CROW WING COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICT 3 CANDIDATE TAD A. ERICKSON (R)

Potential hits from the left	Potential hits from the right
• Voted for a roughly 50-megawatt crypto mining operation on the Brainerd Planning Commission • Named health and human services as the county budget area he would cut • Shared Turning Point USA's AmericaFest 2021, a conference built around 2020 election denial • Has shared content from election deniers including Kari Lake and Michael Flynn • Shared "The War Against Woke Communism" • Told a 2022 forum "my level of confidence in machines is not there," after the county's own election administrator had refuted the premise • Said secretaries of state nationally "exceeded their purview" in the 2020 election • Contributed to Trump Save America JFC • Said the pandemic response "overstepped" and infringed on individual rights • Campaigns on the sheriff's 287(g) agreement with federal immigration authorities	• Voted for a 9.54% preliminary levy increase, then for a 3% final increase — and taxes still rose for many • Absent from the council vote on the sheriff's 287(g) resolution he now campaigns on

Key Findings Include:

Erickson Told A 2022 Candidate Forum "So My Level Of Confidence In Machines Is Not There," After The County's Own Election Administrator Had Already Refuted The Premise. He described being given shifting answers: "I'm not technical enough to know whether

the machines were hackable, but what we're told when asked is, 'They're not connected online.' When pressed on that, 'OK, they're connected online, but they're not hackable.' Then when pressed on that, they say, 'Well, they are hackable, but there's no evidence of fraud.'" Administrative Services Director Deborah Erickson said the county does not connect its voting machines "to anything at all" and is "more restrictive than the law." He also said secretaries of state throughout the country "exceeded their purview in setting policy for the way votes were counted." The county board he seeks to join oversees election administration [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/21/2022].

Erickson Shared Turning Point USA's AmericaFest 2021, A Conference Built Around 2020 Election Denial. TPUSA ran a panel titled "State By State Election Integrity: What Happened In AZ, The Audit, And The Future" — "The Audit" being the Cyber Ninjas review of Maricopa County — and Phoenix New Times reported that Turning Point "has played a key role over the past year in disseminating claims of election fraud on a national level – and in Arizona" [Phoenix New Times, 12/20/2021]. Kyle Rittenhouse was the marquee guest one month after his acquittal and received a standing ovation [Newsweek, 12/21/2021]. Arizona Mirror documented a white nationalist in attendance and a January 6 participant who was given press credentials [Arizona Mirror, 12/23/2021].

Erickson Has Repeatedly Promoted Election Deniers And MAGA Figures On His Personal Facebook. He posted praising Kari Lake — "Kari Lake is great. Poise level: EXPERT. She also happens to be right" — shared an article quoting Michael Flynn titled "We Are in the Midst of a Fascist Power Grab, But We the People Still Have Options," and shared an American Mind piece titled "The War Against Woke Communism" [Tad Alan Erickson, 3/13/2026].

Erickson Voted For A 9.54% Preliminary Levy Increase And Then For The Final Increase. "Johnson, Bevans, Tiffany Stenglein, Jamie Bieser and Tad Erickson voted in favor of the 9.54% preliminary increase," driven by former firefighters "who were granted a total settlement of $3.9 million due to unfair labor practices when the council voted to dissolve the full-time fire department and its union" [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/20/2022]. The council certified a 3% increase in December, "but property taxes for many are still expected to rise because of a significant overall increase in property values throughout the county" [Brainerd Dispatch, 12/21/2022]. He was present and the levy and budget passed unanimously with no dissent noted [Brainerd City Council Meeting Minutes, 12/19/2022]. His 2026 platform leads with maintaining low property taxes [2026 Lakes Area Voting Guide, accessed 9/1/2026].

Erickson Named Health And Human Services As The County Budget Area He Would Cut, While Conceding It Is "An Increasing Need." "The county has a $100 million budget, 42% of that … comes from the property taxes. And I think we have to find other ways to bring those taxes down and cut costs, particularly in the area of health and human services, even though

that's an increasing need," he said. "And don't get me wrong, there's certain needs there as well" [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/21/2022].

Erickson Voted For A Roughly 50-Megawatt Crypto Mining Operation And Told Commissioners It Was Not Their Place To Question The Applicant's Business Plan. He was one of three Planning Commission members supporting VCV Digital's interim use permits in September 2022. "Erickson, who sits on both the Planning Commission and City Council, advocated for the permits, telling commissioners it was not their place to question the business plan of someone proposing to do business in the city. The business, he said, is the one taking the risk upon themselves" [Brainerd Dispatch, 10/07/2022].

