



2023 HRA and EDA Annual Summary

We are excited to present the 2023 HRA and EDA Annual Summary. This report reflects the steady progress made by the Economic Development Authority, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, the Beautification and Public Art Committee, the Together Elk River Committee, and the Joint Finance Committee.

Economic Development Authority

In 2023, the Elk River Economic Development Authority (EDA) was comprised of four members of the City Council, three residents at large:

- Dan Tveite, President (At large)
- Mike Beyer, Vice President (Councilmember)
- Jeff Hartwig, Treasurer (At large)
- Charlie Blesener (At large)
- Cory Grupa (Councilmember)
- Jennifer Wagner (Councilmember)
- Matt Westgaard (Councilmember)



From left to right: Cory Grupa, Jeff Hartwig, Matt Westgaard, Dan Tveite, Mike Beyer, Jennifer Wagner, Charlie Blesener

Housing and Redevelopment Authority

In 2023, the Elk River Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) was comprised of the following members:

- Dennis Chuba, Chair
- Jennifer Wagner, Vice Chair
- Nate Ovall, Secretary
- Jayme Cannon (through 9/2)
- Lynn Caswell (appointed 10/16, not pictured)
- Jill Larson-Vito



From left to right: Nate Ovall, Jayme Cannon, Dennis Chuba, Jill Larson-Vito, Jennifer Wagner

Committees

Together Elk River Committee

The Together Elk River Committee continued to use the Together Elk River initiative to support the local business community. The focus in 2023 was on 169 Redefine and its impacts to businesses along the Highway 169 corridor. Orange Ball Creative generated dozens of social posts that were shared on the Chamber, Economic Development, and City Facebook pages. In addition, the committee secured a digital billboard that provided dozens of banners that supported local businesses and city events.



Beautification and Public Art Committee

The Beautification Committee merged with the Public Art Committee to form the Beautification and Public Art Committee. The group continued to meet to recognize business owners who have made an effort to clean, repair, improve, and enhance the overall aesthetics of their property to maintain the beauty of their neighborhood. Each year, the Beautification and Public Art Committee fields applications for the City Beautification Award. In December, Edge Bar + Boutique was presented with the award for their recent construction of a coffee bar and boutique downtown.

In addition, the Beautification and Public Art Committee began work on soliciting additional public art for the community and will begin the artist search in early 2024.



Joint Finance Committee

The Joint Finance Committee met on three occasions in 2023 utilizing the valuable expertise of its members. The committee focused on supporting staff's decisions regarding multiple loans issued by the EDA.

Department Activities

Marketing

The economic development staff had multiple opportunities in 2023 to market properties and programs of the department. In addition to various web and print ads staff were able to attend many trade shows and development summits. The Economic Development department in partnership with Sherburne County Economic Development staffed a sponsored hole for the annual Elk River Area Chamber of Commerce golf tournament at Links at Northfork in July. The MNCAR Commercial Real Estate Expo was in October where multiple properties were promoted to hundreds of real estate professionals. In November, Economic Development Director Brent O'Neil was featured on a panel focused on an update of development in the north suburbs.

Staff partnered with Tri-CAP and ERMU to produce a home improvement resources one-page mailer that was included with an ERMU monthly utility bill. Economic development staff fielded nearly two dozen in-person and call-in inquiries, of which four new loans were closed.

DERBA

Staff continued their support and attendance at monthly meetings of the Downtown Elk River Business Association (DERBA). Regular meetings with local business-owners have afforded the economic development staff valuable collaboration and insight into the social and economic pulse of Elk River's downtown.

Sherburne County Connect

Staff in the Sherburne County economic development department started Sherburne County Connect, which is an organized effort to improve communication, support, and encourage active engagement across Sherburne County. The group is comprised of community and economic development staff from the cities and townships of Sherburne County and meets monthly across the county.

EV Event

The economic development staff were on the steering committee for Recharge MN's Elk River ElectriFUNcation & EV Test Drive Event in August at FT Center. The EDA was one of the sponsors of the event.

