

City of River Falls Community Development

2017 Council Annual Report



Prepared by the City of River Falls Community Development Department



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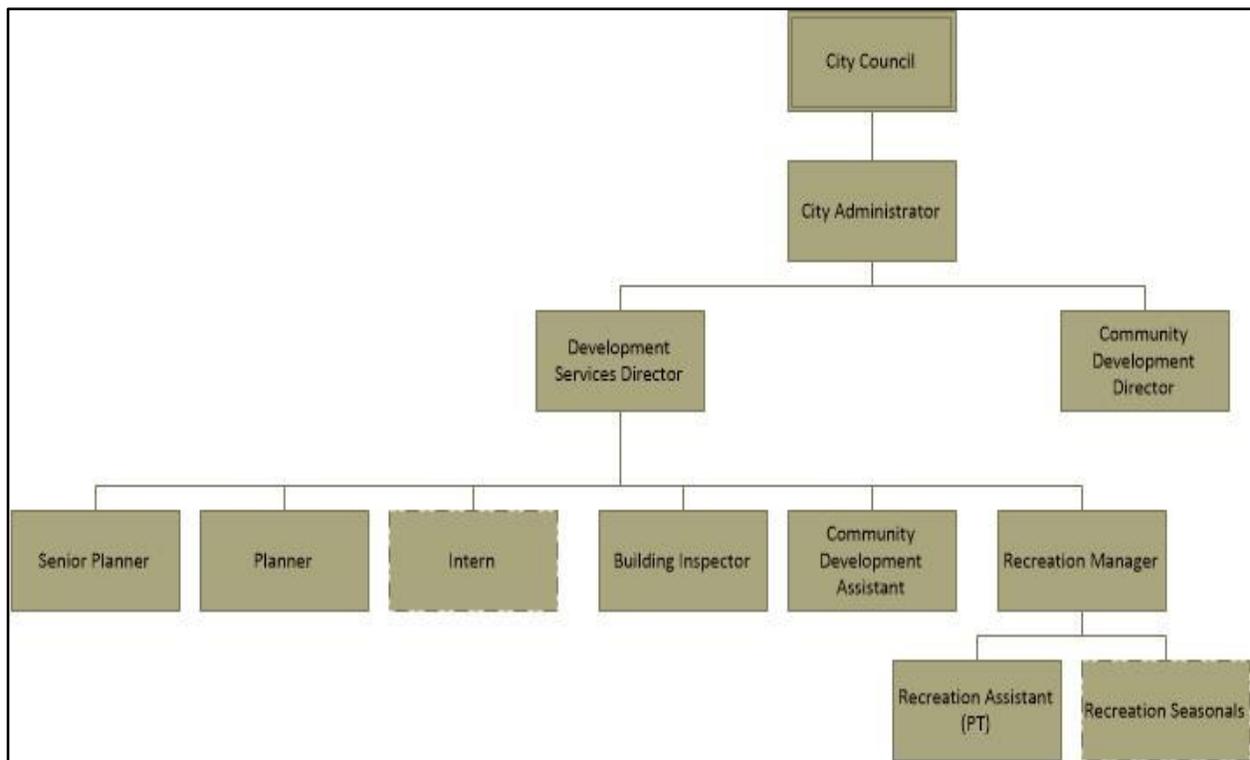
Introduction

The City of River Falls Community Development Department is uniquely equipped to provide value to the City as it encounters the many economic, social and environmental challenges US Cities face today. Planning is, in fact, an agent of hope in the community, affecting renewal and regeneration, and is a facet of government that uniquely focuses on the partnership of collective work to improve the conditions of the city and life in it. It is also uniquely prepared and focused on promoting a condition of sustained improvement, overlooking short-term benefits in favor of the long-term impact of policy on the common good and future generations.

The purpose of this Report is to document the details of the Department, including staffing, roles, and functions as well as the previous years' workload impact.

The Community Development Department is responsible for the long term and current planning, and zoning of the City, building inspections, permitting and code enforcement for the City, and via the Recreation Division is responsible for the City's annual recreation programming, City pool operations, campground administration, and information creation and dispersal regarding recreating in the City.

Looking forward, the 2018 Department Organizational Chart is below and includes a total of 7.5 FTE's. Note, the FTE count does not include interns and seasonals.



