FROM **POSSIBILITIES** TO **PROGRESS**

City of River Falls

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

To coordinate and deliver essential services and ensure a sustainable future.

VISION

A distinct, vibrant, and safe community with an abundance of nature and easy access to metropolitan amenities. A place whtere families, students, and businesses flourish.

VALUES

Put People First
Pursue Excellence
Act With Integrity
Embrace Change
Serve Our Community
Consider Future Generations

DEAR FRIENDS,

In 2022, we worked hard to uphold our mission to coordinate essential services and ensure a sustainable future for the City, our residents, and our partners. We launched a large-scale community effort to update three critical City plans, setting our priorities for the next 25 years. We secured a federal partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, taking a big step forward on implementation of the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan. We made significant investments in infrastructure, including completing the massive North Interceptor sewer rerouting project and moving forward with plans for Mann Valley, the City's newest corporate park. Above all else, 2022 at the City of River Falls was about turning big possibilities into progress.

Just as the rest of the nation faced the challenges of inflation, housing affordability, and increased skepticism in the elections process, so did we. By focusing on the representative values that the City Council has developed, we moved forward on strategic initiatives not despite, but because of, the challenges that we faced.

This report showcases the projects, programs, and accomplishments that defined 2022 at the City of River Falls. Not a single success story in these pages would have been possible without our community members and partners. Thank you to each of you who showed up to give your time, passion, input, and expertise. We are better because of you.

Dan Toland
Mayor

Scot Simpson
City Administrator

2022 BOARD, COMMISSION, AND COMMITTEES

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) BOARD
Amy Freeman
Amy Halvorson
Heidi Hanson
Russ Korpela
Joleen Larson
Terry McKay
Mike Miller
Kerri Olson
Michael Pepin
Vince Seidling

CITY BOARD OF APPEALS
Eric Amundsen
Andrew Brown
Gary Horvath
Jeanette Leonard
Kellen Wells-Mangold

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Denton Anderson
Mark Anderson
Jeff Bjork
Pam Friede
Heidi Heinze
Jayne Hoffman
Julie Huebel

LIBRARY BOARD
Tiffany Alexander
Lorraine Davis
Sean Downing
Rebecca Ferguson
Kari Heinselman
Tanya Misselt
Michael Metro
Jean Ritzinger
Wayne Roen
Whitney Rudesill

PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
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Brenda Gaulke
Matt Janquart
Patricia La Rue
Alyssa Mueller
Melissa Pedrini
Natasha Schaefer

PLAN COMMISSION
Chris Holtkamp
Patricia La Rue
Lisa Moody
Diane Odeen
Rebecca Prendergast
Dan Toland
Mike Woolsey

POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION
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Grant Hanson
Jon Longsdorf
Dick Rinehart
Mark Sams

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Liz Brunner
Jacqueline Niccum
Jacob Proue
Jason Stroud

RIVER FALLS UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD
Nick Carow
Adam Gierl
Mark Klecker
Christopher Lick
Mark Spafford
Tim Thum
Kellen Wells-Mangold

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Mayor Dan Toland
District 1 Sean Downing
District 2 Nick Carow
District 3 Alyssa Mueller
District 4 Todd Bjerstedt
At-large Scott Morrissette
At-large Diane Odeen
At-large Jeff Bjork

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

STAFF ENGAGE WITH YOUTH

During Public Works week in May, staff visited elementary schools to teach River Falls kids about what they do. City and Library staff also joined together in October to put on a brand-new event, "Lineworker Storytime," in recognition of Public Power Week. Lineworker Luke read "If I Were a Lineworker" to a room full of excited little ones, who got to chat with Utilities staff and explore their trucks.

CITY LEADERS CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY

Throughout the summer, Mayor Dan Toland and City Councilmembers hosted the Mayor's Cookout Conversations at parks throughout the city.

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION EVENT RETURNS

On August 18, the City brought back its annual Customer Appreciation Event after a two-year hiatus. The 2022 theme, "Celebrating a Community That Cares," allowed City leaders and staff to thank residents for being active partners in advancing sustainability through participation in the City's green energy programs, comprehensive planning process, and more. Community members were invited to City Hall Plaza for food, yard games, live music, and kids' activities.

COMMUNITY RUNS WITH THE COPS

River Falls Police Department partnered with UWRF and local law enforcement agencies in October to host Run with the Cops, a 5k run/walk that benefits the Special Olympics of Wisconsin.