Erickson Is Running His Third Campaign In Four Years And Filed Fifteen Months Into The Four-Year Term He Won In 2024. He served on the council 2019–2022, declined to seek re-election in order to run for county board, lost to Barrows, won a Ward 1 term in 2024, then announced for county board on March 20, 2026. Ward 1 voters face a second mid-term departure in four years from the same person [Brainerd Dispatch, 3/20/2026].

Erickson Is A Republican Who Contributed To Trump Save America In A Formally Nonpartisan Race. His one federal contribution went through WinRed earmarked for the Trump Save America Joint Fundraising Committee in April 2023 [FEC, accessed 9/2/2026]. He has no Minnesota state or local contributions [Minnesota Campaign Finance Board, accessed 9/2/2026].

Erickson Campaigns On The Sheriff's 287(g) Agreement With Federal Immigration Authorities But Was Absent From The Council Vote On It. His campaign video, filmed outside the county jail, states: "I want to state clearly my unapologetic support for law-enforcement, first responders, and emergency service workers." The video description says he "demonstrates his commitment and support for Law Enforcement even in the face of opposition to the Sheriff Office's 287G agreement with Federal authorities" [Commissioner Tad Erickson, 08/26/2026]. The Brainerd City Council passed a resolution supporting the sheriff's agreement in July 2025; Erickson was absent from that meeting [Brainerd Dispatch, 07/17/2026].

Erickson Said The Pandemic Response "Overstepped" And Infringed On Individual Rights. "I feel like we've taken the scientific process and used that to infringe on individual rights and individual freedoms. And so I think — I'm not saying we shouldn't do any of that, but I'm saying I think it overstepped…I think the decision-making would have been better handled on the local level than how it was" [Brainerd Dispatch, 7/19/2022].

Jurisdiction Summary

The Crow Wing District 3 Seat Is Open. Two-Term Incumbent Steve Barrows Announced In April 2026 That He Would Not Seek A Third Term. Barrows won the seat in 2018 and 2022 after roughly. [Brainerd Dispatch, 4/16/2026]

Though The Office Is Nonpartisan, Crow Wing County Leans Strongly Republican. In 2022 Scott Jensen carried the county over Gov. Tim Walz 61.82% to 34.87% and Jim Schultz carried it over Attorney General Keith Ellison 66.81% to 33.13% [Brainerd Dispatch, 11/12/2022].

BACKGROUND

Personal Life

Erickson Lives In Brainerd, In Crow Wing County, And Is A Little Falls, Minnesota Native. He was described in 2022 as living in south Brainerd. He was homeschooled during his own school-age years [Brainerd Dispatch, July 2022 candidate profile, accessed 8/31/2026].

Erickson Received a B.S. in Finance at Pensacola Christian College, Attending 2004-2009 [Linkedin, accessed 9/2/2026].

Erickson was a Member of the Kappa Psi Delta Collegian [Linkedin, accessed 9/2/2026] [Pensacola Christian College, accessed 9/2/2026].

Erickson has been Married to his Wife Jaclyn for 15 Years. They have Five Children Together [Tad Erickson for Crow Wing County Commissioner District 3, 3/13/2026].

Erickson's 2026 Candidate Questionnaire Lists Five Children, Whom The Couple Homeschools. 2022 reporting described three children [Brainerd Dispatch, 7/19/2022].

Professional, Civic, & Public Sector Background

Erickson Worked as a Licensed Minnesota Real Estate Agent at Goedker Realty Inc in 2012-2013 [Linkedin, accessed 9/2/2026].

Erickson Served as the Vice Chair for the brainerd Planning Commission 2011-2013 [Linkedin, accessed 9/2/2026].

Erickson worked as a Regional Development Planner at Region Five Development Commission. He worked in this role from 2010 [Linkedin, accessed 9/2/2026] until his departure in 2025 [Region Five Constant Contact Winter 2025 Quarterly Newsletter, accessed 9/15/2026].

