

Council Corner - Parks & Recreation in Baldwin

By Council Member Tom Rush

For more than 17 years, I have had the privilege of working alongside the Baldwin Park Committee, first as a committee member and later as the City Council liaison. During that time, I have watched our parks grow into some of the community's greatest assets. I hope this overview provides a helpful look at the parks, lakes, and volunteers who help make Baldwin such a special place to live and enjoy the outdoors.

Baldwin features two primary parks located on the east and west sides of Highway 169. These parks provide a wide range of recreational opportunities and are maintained for the enjoyment of all residents.

Young Park — Donated by Kermit and Margarette Young in 2004, Young Park spans 80 acres and is located two miles east of Highway 169 on County Road 38. The park features a monument dedicated to the Youngs in honor of their generous donation of the land. The park offers extensive amenities, including:

- * Athletic facilities: A fenced baseball field (used by Princeton and Zimmerman youth MYAS leagues), a basketball court, a horseshoe pit, and a Gaga ball pit.
- * Leisure and trails: Five miles of crushed-granite boardwalk trails equipped with benches and picnic tables.
- * Family amenities: Modern playground equipment for children ages 2–12 and a swing set.
- * Event spaces: A rentable pavilion and two grills that host the annual Fun Fest and car show.



Goose Lake Park — Donated by Sherburne County in 2012, Goose Lake Park covers 37 acres, the majority of which is water. Located two miles off County Road 87, the park features a 12-stall parking lot and a one-mile crushed-granite trail with benches offering scenic overlooks of the lake.

Lake and Environmental Management — Baldwin provides public access to Elk and Sandy lakes through public beaches and boat launches. In partnership with the Sherburne County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), the City has utilized grant funding to address runoff issues and improve lake water quality. Ongoing maintenance includes beaches, docks, boat launches, and rain gardens. Additionally, the City owns property at Lake Diann and Lake Helena, the latter of which is reserved for carry-in kayaks and canoes only.

Park Committee — Established in 1996, the five-member Baldwin Park Committee oversees the development and continued success of the City's park system. The committee meets monthly and is currently chaired by Mary Larson, with Tom Rush serving as the City Council liaison. ^B

WHAT'S COVERED IN THIS ISSUE

- RESPECTING THE PARKS
- FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT
- FUN FEST ANNOUNCEMENT
- ORDINANCE SPOTLIGHT UPDATE

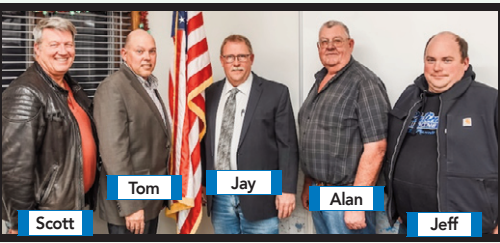
AUGUST
2026

Upcoming City Calendar

- August 5: City Council Meeting
August 12: Special Planning Commission
August 19: City Council Meeting
August 20: Park Committee Meeting
August 26: Planning Commission Meeting
-
- September 2: City Council Meeting
September 7: City Hall closed in Observance of Labor Day
September 9: Special Planning Commission Meeting
September 16: City Council Meeting
September 17: Park Committee Meeting
September 23: Planning Commission Meeting
- City Council meetings start at 7:00pm unless otherwise noted.

CITY OF BALDWIN OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY-THURSDAY – 8-4:30PM
CLOSED FOR LUNCH – 12:30PM-1:00PM
FRIDAY – 8-12:00PM



BALDWIN CITY COUNCIL

Jay Swanson, Mayor — 763-631-8545 — mayor@baldwinmn.gov
Jeff Holm — 763-389-8931 — CouncilmemberA@baldwinmn.gov
Scott Case — 763-389-8931 — CouncilmemberB@baldwinmn.gov
Alan Walker — 763-389-8931 — CouncilmemberC@baldwinmn.gov
Tom Rush — 763-389-8931 — CouncilmemberD@baldwinmn.gov

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BALDWIN CITY STAFF

Joan Heinen — Clerk/Treasurer — city.clerk@baldwinmn.gov
Kayla Nielsen — Deputy Clerk/Treasurer
Robin Fischer — Fire Chief — 763-350-0374
Zachary Good — Public Works Supervisor
Phil Fadden — Maintenance Technician
Josh Wergin — Maintenance Technician

Recent Vandalism at Young Park Disappoints Community

Recent vandalism at Young Park has left many in the Baldwin community saddened and disappointed. While the damage can be repaired, it is discouraging to see a place that has brought so much enjoyment to families, walkers, children, and nature lovers become the target of senseless destruction. Parks belong to everyone, and acts like these diminish something the entire community shares.