FIRE DEPARTMENT MAKES LEARNING FUN

The Fire Department hosted its annual open house in October, opening up the fire station for an evening of food, fun, and learning.

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

T-MOBILE HOMETOWN GRANT ENHANCES ACCESS

In September, the Library won a $17,800 T-Mobile Hometown Grant to purchase 25 additional Wi-Fi hotspots, which community members can check out for free anytime during the Library's open hours. Library Director Tanya Misselt sought out the grant opportunity after the COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the economic divide between households and their ability to afford Internet services. The additional hotspots will help the Library keep wait times down, ensuring more River Falls community members can obtain Wi-Fi when they need it.

Learn about Library programs and services

> "I will never forget the happy patron who, while returning a hotspot, told me that he landed a job because he was able to complete an online job application using that hotspot. I don't think we always know what impact our services have on our community, but I think winning this grant made a difference for a lot of people."
>
> **Tanya Misselt**
> River Falls Public Library Director

LIBRARY CHAMPIONS LEARNING FOR ALL

In 2022, the Library continued providing exceptional resources to empower the community to think big, get creative, and connect with one another.

HIGHEST PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Adult programs:
Author William Kent Krueger (110 people)

Family programs:
River Falls High School - Unstrumental (170 people)

Children's programs:
Carnival Kick-Off (312 people)

Virtual programs:
Understanding the Russian Invasion (296 views)

275+
PROGRAMS OFFERED

CUSTOMER SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS HELP COMMUNITY MEMBERS NAVIGATE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

The City's customer service team continued to provide compassionate, personalized service to River Falls Municipal Utilities customers in need of bill payment assistance. When customers miss payments, team members Brenda, Jackie, Lisa, and Wendy proactively reach out to offer help. They take the time to understand each person's unique circumstances, lay out their options for assistance, and guide them through the application process. The City is proud to partner with several agencies that provide direct financial assistance to utility customers, including the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program, WPPI Commitment to Community, Assistance Resource Center (or ARC), Operation Help, WI Help for Homeowners, and the Salvation Army.

300+ Utility Customers Received Assistance

$106,000 IN AID PROVIDED

"We are here to work with you – we do not want to see anyone be without power, and we are lucky to have partnerships and resources to help you keep the lights on."

Wendy Tokheim
Customer Service Representative

Learn more about bill payment assistance

CITY LAUNCHES NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY DRIVES

In September, the City Clerk's Office partnered with the UWRF Office of Student Involvement and the League of Women Voters to hold the City's first-ever National Voter Registration Day event. Teams set up shop in the UWRF University Center and River Falls Public Library to register voters, meeting people where they were to make the registration process easier and more convenient.

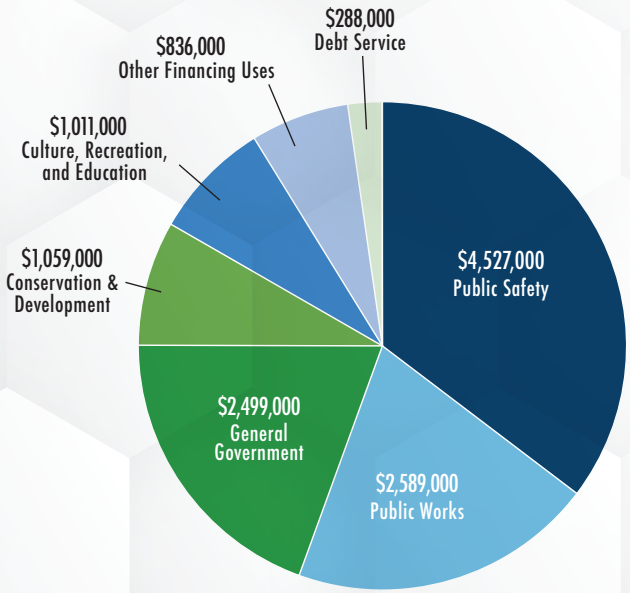
"Partnering with the City on voter registration has exponentially streamlined our work to get UWRF students registered. I am so thankful for the City's commitment to working with us."