Erickson works at the Minnesota Department of Transportation. He is listed as "Tad Erickson, Principal Planner, MnDOT District 3" [MnDOT, accessed 9/15/2026]. An April 2026 Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization mentions "MnDOT District 3 Principal Planner Tad Erickson provided a recap of most recent meeting of the ATP Managed Program Regional Target Formula group." [Saint Cloud APO, 4/30/2026].

Erickson Reported Delivering Pizzas for Dominos for Four Years in 2022 [Brainerd Dispatch, 11/09/2022].

Erickson Opened Adventure To Go, a Seasonal Bike, Kayak and Paddleboard Rental Business in Brainerd, Nisswa, and Lake Shore, MN [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/15/2021].

Erickson Served on the Brainerd City Council 2019-2022 and was Elected to his Current Term in 2024. He was appointed to the City Council in 2019 and Won a Full Term in 2020. "Instead of seeking re-election two years ago [2022], Erickson put in a bid for Crow Wing County Board, falling to incumbent Steve Barrows in District 3" [Brainerd Dispatch, 10/13/2024]. Erickson then successfully ran again for the Brainerd City Council in 2024 and won [Brainerd Dispatch, 11/05/2024].

Erickson Ran for the Crow Wing County Council District 3 Seat in 2022, Losing to Incumbent Steve Barrows [Brainerd Dispatch, 10/13/2024].

Integrity & Accountability

Erickson Announced His Candidacy For County Board On March 20, 2026, Fifteen Months Into His Four-Year Term He Won in 2024. Erickson also declined to run for a second term after the expiration of his partial term in 2022, instead running for County Commission. Ward 1 voters are facing a second mid-term departure in four years from the same person. [Brainerd Dispatch, 3/20/2026]

Campaign Background

Erickson's 2026 Lakes Area Voting Guide Questionnaire Lists Three Top Priorities: Maintaining Low Property Taxes, Ensuring Public Safety, And Commitment To Land And Water Resources Stewardship. Under taxes he pledges to "Support pro-growth policies that broaden the counties tax base," "Identify innovative solutions to reduce county expenditures when possible," and "Relieve businesses from unnecessary overregulation." Under public safety the first sub-point is "By NOT defunding the Sheriffs Office." Under stewardship: "Protecting Water Quality," "Prudent Land-Use Decisions," and "Prioritizing Solid-Waste and Forestry Practices" [2026 Lakes Area Voting Guide, accessed 9/1/2026].

Ideology & Politics

Erickson is a Republican. He made a contribution to a Trump PAC in April 2023 (see Personal political contributions) and has shared many partisan posts on his personal Facebook account (see Partisan posts).

Affiliation with political figures/organizations:

No findings of note

Partisan posts

Erickson Shared Turning Point USA Event, America Fest 2021. The festival featured speakers Donald Trump Jr., Rep. Jim Jordan, Judge Jeanine Pirro, Rep. Lauren Boebert, James O'Keefe, Charlie Kirk, and more MAGA and election denier individuals.

