



Crosslake Connections

From the desk of Lori Conway, City Administrator

As we stand on the cusp of spring here in Crosslake, I'm reminded that March has a personality all its own. It may promise sunshine and melting snowbanks, but as the saying goes, it can still roar like a lion. After all, didn't Punxsutawney's famous groundhog see his shadow? Whether we are destined for a few more weeks of winter's chill or an early thaw, there's no denying that change is in the air.

Before we bid winter farewell, however, our community embraced it in the best possible way: with another fantastic Winterfest celebration. From the first spark of the bonfire to the last consumed spoonful of soup, it was a joyful reminder of what makes this city so special. Dozens gathered to taste creative soups, cast their votes, and celebrate this deliciously competitive tradition. Once again, the event was a tremendous success thanks to the leadership and energy of the Crosslake Chamber of Commerce and the many volunteers and businesses who made it all possible.

Hearts—and hands—were warmed by the crackling bonfire at the Crosslake Community Center, while little giggles carried across the snow during horse-drawn sleigh rides, sledging adventures down the hill, and twirls around the ice rink. Marshmallows were toasted to golden perfection, s'mores were assembled with care, and for a few perfect hours, winter felt less like something to endure and more like something to celebrate.

As we shift our focus toward spring, excitement is already building for the 52nd Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade & Celebration. I have a confession to make: as I write this, I am slightly tempted to duck behind my desk and admit that I have not yet fully partaken in this epic event that draws an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 visitors into our community each year. It's a tradition that has grown into a regional favorite, filling our streets with green, laughter, and a sense of shared celebration.

But this is the year. I've decided it's time. I will grab my Irish husband, gather our festive trinkets, and stake out a spot bright and early—joining thousands of others in search of the perfect parade view. There's something powerful about standing shoulder to shoulder with neighbors and visitors alike, celebrating heritage and sipping on a spirit or two.

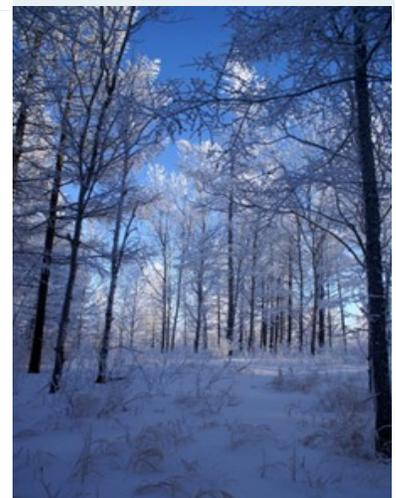
In my last newsletter, I shared my newfound love of Bingo. I'm happy to report that the fun hasn't stopped there. Monday evenings have found me at Patrick's Cedar Chest for the beloved meat raffle. If you've never experienced it, you're missing out—not just on the chance to win, but on the camaraderie and laughter that fill the room. There's even a delightfully catchy song reserved for double—or dare I say triple—winners, affectionately dubbed "meat hogs." It's these small, uniquely local traditions that weave us closer together.

Each month, I continue discovering new events, new faces, and new reasons to appreciate this wonderful community. From seasonal festivals to weeknight gatherings, there is always something happening in Crosslake. See you out there!



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Fire Department - Chief Lohmiller

The Fire Department has been off to a busy start in 2026. Several members have been attending outside training opportunities focused on leadership development, helping strengthen the department's ability to serve our community now and into the future.

Recently, city elected officials and department heads participated in a tabletop exercise centered on emergency management. This valuable training was provided in part through a grant awarded by the Initiative Foundation and allowed participants to work through realistic emergency scenarios, enhancing coordination and preparedness across departments.

Our team is also preparing for the upcoming St. Patrick's Day Parade. We're looking forward to connecting with community members and celebrating together—be sure to come out and say hello!

As we look ahead, a reminder that spring is right around the corner. Please use caution around lakes and ponds as ice conditions become unpredictable and thin. Additionally, wildfire season will soon be upon us—watch for updates and safety reminders in the coming weeks.



Police Department - Chief Maier—

In January, the Crosslake Police Department received a \$15,000 donation from the Crosslake Ideal Lions Club. This money is to be used for the creation of a gym and the purchase of exercise equipment to be put into an empty portion of the basement at City Hall. This addition to the Police Department will promote officer health and well-being. Thank you!

Stay Safe and thank you for your continued support!

Septic Inspections In-House

In another effort to improve service and reduce costs, the City will now be conducting **new septic system inspections in-house**.

Previously, inspections were performed externally. By bringing this service in-house, the City will:

- Save applicants time
- Improve coordination between zoning, building, and septic review

This change allows for better oversight and streamlined communication throughout the development process. It also supports our commitment to protecting public health and water quality while making the process more efficient for property owners.



Planning & Zoning—Jody Grund

Planning & Zoning Department Update: Moving Forward with Efficiency and Service

The City's Planning and Zoning Department is committed to improving service delivery, increasing efficiency, and responsibly managing growth in our community. As development activity continues, we are implementing new tools and services designed to better serve residents, contractors, and property owners.