Elise Peters
Events & Activities Coordinator,
UWRF Office of Student Involvement

PURSUE EXCELLENCE

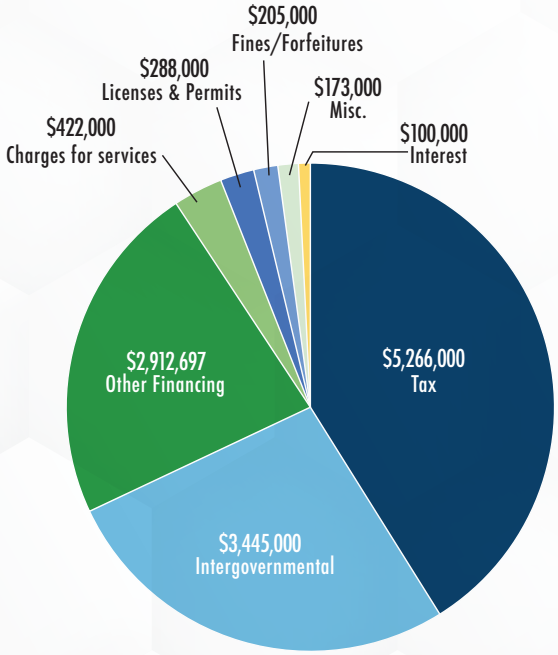
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIZES FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY WITH 2023-2024 BIENNIAL BUDGET

In 2022, Finance Department staff worked with the City Council to prepare the 2023-2024 biennial budget. The adopted budget utilizes approximately $60,000 less than what was contemplated in the Fiscal Plan and requires approximately $228,000 less than expected in property taxes. Performing in-line with or better than the Fiscal Plan helps the City achieve financial sustainability.



GENERAL FUND EXPENSES

Learn more about City finances



INCOME SOURCES

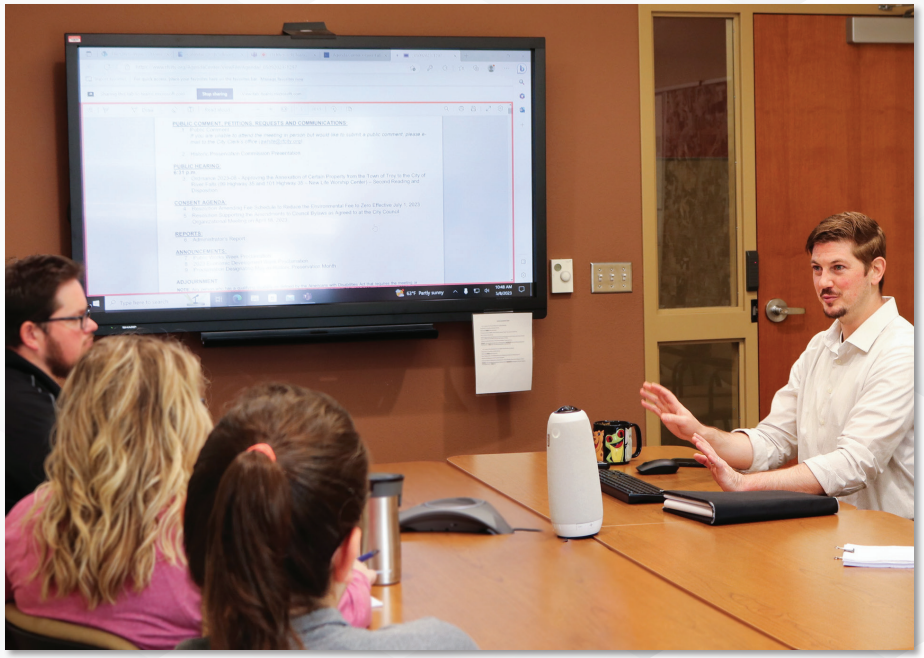
CITY OF
RIVER FALLS

Aaa	Lowest level of credit risk
Aa1	Very Low Credit Risk
Aa2	
Aa3	
A1	Low Credit Risk
A2	
A3	
Baa1	Moderate Credit Risk
Baa2	
Baa3	
Ba1	Substantial Credit Risk
Ba2	
Ba3	
B1	High Credit Risk
B2	
B3	
Caa1	Very High Credit Risk
Caa2	
Caa3	

BOND SALES EXEMPLIFY COMMUNITY'S GROWTH

The Finance Department also facilitated the sale of approximately $12 million in bonds for City projects in 2022, including the North Interceptor sewer rerouting project, North Water Tower, North Loop utility extension, and Mann Valley. This was the City's largest sale of bonds in recent history.

As part of the bond sale process, the City received updated credit rating opinions in 2022, including an Aa2 general obligation rating, the third highest possible rating. This prime rating serves as an indicator of the City's financial reliability and stability, which in turn influences the availability of investors, interest rates, and bond pricing. The higher the credit rating, the more access a local government has to affordable project financing options.