Tad Alan Erickson
December 21, 2021 ·

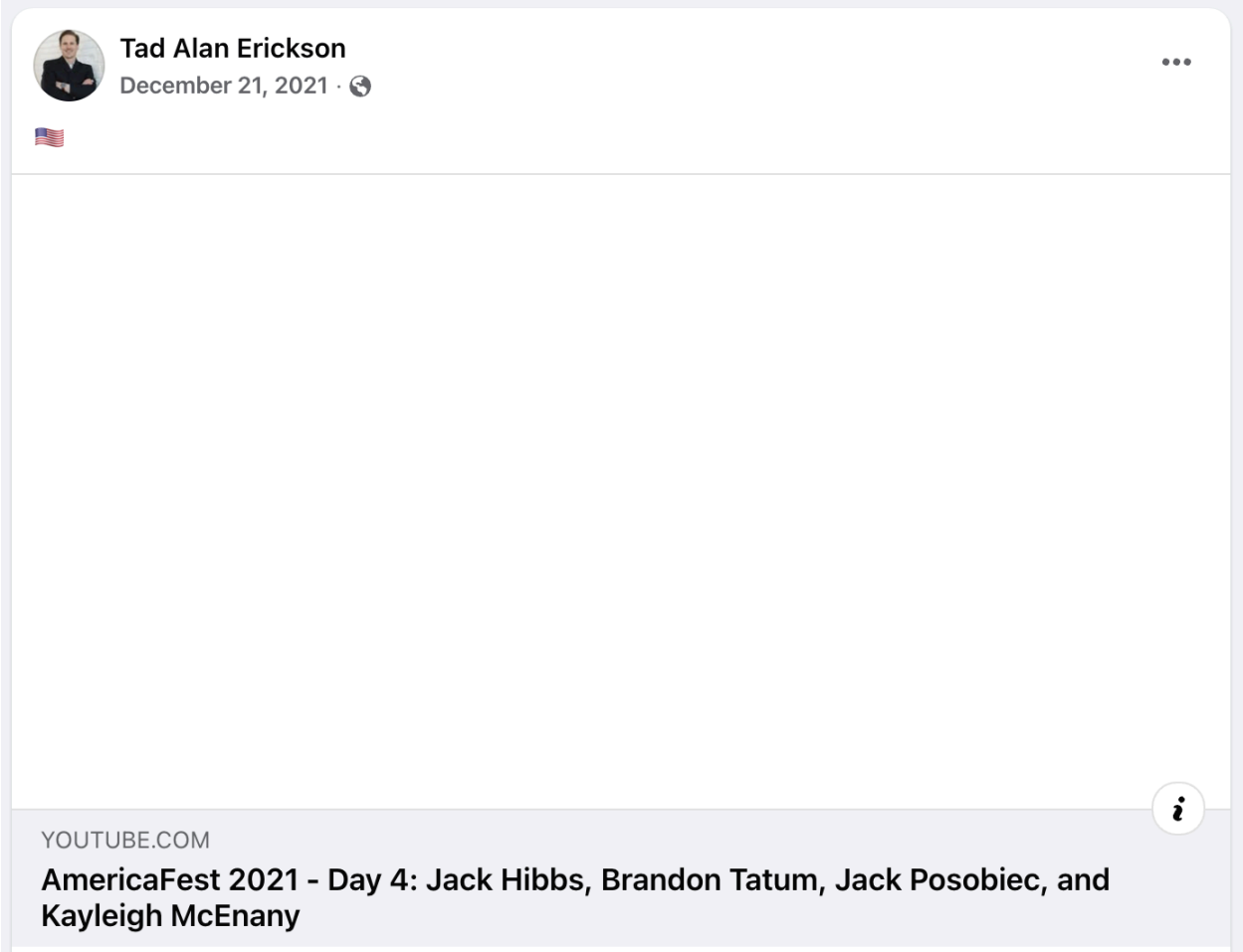
YOUTUBE.COM

AmericaFest 2021 | Day 2, Session 1 — Don Jr, Charlie, Jim Jordan & Judge Jeanine LIVE

Tad Alan Erickson
December 21, 2021 ·

YOUTUBE.COM

AmericaFest 2021 | Day 3, Session 1 — Rep. Lauren Boebert, James O'Keefe & Charlie Kirk LIVE



Election Denial Was Programmed Into The Conference: TPUSA Ran A Panel Titled "State By State Election Integrity: What Happened In AZ, The Audit, And The Future." "The Audit" refers to the Cyber Ninjas review of Maricopa County. The Phoenix New Times reported that Turning Point "has played a key role over the past year in disseminating claims of election fraud on a national level – and in Arizona" [Phoenix New Times, 12/20/2021].