2017 Review

The following highlights the Departments work in 2017, including the permitting and development activity, and shows the value of the work to the City.

Development

251	Total Building Permits
\$21,176,325	Construction Value of Permits
82,239	Square Feet of Commercial/Industrial Building Permits Sold
119	Single Family Lots Approved
2	Final Plats Approved
8	Development Review Approvals
17	Zoning Permits Issued
\$630,399	Grant Funds Awarded

Recreation

Revenue	
\$31,000	Total Campground Revenue
\$5,350	Total Shelter Revenue
\$84,007	Total Recreation Revenue
Activity	
7,704	Swimming activity
1,010	Youth sports
603	Camps and classes
1,173	Adult Leagues
10,490	Total Activity Enrollment

Community Survey

Community Characteristic	2015 % Positive Rating	2017 % Positive Rating
New Development	65	58
Housing Options	63	63
Public Parking	60	58
Travel By Bicycle	71	74
Overall Natural Environment	89	89
Governance		
Code Enforcement	54	57
Economic Development	55	67
Recreation Programs	77	82

Major Projects

Kinni Corridor Plan

The bulk of Phase 1 planning completed, including Tech Talks, Committee work and a Charrette.

Wayfinding Plan

Completed the bulk of the wayfinding plan to help visitors find their way, and streamline sign clutter in the city.

State Electronic Permits

Implemented the State's new process for online applications for new home permits.

Records Management

Made progress in all three divisions, scanning paper files, and organizing/cleaning electronic files. Converted all rental licenses into Munis.

Science Explorer Camp



Knollwood subdivision – 2nd Addition



Rendering of Dollar Tree



City Council Strategic Plan Goals

Ensuring Financial Sustainability

- Preparing for financial contingencies
- Maintaining diverse revenue sources
- Maintaining an excellent credit rating
- Maintaining vibrant business-type activity

Consistently Delivering Quality Municipal Services

- Maintaining a high-performance workforce
- Maintaining high resident satisfaction of life in River Falls
- Maintaining high resident satisfaction in the City's customer service

Promoting Economic Vitality

- Identifying private sector commercial land development partners
- Encouraging job growth
- Developing the Sterling Ponds Corporate Park
- Developing the Regional Business Incubator
- Securing future growth opportunities (Boundary Agreements)

Connecting Community Members

- Positioning our parks for the future
- Enhancing the Kinnickinnic River Corridor

Considering Future Generations

- Cultivating a sustainable community
- Leading by example in energy sustainability
- Monitoring infrastructure condition
- Delivering an affordable package of services

Administration's 2017-2019 Major Work Plan

* Highlighted items include Community Development involvement

Ensuring Financial Stability

- Implement Street Light Utility (Policy)

Consistently Delivering Quality Municipal Services

- Develop 2025 Organization Plan (People)
- Engage in Succession Planning (People)
- Implement PTO System (People)
- Develop Implementation Strategy for Public Safety Facilities (Place)
- Implement N. Sewer Interceptor Plan (Place)
- Lead Strategic Planning Retreat for City Council & Staff (Planning)

Promote Economic Vitality

- **Cooperative Boundary Agreement with Town of Clifton (Partnerships)**
- **Pursue Infill Development (Place)**
- Analyze TID #7 for Possible Dissolution/Creation of a New TID for Clark Street (Planning)
- **Complete Feasibility Study of Community Development or Redevelopment Authority (Proficiency)**
- **Create a Comprehensive, Integrated Marketing Plan for Economic Development (Proficiency)**

Connecting Community Members

- **Continue Development of Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan (Place)**
- **Phasing & Implementation Plan of Glen Park Improvements (Place)**

Considering Future Generations

- Complete Main Substation Reconstruction Project (Place)
- Implement Kinni Trail – Heritage to Division (Place)
- Develop Utility Technology Plan (Planning)

Department Values and Mission Statement

The Values of the City of River Falls Community Development Department:

Work Culture

- We will be ethical
- We will strive to always learn
- We will be innovative
- We will find meaningful work
- We will actively engage and be respectful

Customer Services

- We will be ambassadors of the City, city government and the department
- We will strive to offer the fastest quality services
- We will be solution-oriented and resourceful
- We will monitor and be responsive to community satisfaction
- We will provide balanced services at affordable prices