ELECTION WORKERS EXCEL IN 2022

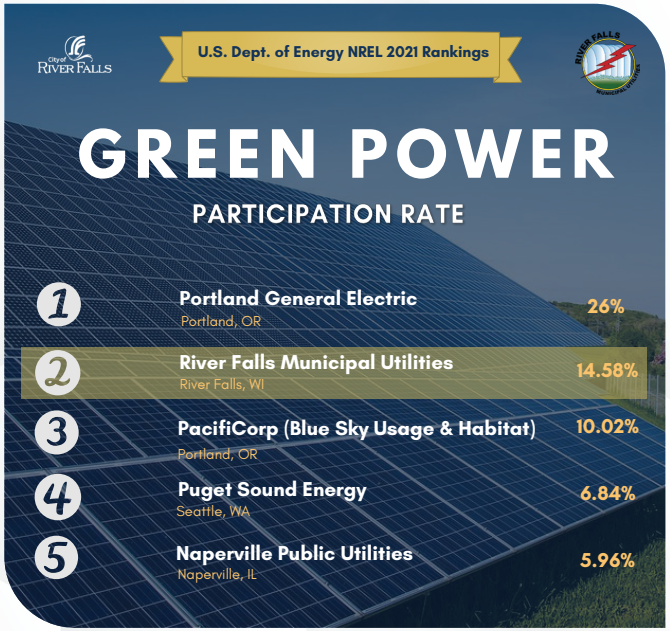
The City Clerk's Office and 90 River Falls election workers continued to perform their duties with passion, dedication, and professionalism in 2022. Through a spring primary in February, spring election in April, partisan primary in August, and midterm election in November, they worked hard to ensure River Falls residents were able to vote easily and securely.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS PROCESSED
3,662

ELECTION DAY VOTERS ASSISTED
6,610

HOURS SPENT ADMINISTERING IN-PERSON ABSENTEE VOTING
224

HOURS SPENT SERVING ELECTION DAY VOTERS
52



RIVER FALLS REMAINS AHEAD ON THE PACK ON GREEN ENERGY

In 2022, the U.S. Department of Energy ranked River Falls Municipal Utilities No. 2 in the nation for green power participation rate, which measures the percentage of utility customers that opt in to a city's green energy programs. The City has ranked in the top 10 every year since 2006 but has placed second only once previously, in 2020. Thank you for helping us build a more sustainable future!

HOW YOU CAN HELP US REACH THE #1 SPOT

Learn more about green blocks

GREEN BLOCKS

Green blocks, which cost $2 per month, increase the amount of renewable energy used to power your business or home.

CITY EYES ENHANCED SUSTAINABILITY AND COST SAVINGS WITH NEW BIOSOLIDS DRYER

On August 23, 2022, the City Council authorized staff to negotiate a contract with Strand Associates, Inc., for the design of a biosolids dryer at the City's wastewater treatment plant. The City's solid waste has traditionally been hauled to Ellsworth by tanker truck, where it has been treated and land-applied. Utilizing a dryer onsite at the Wastewater Treatment Plant will bring several long-term benefits: it will improve cost efficiency in the treatment process, eliminate the carbon emissions generated by transporting waste to Ellsworth, and produce an environmentally friendly end product that can be applied to River Falls land as an all-natural fertilizer.

"We're fortunate that our wastewater employees are able to think outside the box and take the initiative to make economically sound and environmentally friendly projects like this happen."

Kevin Westhuis
Utility Director

City Councilmembers, Utility Advisory Board members, and staff visited the Wisconsin Dells-Lake Delton Biosolids Drying Facility in April 2022 to learn how to bring a drying facility to life in River Falls.

SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

"We are pleased to have been able to provide some tools to help our Project SEARCH interns expand their skills and work experience, but we're equally grateful to have their unique perspectives to help us grow."

Dan Toland
Mayor

PROJECT SEARCH BROADENS CITY HALL HORIZONS

In March 2022, under Mayor Dan Toland's lead, the City became the first local government in Wisconsin to host a Project SEARCH intern. Project SEARCH, founded at Cincinnati Children's Hospital in 1996, provides young adults with disabilities training and career exploration opportunities to help them gain competitive employment. The City has hosted five interns to date and staff look forward to welcoming many more.

LOCAL ARTISTS PAINT THE TOWN WITH CITY-SPONSORED MURALS

The City added two new murals to the local landscape in 2022: "Discovery" by Isaiah Shipp, located on the old railroad abutment near the White Pathway portion of the Kinni Trail, and "Party Under the Bridge" by Alex Petersen, which can be found under the Maple Street Bridge near City Hall.