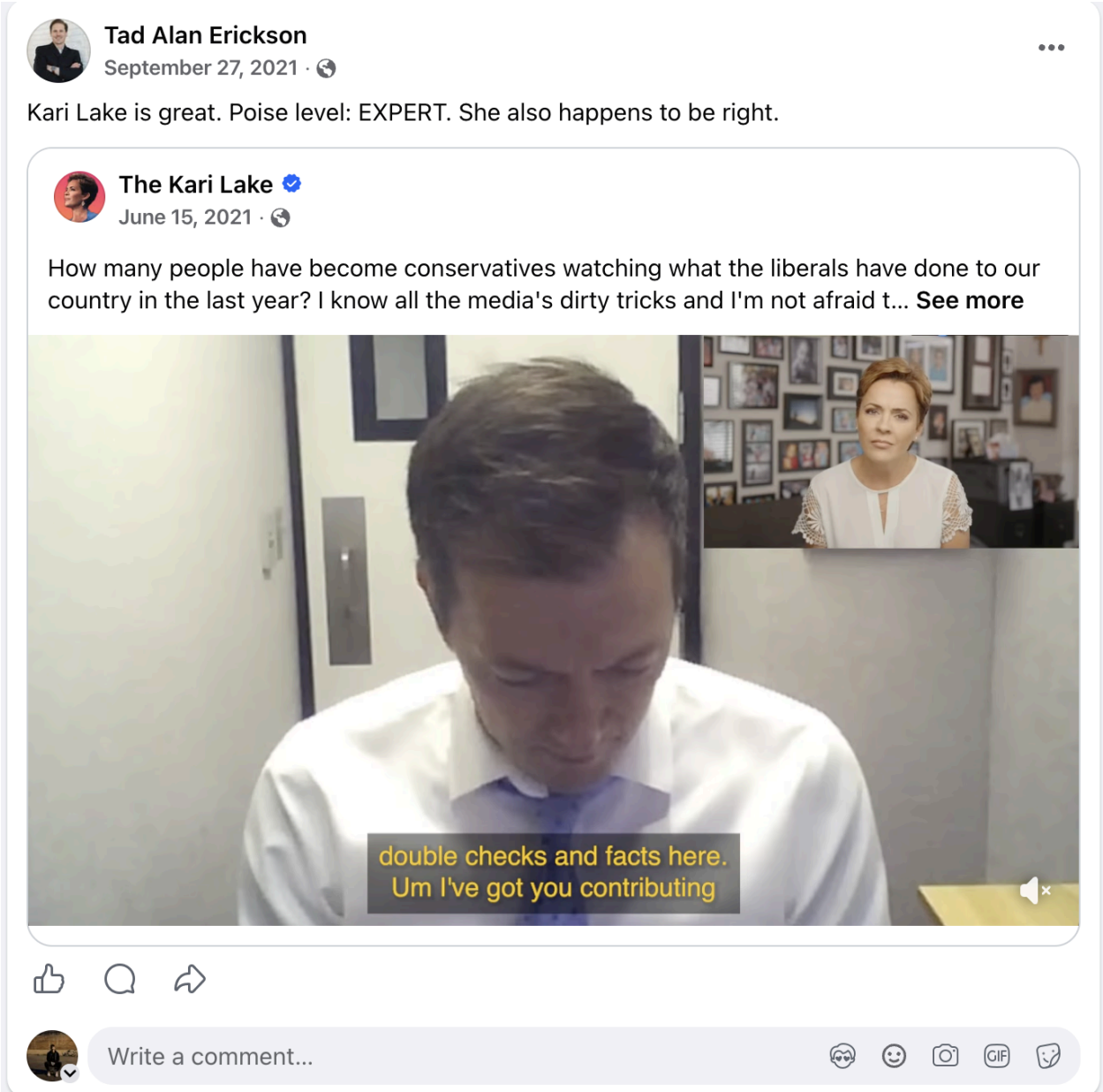
Kyle Rittenhouse Was The Marquee Guest One Month After His Acquittal And Received A Standing Ovation. Rittenhouse told the crowd, "My trial was an example of them trying to come after our Second Amendment rights, or the right to defend ourselves" [Newsweek, 12/21/2021]. Charlie Kirk said onstage, "Kyle Rittenhouse is about to be super rich. So you better be careful about what you write" [Newsweek, 12/20/2021], and Jack Posobiec called the Kenosha shootings "divine providence" [Rolling Stone, 12/22/2021].

A White Nationalist And A January 6 Participant Attended, And The January 6 Participant Was Given Press Credentials. Arizona Mirror documented the presence of Greyson Arnold, who had posted content calling Nazis the "pure race," lamented the Allied victory in World War II, and posted a Stormfront logo; and Micajah Jackson, a Capitol riot

participant with Proud Boys ties who said FBI agents should be "exiled." Proud Boys videographer Tomas Morales also attended [Arizona Mirror, 12/23/2021].

Erickson Shared an Article from American Mind Entitled "The War Against Woke Communism" [Tad Alan Erickson, 3/13/2026].

Erickson Posted Praising Election Denier Keri Lake. "Kari Lake is great. Poise level: EXPERT. She also happens to be right." [Tad Alan Erickson, 3/13/2026].



Erickson Posted an Article That Quoted Election Denier Michael Flynn. "We Are in the Midst of a Fascist Power Grab, But We the People Still Have Options" [Tad Alan Erickson, 3/13/2026].

Campaign Infrastructure

Erickson Maintains a Campaign Facebook and YouTube Account.