Young Park is much more than a collection of trails and green space. The park stands on land generously donated by Kermit Young and honors the legacy of Kermit and his wife, Margritte, whose lives were deeply rooted in Baldwin. Their love of the outdoors, commitment to conservation, and dedication to the community helped shape the park into the peaceful gathering place it is today. Every trail and scenic view reflects a history that deserves to be respected and preserved.



RESPECTING OUR PUBLIC SPACES STRENGTHENS US ALL

With the support of residents, volunteers, and city staff, the damage will be repaired, and the park will continue to serve future generations. Respecting public spaces is one small but meaningful way each of us helps preserve Baldwin's history and strengthen the community we are proud to call home. ^B

The City of Baldwin and the Sherburne County Sheriff's Office have addressed the incident, and those involved. The City's focus now is on restoring the park and reminding everyone of the importance of respecting the public spaces that bring our community together. Acts of vandalism affect far more than property—they impact a place that generations of Baldwin residents have enjoyed and cherished.

Young Park has long been a source of community pride, where neighbors gather, children play, and visitors experience the natural beauty that makes Baldwin special.

Sundays 10:00am
Join Us!



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Livonia Township Hall
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Fire Department Report «by Assistant Chief Torborg

Please join us in welcoming our newest probationary members to the Baldwin Fire Department: Ryan Schuft, Brian Hockemeyer, Danielle Bergmann, Nicole Wolfe, and Matthew Haugen (not pictured).

We are excited to have each of them join the Baldwin Fire family and look forward to serving our City together for many years to come. Their willingness to step forward reflects a spirit in Baldwin of dedication, sacrifice, and service we surely are accustomed to



seeing from our residents. It is their actions that strengthens our department and helps keep our people and properties safe. It is

a privilege to welcome individuals who have chosen to answer the call to serve others, often putting the needs of their neighbors before their own. We are grateful for their commitment and proud to have them as part of our team. ^B



Stay informed by the City with TextMyGov

TextMyGov text alerts is a convenient and smart text messaging service that provides Baldwin residents with important information and updates to keep citizens informed. Residents will receive text message notifications on things such as elections, road closures, and other relevant items. You can choose to opt-in by texting “Baldwin” to the number 91896. After sending an initial keyword, users will be asked to reply to the confirmation with a “yes” to opt-in for notifications. Other governmental entities across the country are utilizing this system with great success. For more information about TextMyGov, please visit <https://textmygov.com>. To view meeting information, calendar, or current events, please visit our website at www.baldwinmn.gov. ^B

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Burning Permits

Regarding Baldwin Permit Information

A burning permit is required for all open burns except for recreational fires within a 3-foot by 3-foot area and setback 20 feet from any structure. Recreational fires are limited to dry, clean wood that is unpainted or untreated including cordwood, branches, limbs, twigs dimensional lumber cut into lengths not longer than three feet. A burning permit may be obtained at the Baldwin City Hall or with a Baldwin Fire Warden free of charge.

A yearly permit can also be applied for at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources website at <https://apps.dnr.state.mn.us/burning-permits> for a \$5.00 annual fee.

Once a burning permit has been issued, it is the permit holder's responsibility to confirm that no burning ban is in effect prior to starting an open burn or recreational fire and the permit holder must be constantly in attendance of the fire. No fire may be allowed to smolder with no person in attendance and the open burn or recreational fire must be completely extinguished before the permit holder leaves the site. You do not need an open burning permit when the ground is completely covered by a minimum of 3 inches of snow. ^B



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REWARD**

For information leading to conviction of the individual(s) responsible. Dog was found tied to a tree in Young Park on May 16, 2026.



Breed: Cur Mix Color: Brown Collar: Orange

**ANYONE WITH INFORMATION IS
ENCOURAGED TO CALL THE SHERBURNE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S NON-EMERGENCY LINE AT 763-765-3500
OR CITY HALL AT 763-389-8931.**



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Planning Commission

Regarding Baldwin regular scheduled meetings

Behind every new neighborhood, business, park, or development in Baldwin is a group of dedicated commissioners helping shape the city's future.

The Baldwin Planning Commission is a seven-member board appointed by the City Council. Commissioners serve staggered three-year terms, providing continuity and long-term vision as the community grows. Meetings are staffed by the city's Planning and Zoning Administrator, Dan Licht of The Planning Company, along with City Council Liaison Jay Swanson.

The Commission meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Baldwin City Hall.