Partnerships

- We will be collaborative and strive for win-win solutions
- We will attract talent inside and outside the organization to fulfill our mission
- We will be creative in strategizing on projects, looking to the P-5 for partners (Public, Private, Non Profit, Philanthropic and People)
- We will be available to assist other organizations in improving the quality of life in River Falls

Community/Urbanism

- We will work for the community's best interest
- We will maintain a cooperative intergovernmental perspective
- We will promote a compact urban form
- We will maintain and respect River Falls' unique personality, sense of place and character
- We will work to be a community of real neighborhoods and diverse districts, and we will support the conservation of the natural environment and the preservation of our built environment
- We will advocate for the following principles: neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population; our community should be designed for the pedestrian, biker and ultimately transit, as well as the car; our community should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; our urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrates our local history, climate and ecology

The Mission of the City of River Falls Community Development Department is to guide future growth and development through effective planning, zoning, permitting, enforcement, and maintain and promote sustainability by taking care of the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Employee Expectations

The City of River Falls Community Development Department staff are required to adhere to the most current City of River Falls Employee Handbook and Policies.

In addition to the requirements of the City of River Falls Employee Handbook, the City of River Falls Community Development Department will:

- Strive for respectful, collaborative relationships with other City of River Falls departments and staff through responsiveness, good listening skills, empowering others with information.
- To the best of our abilities, foresee deadlines and request information from other departments well ahead of time, to avoid 'crisis management'.
- Provide customer service as a top priority, assisting the public when able with the concept of "first contact, first to serve", being accessible, listening, being resourceful and solution oriented and communicating in a timely fashion to address the needs of the public.
- Hold initial development plans and discussions, proprietary information and other similar information in confidence until such time as the owner of the information decides to share it with the public, unless we are required to provide it by law.
- Be respectful with each other, never criticizing others in a public setting, being candid with each other, offering assistance to each other and having a sincere interest in the thoughts and ideas of others above our own.
- Manage projects deliberately, taking into account adequate quality control, legal review and economic impacts to safeguard the City and provide for a successful end-product.



From left to right: Dave Hovel, Brandy Howe, Amy Peterson, Angie Bond, Brenda Rundle, Cindi Danke, Buddy Lucero.

Department Positions – Descriptions and Time Distributions

The Department is operating with 7.50 FTE in 2018.

Intern Program

Positions may vary by academic semester, but typically have included a GIS Intern. Possible future internship may include Historic Preservation or Economic Development.

Recreation Seasonal Positions (approximately 25 per summer)

Positions include life guards and programming staff.

Recreation Assistant (Part-time)

Brenda Rundle

Assist Recreation Manager in planning, organizing, coordinating and supervising a community recreation program for seniors, adults, and/or youth. Programs include cultural arts, physical activities, special interest classes and other programs. Coordinate day to day administrative office work both routine and complex.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>
<u>Distribution</u>	
Registration/facility rental	30%
Customer service	30%
Preparing annual activity guide	20%
Preparing supplies/paperwork for seasonal staff	10%
Leading/monitoring classes/staff	5%
Website & social media	5%

Recreation Manager

Cindi Danke

Plans, organizes, coordinates and supervises the community recreation program for seniors, adults, and youth. Program includes cultural arts, physical activities, special interest classes and other programs. Coordinate day to day administrative office work both routine and complex.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>
<u>Distribution</u>	
General customer service	30%
Registration	20%
Staff management	20%
Meetings	20%
Reports, scheduling, social media	10%

Community Development Assistant

Angie Bond

The Community Development Assistant position supports the Community Development Division with primary responsibilities assisting the Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer. The position is responsible for performing administrative work receiving the public, providing customer assistance, cashiering and maintaining record systems. This position is responsible for maintaining current information relative to housing standards, property records systems, filling procedures to document inspections and submit reports to Council, Planning Commission and State and Federal governments as required.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>
<u>Distribution</u>	
Building permits	30%
Rental licensing	15%
Code enforcement	10%
Sign permits	10%
Department support	15%
Customer service	20%