Erickson Does Not Have a Campaign Website.

Endorsements

No endorsements found for 2026 race.

Campaign finance

Erickson Reported $1,492.02 Cash On Hand and $3,350.47 in Contributions in an August 2026 Campaign Finance Report for the Period May 19, 2026 - August 5, 2026 [Crow Wing County, 8/5/2026]. He reported no cash on hand and no contributions for the period January 1, 2026 - May 18, 2026 [Crow Wing County, 8/5/2026].

Personal political contributions

Erickson has One Federal Contribution to Win Red and earmarked for TRUMP SAVE AMERICA JOINT FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE (C00770941) in April 2023 [FEC, accessed 9/2/2026].

Erickson Does Not Have Any Minnesota State or Local Contributions [Minnesota Campaign Finance Board, accessed 9/2/2026].

ISSUES

Taxes / Controversial Budget Cuts

Erickson Was Among Five Council Members Voting In Favor Of A 9.54% Preliminary 2023 Brainerd Levy Increase On September 19, 2022. "Johnson, Bevans, Tiffany Stenglein, Jamie Bieser and Tad Erickson voted in favor of the 9.54% preliminary increase." The increase was driven by former firefighters "who were granted a total settlement of $3.9 million due to unfair labor practices when the council voted to dissolve the full-time fire department and its union" [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/20/2022]. The council ultimately certified a 3% increase in December, "but property taxes for many are still expected to rise because of a significant overall increase in property values throughout the county" [Brainerd Dispatch, 12/21/2022]. Erickson was present at the city council meeting when the levy and budget were voted upon. No dissent was noted on the vote, so the budget and levy increase passed the Brainerd City Council unanimously on December 19, 2022 [Brainerd City Council Meeting Minutes, 12/19/2022].

Good Government/Ethics

No findings of note

Public Safety

No findings of note

Healthcare

Erickson Named Health and Human Services As The Area To Cut to Reduce the County Tax Burden While Acknowledging It Is "An Increasing Need." "'The county has a $100 million budget, 42% of that … comes from the property taxes. And I think we have to find other ways to bring those taxes down and cut costs, particularly in the area of health and human services, even though that's an increasing need,' Erickson said. 'And don't get me wrong, there's certain needs there as well'" [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/21/2022]

An Opinion Piece from 2022 Argues Erickson Supports Medical Freedom. "As a teacher, I am pleased to know Tad plans to uphold free speech, medical freedom, will lower government spending, and help reduce property taxes! [Tad Erickson for Crow Wing County Commissioner District 3, 5/29/2022].

Economic development

No findings of note

Housing & Development (affordable housing, zoning, data centers)

Erickson Voted for a Roughly 50-Megawatt Crypto Mining Operation Measured. Erickson was one of three commissioners on the Brainerd Planning Commission to support VCV Digital's interim use permits in September 2022 [Brainerd Dispatch, 10/07/2022].

Erickson Told Commissioners They "Should Not Question the Business Plan of Someone Proposing to do Business with the City." "Erickson, who sits on both the Planning Commission and City Council, advocated for the permits, telling commissioners it was not their place to question the business plan of someone proposing to do business in the city. The business, he said, is the one taking the risk upon themselves" [Brainerd Dispatch, 10/07/2022].

The Operation Was Never Built. The Permits Expired Without The Company Making Any Improvements, And The Site Remained A Vacant Lot. When VCV returned for a new permit in May 2024, the Brainerd Dispatch reported that "consideration for the interim use permit comes after a similar permit was issued in 2022 but expired without VCV starting to make any improvements on the land within a year of issuance," describing the location as "a vacant lot on Thiesse Drive in Brainerd's industrial park." The Planning Commission recommended denial 3-2; Chair Don Gorham said, "I just don't see any hard information coming from the applicants right now about what the operation is going to do" [Brainerd Dispatch, 5/17/2024].

The Council Formalized Its Denial 6-1, Citing 25 Megawatts Of Consumption For Only 16 Jobs, 24/7 Operation, And Nighttime Sound That Could Exceed Minnesota's 50-Decibel Residential Standard. The stated reasons also included conflict with the 4,800 housing units the city needs by 2033 [Brainerd Dispatch, accessed 7/21/2024].