Placer.ai

Staff have continued to implement the foot-traffic software: Placer.ai. Economic Development Specialist, Josh Mollan presented findings to the EDA in May, the HRA in September, and for the Elk River Area Chamber Connections group in November.

Development Projects

This section highlights projects undertaken in Elk River in 2023. Some of these had direct involvement from the HRA and EDA and through the strong local economy others were the result of passionate business and property owners committed to the community.

Elk River Meats

After the 2022 acquisition of the former Elk River Meats property, the HRA demolished the code-deficient building and repurposed the parcel into a temporary green space that was utilized by downtown visitors. The HRA is actively discussing the future redevelopment of that and surrounding parcels.



Hillside Heights

Construction began and nearly completed on a 52-unit apartment building on Twin Lakes Road.



Building Products, Inc.

BPI expanded into the Twin Cities market utilizing space from Mill City Paper on Industrial Boulevard.



Plants and Things

Plants and Things constructed a new indoor and outdoor showroom next to the existing Furniture and Things along Highway 10.



Quick Lane at Cornerstone Auto

Cornerstone Auto constructed a new 14-bay express service facility off Highway 10.



JonnyPops

After their move to Elk River in 2022, JonnyPops held their ribbon cutting in October.



Avery's Adventures

In September, this family-owned indoor playground opened its doors to give kids a unique place to gather and play.



Beaudry Oil

Beaudry Oil started construction on a 25,000 sq ft lubricants facility on County Road 1.



McDonald's

McDonald's demolished and rebuilt their store on Highway 169 that features a modern and digital-forward experience.



The Delta

Construction has been completed on one of two 90-unit apartment buildings on the old Saxon Motors site along the Mississippi River.



Properties

In January, the EDA continued its contract with Ryan Hardin of Hardin Companies as its broker for its available land. Ryan has been actively marketing the properties and has been involved in many discussions and decisions.

Natures Edge Business Center

The Northwest site at Natures Edge Business Center I has had strong interest with an aim at closing in 2024. The available 21-acre land at Natures Edge Business Center III continued to be marketed for business park uses.

Fox Haven

The 3-acre property continued to be marketed and staff have continued to research the best uses of the property.

Main and Gates

The 1.7-acre property had a purchase agreement signed in June but was unable to close on schedule. There remains interest in the site as staff continue to market it.

Status of Loans

EDA Microloans

The EDA had four active loans in 2023 with one set to be paid off in early 2024.

EDA Active Loan Portfolio	
Number of Loans	4
Total Original Principal	\$ 611,200.00
Outstanding Balance	\$ 338,403.62

HRA Rehab Loan Program

The HRA closed four rehab loans through CEE for a total of \$122,677.73. Moreover, in 2022 and 2023 CEE closed six additional loans outside of our program to residents in Elk River for a total of \$80,990.

HRA Active Loan Portfolio	
Number of Loans	9
Total Original Principal	\$ 221,953.95
Outstanding Balance	\$ 162,108.05

Building Permits

Commercial

In 2023, Elk River saw a valuation of just over \$50 million in commercial building permits, compared to \$60 million in 2022, \$51.5 million in 2021, and \$21.5 million in 2020.

Residential

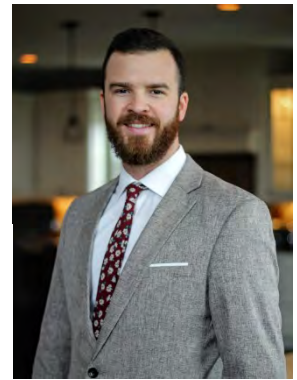
On the residential side, Elk River saw a valuation of nearly \$37 million in residential building permits.

Staff

Economic Development Director Brent O'Neil and Economic Development Specialist Josh Mollan continue to support the department by fielding phone call and walk-in inquiries, attending ribbon cuttings, leading department committees, marketing resources to existing and prospective business owners and residents, visiting local businesses, and attending economic development events and trainings.



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