Recently, the Commission has been focused on updating Baldwin's Comprehensive Plan—a roadmap that helps guide the city's future. Along the way, members review zoning requests, development proposals, land subdivisions, variances, conditional and interim use permit applications, ordinance updates, and other planning matters. They work closely with city staff, planning professionals, developers, and residents to ensure Baldwin continues to grow in a thoughtful and responsible way.

Curious about how decisions are made that shape Baldwin? The public is always welcome to attend any regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. ^B



Ordinance Spotlight Residential Accessory Buildings

The Zoning Ordinance allows construction of accessory buildings on residential properties within Baldwin as follows:

- There is no limit on the number of accessory buildings allowed.
- The area of all accessory buildings is limited to 4% of the area of the property.
- For properties less than 5 acres in area or within a Shoreland area, the height of the building is limited to 25 feet. Accessory buildings on properties 5 acres in area or larger that are not within a Shoreland area are allowed to be 35 feet in height. The height of a building is measured from grade to the midpoint of a pitched roof.
- Accessory buildings must be set back from property lines and the Ordinary High Water Level of a public lake or stream by the same distances required for the house on the property.
- Pole building construction (post/beam foundation and metal exterior finish) is allowed.
- Use of a shipping container as an accessory building is only allowed on properties less than 10 acres in area with approval of an Administrative Permit and must have an exterior finish and roof so as not to look like a shipping container. Temporary use of a shipping container may also be allowed for limited time periods for moving or during construction.
- An accessory building cannot be used as a second dwelling, defined as having a kitchen, toilet and bath facilities, and sleeping quarters. An accessory building with not more than two of these elements is allowed.
- Business use of an accessory building requires approval of an Interim Use Permit and may be subject to commercial building codes.
- A building permit is required to construct any accessory structure larger than 200 square feet. Sherburne County requires a septic compliance certificate issued within the prior 10 years before approval of a building permit to construct an accessory building.

**AN ACCESSORY BUILDING
CANNOT BE USED AS A
SECOND DWELLING,
DEFINED AS HAVING A
KITCHEN, TOILET AND
BATH FACILITIES, AND
SLEEPING QUARTERS**

More information regarding accessory building regulations is provided in Chapter 18 of the Zoning Ordinance available on the City website or by contacting City staff. ^B

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Election Judges

Election Judges play a vital role in conducting voting activities for local, state, and federal elections. The City of Baldwin is looking for individuals to join this proud team working to ensure the election process is fair and in accordance with our laws.

To be an election judge, you must be:

- Eligible to vote in Minnesota
- Able to read, write, and speak English
- Appointed by the City Council

An election judge cannot be a candidate in the election or closely related to a candidate. Also, election judges cannot be closely related to another election judge in the same precinct.

Election judges are required to complete election judge paid training through the Sherburne County Auditor/Treasurer's Office.

If you are interested in serving as an election judge, you can find the Election Judge Application on the City's website at baldwinmn.gov under Election Information, or by contacting the City Clerk/Treasurer Joan Heinen at 763-389-8931 or at city.clerk@baldwinmn.gov. ^B

★★★★★

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Volunteer Opportunities « by Mary Larson

It's the Fun in Baldwin Funfest that makes it so special!

Our annual car show has an amazing variety of cars. The car show is about sharing stories that includes times and places they have driven their classics to over coffee and doughnuts.

The kids enjoy Painting a Plow and eagerly wait to point out where their art is on the plows once first snow comes.

It's about the adults re-connecting with neighbors and friends.

Our wonderful volunteers wear the Baldwin Funfest t-shirts. Many thanks go out to our volunteers who come back Faithfully each year.

Volunteering is not just about working hours at Funfest or any event.

It is more than any one individual. It is about maintaining a sense of community with pride and traditions in who we are as a community with our rural lifestyle.

Are you new to the community and want to make some new friends? Do you have an idea for another activity that could be offered next year? Or an activity that could be offered year-round? Or a seasonal activity? Do you want to help build a stronger community? Do you have the urge to sign up to volunteer? All ideas are welcome.

— Sincerely, Mary Larson, Volunteer Event Coordinator, City of Baldwin ^B

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ Event Setup & Cleanup
- ✓ Kids Activities
- ✓ Parking & Greeting Guests
- ✓ Food Service
- ✓ Games & Entertainment
- ✓ General Event Helpers

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Call Mary Larson 507-208-1053 OR Call City Hall 763-389-8931

♥ We can't do it without you!



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BALDWIN

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LIVE, WORK & CELEBRATE!