Environment / Land Management

No findings of note

Infrastructure (roads, parks, water and utilities, bike paths)

No findings of note

Education

No findings of note

Elections/Voting Access

Erickson Said At The September 13, 2022 Candidate Forum, "So My Level Of Confidence In Machines Is Not There." "I'm not technical enough to know whether the machines were hackable, but what we're told when asked is, 'They're not connected online.' When pressed on that, 'OK, they're connected online, but they're not hackable.' Then when pressed on that, they say, 'Well, they are hackable, but there's no evidence of fraud.'" [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/21/2022]

The County's Own Election Administrator Had Already Refuted Crow Wing County Connects Voting Machines to "Anything At All." Administrative Services Director Deborah Erickson said Crow Wing County does not connect its voting machines "to anything at all" and is "more restrictive than the law by not connecting the machines to anything at all" [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/21/2022]

At The Same Forum Erickson Said Secretaries Of State Nationally Exceeded Their Authority In The 2020 Election. Erickson said he believes secretaries of state throughout the country "exceeded their purview in setting policy for the way votes were counted and the manner in which the election was conducted" [Brainerd Dispatch 9/21/2022].

Erickson Said He Did Not Believe Fraud Occurred Locally But Does Not Trust Voting Machines. "He said he does not believe election fraud occurred locally — although he said he's not confident in the reliability of voting machines" [Brainerd Dispatch, 9/21/2022]

Affordability / Cost of Living

No findings of note.

Immigration & ICE

Erickson Released a Campaign Video Expressing Support For The Crow Wing County Sheriff Office's 287(g) Agreement With Federal Immigration Authorities. The Brainerd City Council passed a resolution supporting the sheriff's agreement in July 2025. Erickson was absent from the meeting where the vote was taken on the resolution [Brainerd Dispatch, 07/17/2025].

Erickson References the County Jail and Supporting Federal Law Enforcement. "As you can see behind me is the Crow Wing County Jail, recently the topic of controversy regarding an agreement with federal law enforcement. One of the crucial elements of law-enforcement is coordination and communication amongst and between organizations and agencies. I want to

state clearly my unapologetic support for law-enforcement, first responders, and emergency service workers" [Commissioner Tad Erickson, 08/26/2026].

The Video's Description Indicates Erickson's Support for Law-Enforcement and 287 (g) Agreements. "In this video Tad Erickson, a candidate for Crow Wing County Commissioner District 3 - demonstrates his commitment and support for Law Enforcement even in the face of opposition to the Sheriff Office's 287G agreement with Federal authorities" [Commissioner Tad Erickson, 09/26/2026].

Posted in Support of ICE [Tad Erickson for Crow Wing County Commissioner District 3, 5/29/2026].

Tad Erickson for Crow Wing County Commissioner District 3 is with **Tad Alan E...**
May 29 · Brainerd, MN ·

Many will say that they support law enforcement - that is, until the laws are actually enforced.

Thank you Gail, Rachel, Dottie, Shirley and others for speaking up in Unapologetic Support of the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office, and other Law Enforcement on this defining issue. 🇺🇸
See less

Brainerd Dispatch
May 28 ·

People with signs and stories of individual victims spoke during the open forum at the Crow Wing County Board meeting

BRAINERDDISPATCH.COM
Residents highlight crime victims, speak in favor of ICE

COVID-19 Response

Erickson Said In July 2022 That The Pandemic Response "Overstepped." "'I feel like we've taken the scientific process and used that to infringe on individual rights and individual freedoms. And so I think — I'm not saying we shouldn't do any of that, but I'm saying I think it overstepped…I think the decision-making would have been better handled on the local level than how it was'" [Brainerd Dispatch, 7/19/2022]

Social Media Links:

Campaign Facebook (County Commission)
Campaign Facebook (City Council)
Personal Facebook

PUBLIC RECORDS

Erickson Was Cited For Driving 70 In A Posted 60 Zone On Highway 371 In Crow Wing County In February 2020, Five Months After Joining The Brainerd City Council. The citation was filed in district court on February 6, 2020 as case 18-VB-20-543, with the Crow Wing County Attorney as prosecuting agency. The single charge under Minn. Stat. § 169.14.4 is a petty misdemeanor, which under Minnesota law does not constitute a crime and carries a maximum $300 fine; the record notes it was not a third violation, and no accident damage. Erickson was convicted and fined $125.00 [Minnesota Judicial Branch Minnesota Court Records Online (MCRO), accessed 9/2/2026].