County Commissioner John Heinrich. “Keeping the river clean benefits local ecosystems and also improves the aesthetics for people who recreate in and near the river.”

Prevent Stormwater Pollution by Reporting Illicit Discharges

Lakes, rivers, and streams are an important part of our ecosystem, and we all have a part to play in keeping them clean. One way to fulfill this role is to report illicit discharges.

What exactly are illicit discharges? And what do they have to do with keeping our waters clean? The answer to these questions starts with storm drains.

Everyone has seen the storm drains along the sides of roads and probably wondered where they go. What most people don’t know is that, unlike the wastewater from your home that is sent to water treatment facilities, the water that flows through these storm systems is drained directly into lakes, rivers, and streams. The water does not undergo any filtration or treatment to clean it before reaching surface waters. This is why it is so important to avoid and report illicit discharges.



Illicit discharge refers to any discharge to the stormwater drainage system, (commonly through drains in streets, gutters, ditches, and ponds) lakes, rivers, and streams other than stormwater. Substances that could be harmful include paint, trash, car fluids (like oil and gas), and cleaning materials. These are just a few examples of what an illicit discharge could look like, so it’s important to remember that the only thing that should be entering the storm drainage system is stormwater.



Reporting an illicit discharge can be a crucial act in stopping water pollution and keeping our waters clean, so please, if you witness an illicit discharge, report it to Rebecca Haug, at Rebecca.haug@anokacountymn.gov or 763-324-3144 immediately. For spills of potentially hazardous substances, call 9-1-1 right away. Non-stormwater discharges are prohibited and are enforced under local ordinances.

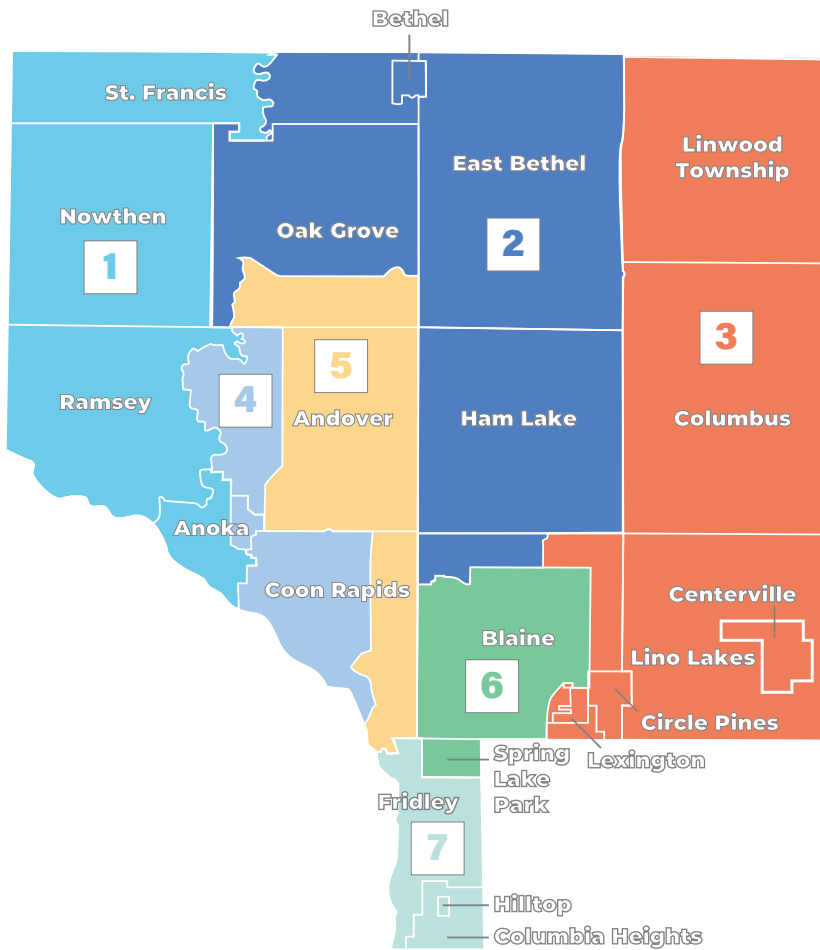
Anoka County
 2100 3rd Ave.
 Anoka MN 55303-5024



Visit our website!

763-324-4700

ANOKA COUNTY LEADERSHIP



John Heinrich
 DISTRICT 1
 COMMISSIONER

Julie Braastad
 DISTRICT 2
 COMMISSIONER

Jeff Reinert
 DISTRICT 3
 COMMISSIONER

Scott Schulte
 DISTRICT 4
 COMMISSIONER

Mike Gamache
 DISTRICT 5
 COMMISSIONER

Julie Jeppson
 DISTRICT 6
 COMMISSIONER

Mandy Meisner
 DISTRICT 7
 COMMISSIONER

Brad Wise
 COUNTY
 SHERIFF

Brad Johnson
 COUNTY
 ATTORNEY

County board meetings are generally held the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 9:30 a.m. in Room 705 of the Anoka County Government Center in Anoka. Watch board meetings live at anokacountymn.gov. "Anoka County News" is produced by Anoka County Communications, Erik Thorson, Chief Communications Officer, 763-324-4612 publicinfo@anokacountymn.gov • anokacountymn.gov/newsletter
 Printed on 30 percent post-consumer recycled paper.