Moving to a Digital Permitting Platform – Coming This June

We are excited to share that the Planning and Zoning Department is transitioning to a new digital permitting and licensing platform, with a goal of implementation by June of this year.

This system will allow applicants to:

- Submit permit applications online
- Upload plans and supporting documents digitally
- Track application status in real time
- Receive approvals and inspection results electronically
- Make payments securely online

Moving to a digital platform will:

- Reduce paper use and in-office visits
- Shorten processing times
- Improve communication between staff and applicants
- Provide better transparency throughout the review process

Our goal is to make the permitting process more efficient, user-friendly, and accessible while maintaining high standards for review and compliance.



WINTERFEST 2026

Parks, Recreation & Library—TJ Graumann

In February, we introduced Sunday Funday, giving kids the opportunity to burn off energy in the gym with hopscotch, balance activities, basketball hoops, tunnels, parachute play, and more. The program has been a huge hit so far!

On Friday, February 6, we hosted WinterFest at the Community Park. Patrons enjoyed sledding, skating, roasting s'mores over bonfires, chili and hot dogs, a Chuck-a-Puck event, and more.

Beginning in April, we will offer SilverSneakers® Evening Yoga, expanding our wellness opportunities for adults and seniors.

Also in April, we plan to host our first annual self-guided Easter Egg Hunt in and around the Picnic Pavilion and Playground. Stay tuned for additional details!

Youth Baseball registration is now open through March 30.

Ongoing offerings include AARP Tax Assistance, Tumbling Class through Community Education, Senior Meals, Woodcarvers (Tuesdays), Mahjong (Thursdays), Art Club, Garden Club, daily fitness classes, and Pickleball.

For more specific information on programs and events, please email us at ccc@cityofcrosslake.gov or by phone 218-692-4271

Mayor Jackson Purfeerst

As we roll into 2026, our focus remains clear: steady progress you can see.

We've just completed Year 2 of our road improvement plan and are beginning Year 3. Recently, the City Council voted to extend the plan by an additional two years — making it a true 7-year road plan. That means consistency, long-term planning, and measurable improvements that taxpayers can see and drive on. Thoughtful infrastructure investment today prevents larger costs tomorrow.

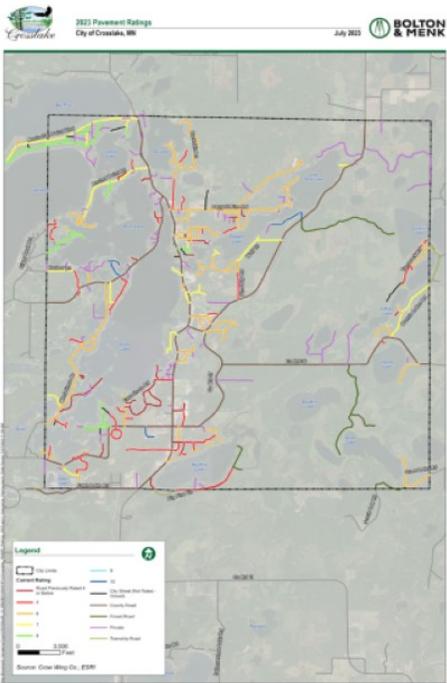
I will also continue working closely with our ambulance service partners to restore dedicated service while keeping a careful eye on your pocketbook. Reliable emergency response matters — and so does affordability. In addition, I've been meeting with representatives and senators on both sides of the aisle to work on legislation regarding ambulance services and advocate for practical, long-term solutions. At the state level, regulations continue to evolve. I remain engaged with legislators in St. Paul to ensure our community's voice is heard and to advocate for practical solutions that protect local taxpayers.

We will continue collaborating with the county to maintain our county roads and keep open lines of communication on current and future projects. Strong partnerships make stronger outcomes.

We're also looking forward to advancing trail expansion opportunities that enhance recreation, connectivity, and quality of life in our community.

Every day, I am working alongside city staff, hearing from residents, and partnering with local and regional leaders to keep our city moving forward. I will also continue working with mayors across Minnesota to advocate for solutions to the challenges our cities face.

Thank you for your continued trust and engagement as we build responsibly and plan for the future.



2026 Street Improvements

- ◆ Year 3 Road Improvements - **Mill & Overlay** will include parts of Bonnie Lakes Trail, Pine Bay Dr, Pine Bay Trail, Red Pine Drive, Red Pine Road, Shamrock Road, Shores Dr, Sleepy Valley Road, Tamarack Lane, Wolf Trail, Bonnie Lakes Lane, Velvet lane, Sugar Loaf Road, Wilderness Trail and Sunrise Blvd.
- ◆ **Chip Sealing** will take place on the roads that were completed last year – 2025.
- ◆ A Petition was received from over 35% of property owners on **Sunrise Blvd** requesting to have the road improved. A public hearing was held and this was approved as an assessment district.
- ◆ The County will be doing bridge rehabilitation on CSAH 66 over Daggett Brook starting approximately May 18th with an estimated completion date of September 4th.
- ◆ The Public Works Department will continue the summer with ongoing street maintenance projects, trail sealcoating along CSAH 66N and Perkins Road.

CITY OF CROSSLAKE

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