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer

David Hovel

This position is responsible for municipal code activities relating to rental housing, to single and two-family housing, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, commercial construction and erosion control, and shall assist State Inspectors with multiple family, commercial, and industrial inspections. Maintains reports, meets with the public on code-related matters, investigates building standards, land use and issues and collects permit and impact fees.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>
<u>Distribution</u>	
Building inspections – residential	50%
Building inspections – commercial	5%
Zoning assistance	5%
Permit review/issue	10%
Code questions & consultations	10%
Code enforcement	5%
Reports	5%
Assist other departments	1%
Miscellaneous	4%

Senior Planner

Brandy Howe, AICP

The primary function is to manage the current and future development of the physical environment through analysis of land use compatibility including environmental, economic and social data and trends. The Senior Planner leads the current planning for the City, leads short and long term planning projects, provides excellent customer service and demonstrates outstanding communication and organizational skills. This position serves as the Zoning Administrator for the City upon delegation of the Community Development Director.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>
<u>Distribution</u>	
Current planning	50%
GIS	15%
Special projects	20%
Code enforcement	10%
Committees/Meeting prep	15%

Community Development Director

Buddy Lucero

The principal function is to lead major development projects as well as the Kinni Corridor Plan. The work is performed under the direct supervision of the City Administrator but extensive leeway is granted for the exercise of independent judgement and initiative. The nature of the work performed requires that an employee in this class establish and maintain effective working relationships with other City Employees, the City Council, City Boards and Commissions, business and community groups, State and Federal officials, representatives of the media and the public.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>
<u>Distribution</u>	
Administrative	30%
Projects	70%

Development Services Director

Amy Peterson, AICP, LEED AP

The Development Services Director provides leadership to operations and services of the Community Development Division. The work includes providing administrative oversight and supervision of the planning, building inspection, and recreation departments and its personnel to provide excellent customer service to the community. The work is performed under the direct supervision of the City Administrator, but extensive leeway is granted for the exercise of independent judgement and initiative. The nature of the work performed requires that an employee in this class establish and maintain effective working relationships with other City employees, the City Council, City Boards and Commissions, business and community groups, State and Federal officials, representatives of the media and the public. This position supports the investment by private and public partners in the built environment of the City by facilitating quality real estate development.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>
<u>Distribution</u>	
Department Administration	30%
Commission/Board Meeting Prep/Attendance	40%
Project development	30%

Partnerships/Public Outreach

The following lists the external public and private partnerships the department develops and maintains:

- River Falls Chamber of Commerce
- Pierce & St. Croix Health Departments
- Habitat for Humanity
- Chippewa Valley Technical College
- St. Croix Valley Bird Club
- Tree City USA
- River Falls Sportsman's Club
- River Falls Pickleball Association
- River Falls Community Arts Base
- Allina Health
- River Falls School District
- River Falls Boys Basketball
- River Falls Business Improvement District
- Housing Authority
- River Falls Rotary
- River Falls Garden Club
- Tri-Angels Playground Race Group
- Community Gardens
- First National Bank
- In Balance Yoga
- WI Bike Federation
- St. Croix County EDC
- Small Business Development Corporation

Training Provided by the Community Development Department 2016/2017

- Plan Commissioners Training - 2017
- Board of Appeals Training - 2017
- Contractors Spring Training – 2016 and 2017
- Seasonal Recreation Employee Training – 2017
- Historic Preservation Commission - 3 attend State Historic Preservation Annual Conference - 2017

Grant Revenues – 2015 to 2017

- 2016 WI State Historical Society - Historical Architectural Survey - \$22,000
- 2016 WI DNR Stewardship Funds - Trail Heritage Park to Division Street - \$238,800
- 2015 FEMA - Hoffman Park Storm Shelter \$583,162 + \$17,725 = \$600,887
- 2017 FEMA Glen Park Storm Shelter \$637,899
- 2015 WI State Historical Society - National Historic Designation – Swinging Bridge - \$4,000
- 2016 WI DOT – Lake George Bridge - \$902,400 (unfunded)

Intergovernmental Coordination

- All City Departments
- Pierce & St. Croix County – Health Departments
- State of WI Commercial Inspectors
- Chippewa Valley Technical College (Wood Techniques Course)
- West Central Regional Planning Commission (taxi administration)
- Wisconsin DOT (taxi administration, grant applications, state highway projects)
- Town of River Falls, Clifton, Kinnickinnic, Troy (Intergovernmental Agreements, ETZ)
- State of Wisconsin Historical Society (grants)
- River Falls Business Improvement District (grants, downtown beautification and development)
- River Falls Housing Authority
- River Falls School District

Committee Work and Assignments

The following lists the committees/ commissions the department participates in and the staff assignments. The first seven highlighted are the official Boards/Committees the department staffs:

- 1. City Plan Commission – Amy Peterson, Brandy Howe**
- 2. ETZ Committee - Amy Peterson, Brandy Howe**
- 3. Board of Appeals - Amy Peterson, Brandy Howe**
- 4. Historic Preservation Commission – Brandy Howe**
- 5. Downtown Design Review Committee – Amy Peterson**
- 6. Business Improvement District – Amy Peterson**
- 7. Park and Recreation Advisory Board – Cindi Danke**
8. Kinnickinnic Cooperative Agreement – Buddy Lucero
9. Management Team – Buddy Lucero, Amy Peterson, Cindi Danke
10. Executive Team – Buddy Lucero, Amy Peterson
11. FUN Committee Co-chairs – Dave Hovel, Angie Bond
12. Chippewa Valley Technical College Advisory Committee for Wood Techniques Course – Dave Hovel
13. Township meetings – Planning staff, as needed
14. Green Team – Brandy Howe
15. Blue Bikes – Brandy Howe, Cindi Danke
16. Training & Development Committee – Amy Peterson
17. Healthy Foundations – Cindi Danke
18. Powerful Choices – Amy Peterson
19. Youth Association Groups (Basketball, Wrestling, Gymnastics, Baseball) – Cindi Danke
20. City Website Committee – Angie Bond

Areas for Future Consideration and Improvement

- Harness the collective creativity and brain power of public and private partners in solving major issues and forwarding projects in the City.
- Look for formal and informal local and regional approaches and collaborations.
- Shift to metric based performance measures in the future. Evaluating projects and programs based upon metrics of social, environmental and economic return on investment will help with setting annual priorities.
- Develop partners in creative financial strategies for project development and implementation.
- Ensure the leveraging of resources whenever possible.
- Continue education and learning opportunities in the community through open planning processes and community conversations.
- Labor is promising to be one of the greater concerns of our time. The aging population, smaller family size and lack of significant immigration in our area will cause market responses whereby employers must offer more to attract and retain talent. These labor challenges face City government and the department as well. Staff longevity, consistency and program stability are at risk. These challenges require that we evaluate our process and programs to adjust to this emerging challenge both from an internal perspective and a community view.
- Develop lean events around our processes and strive for intuitive, predictable processes and self-service access to data, applications and assistance via the internet. Improve our public access to information for applications, permitting, development, GIS and land information.

2018 Department Goals

Broad work plan goals are provided for the Department.

- Department Overall
 - Continue Records Management
 - Complete Department Annual Report
 - Monitor Community Satisfaction
 - Formally document internal department processes and procedures
 - Review and recommendation of Department fees – part 1
 - Spreadsheet of development agreements and HOA covenants per subdivision
 - Historical tracking system of subdivisions/plats since 2000
- Building & Inspections
 - Begin the shift to square foot value permitting
 - Determine software path for B&I
 - Ensure inspections backup staffing
- Recreation
 - Begin creation a comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Forestry ordinance (Includes hours, uses, regulations, camping, hunting, etc.)
- Planning & Zoning
 - **Complete the Kinnickinnic Corridor Plan**
 - Implement wayfinding plan
 - Complete City Housing Assessment
 - Update the official map
 - **Complete feasibility study of community development authority or redevelopment authority**
 - **Cooperative Agreements** with Town of Kinnickinnic and **Town of Clifton**
 - **Assist with Glen Park Plan implementation**
 - Apply for WisDOT bike/ped plan grant
 - Developers Agreements – analyze and create policies/checklists for workflow, administration, impact fees, checks and balances between departments; determine DA lead (this is not solely a B&I project)
- Economic Development
 - **Infill development**
 - **TID 7 development analysis assistance**
 - **Comprehensive integrated marketing plan for economic development**