The murals were funded through River Falls Creates, a City policy that dedicates up to one percent of the cost of eligible City construction projects to public art. Shipp and Petersen were selected by the River Falls Creates committee, a cross-section of community members that identifies public art opportunities, develops requests for proposals, and evaluates artist submissions.

"Public art is right in your own neighborhood and it's free. You can come to it and bring your own perspective no matter who you are and what your background is."

Isaiah Shipp
River Falls artist

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AND PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD FOR THEIR VALUED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS EFFORT.

GLOVER STATION SCHOOL BRINGS HISTORIC CHARACTER TO CITY PARK OFFERINGS

Built in 1920, Glover Station School originally sat at the corner of Highway 35 and Glover Road. It operated as a schoolhouse until 1962, when it was purchased by the Town of Troy and converted to Troy Town Hall. City leaders and staff saw the possibilities of the historic building and purchased it when the Town of Troy listed it for sale in 2003. Afterwards, the River Falls City Council authorized the moving of Glover Schoolhouse to DeSanctis Park.

From 2008 to 2020, the building largely sat vacant. Things changed in 2022 when Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions purchased a City-owned parcel of land at the edge of DeSanctis Park for the construction of a multi-family residential development, now known as Milltown Residences. The scope of the project included extending water and sewer lines out to the schoolhouse, and in July 2022, Glover Station School opened as the City's newest rentable park facility.

"Glover Station School was one of 123 one-room schoolhouses in St. Croix County. Sadly, most of Wisconsin's one room schoolhouses are now gone. The River Falls Historic Preservation Commission is thrilled that Glover Station Schoolhouse will continue to be an important place for learning and connection."

Heidi Heinze
Historic Preservation Commission member

Reserve a park shelter

LOCAL DONORS GIVE A BOOST TO CITY PLAYGROUNDS

In August, the City's Public Works staff installed playground improvements at four city parks. A private donation from a community member enabled the purchase of a new swing set for Spring Creek Park, while funds contributed by the former River Falls Golf Club aided greatly in the purchase of a new play structure at Glen Park. Public Works staff also installed new playsets at Knollwood Park and Brandan's Park.

"Playgrounds help reduce stress and improve overall health and creativity for kids. They also encourage social connection not only for kids, but also for the adults that accompany them. Keeping our play areas in great shape is an important way to serve our community. Thank you to our donors and City staff for making these improvements possible."

Cindi Danke
Recreation Manager

SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PITCHES IN FOR NEW FIRE SAFETY TRAILER

For over three decades, the River Falls Fire Department's fire safety trailer, which functions as a mobile classroom, has been a cornerstone of the department's community education efforts. When the original trailer reached the end of its useful life in 2020, department staff got to work organizing a fundraising campaign to purchase a new trailer with modern amenities and technology. Due to immediate and overwhelming community response, the department reached its fundraising goal in less than four months.

The new trailer includes a full kitchen, allowing firefighters to simulate real-life fire dangers, and a smoke generator, which can be used to teach participants how to get out of a smoke-filled room. The donations also allowed the department to purchase an LED fire extinguisher trainer, which uses lasers to simulate fire extinguisher discharge for a mess-free training experience. River Falls firefighters debuted the new trailer and extinguisher trainer at River Falls elementary schools in spring 2022.

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Turnkey Corrections and 3 Square Market | Aladtec, Inc | Frana Companies | River Falls Lions Club | Allina Health-River Falls | Steiner Plumbing and Electric, Inc | St. Croix Valley Natural Gas | Kwik Trip | Dick's Fresh Market | Krazy Kerry's Barnyard Botanicals | River Falls State Bank | First National Bank- River Falls | Westconsin Credit Union-River Falls | Royal Credit Union- River Falls | Security Financial Bank- River Falls | Hudson Fire Company #1 | Plum City Union Township Fire Department | Durand Fire Relief Association, Inc | Somerset Fire and Rescue Department | Prescott Fire Department | United Fire and Rescue District –Baldwin, Hammond, Woodville | Dennis and Carol Ireland Family | Community Fund of the River Falls Community Foundation, and affiliate of St Croix Valley Foundation | Michael and Deborah Benedict | Jim and Pam Cernohous | Lisa and Mark Ziebarth

NEW FACES JOIN FIRE DEPARTMENT

In August, new Fire Chief Steven Cash was sworn in, bringing over 18 years of experience at the City of La Crosse. The Fire Department also experienced its largest recruitment in history in 2022, with fifteen new volunteer firefighters coming on board to fill both current and anticipated openings. In a time of significant change, the additions of the new Fire Chief and firefighters ensured that staffing levels did not falter and that excellent leadership continued uninterrupted.

SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCE OFFICER POSITION REESTABLISHED

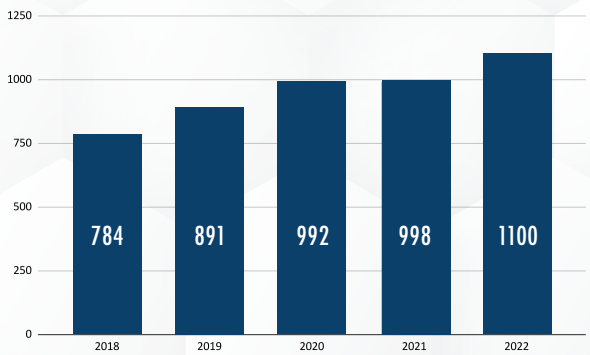
The Police Department reestablished the neighborhood resource officer position in 2022, appointing Officer Luke Axley to the role. In addition to serving as the City's liquor license liaison and coordinating special events in the community, Officer Axley also provides individualized services to community members in need. When the City is made aware of an individual taking shelter in a public location, Officer Axley introduces himself and learns about their needs, serving as a friendly face and link to local organizations that have the staff, expertise, and resources to provide direct assistance to people experiencing mental health, housing, and other crises.

"Officer Axley has been an incredible asset to RFPD. He is kind, compassionate, and truly has each person's best interest in mind. We appreciate that he helps those in need get connected to local resources like Our Neighbors' Place. Our community is better thanks to the work he does."

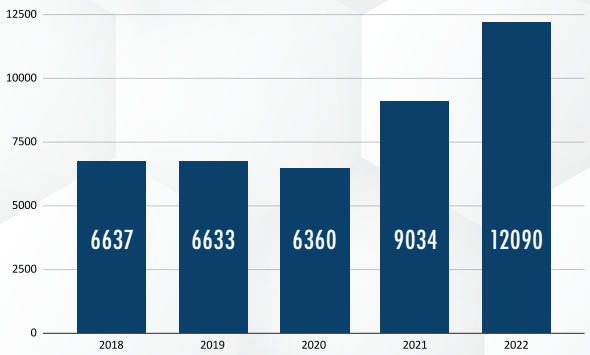
Shelly Smith
Our Neighbors' Place Executive Director

2022 BY THE NUMBERS

The department's 19 patrol officers and five sergeants responded to over 12,000 calls for service in 2022. Meanwhile, the administrative team fulfilled 1,100 record requests over the course of the year, ensuring that PD data remains transparent and accessible to the public.



RECORD REQUESTS



CALLS FOR SERVICE

CONSIDER FUTURE GENERATIONS

EARTH FEST ILLUSTRATES THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

In April 2022, the City partnered with Hope for Creation, UWRF, the School District of River Falls, and the River Falls Area Chamber of Commerce to co-host Earth Fest, the community's first-ever Earth Day celebration, at Glen Park. Despite cold and rainy weather, over one thousand community members attended the event, which featured a sustainability fair, live music, sustainable food samples, tree planting, and a clothing swap. Leaders from UWRF, CVTC, the School District of River Falls, and the City also signed a sustainability pledge, solidifying a shared commitment to a greener future.

DID YOU KNOW?

Pollinators are a keystone species in essentially every ecosystem on earth, enabling the reproduction of more than 85% of all flowering plants and 67% of agricultural crops.

GOAT GRAZING BOOSTS SUSTAINABILITY IN CITY LANDSCAPING

City Forester and Conservation and Efficiency Coordinator Mike Noreen led the implementation of a City goat grazing program in summer 2022 to mitigate buckthorn, an invasive woody plant, along White Pathway on the Kinnickinnic Trail. Because goats enjoy snacking on plants like buckthorn, goat grazing provides an eco-friendly alternative to the chemicals often used in landscaping efforts. The City completed its first two rounds of goat grazing in July and September, and the goats are expected to return in summer and fall 2023.

RIVER FALLS BECOMES A BEE CITY

The City of River Falls became a Bee City in November 2022, joining its additional designations of Tree City and Bike City. The Bee City USA program, administered by the Xerxes Society, provides communities with a framework for conserving native pollinators. As part of the application process, Councilmember Sean Downing organized the Bee City Committee, comprised of community stakeholders with expertise in environmental stewardship. To maintain the designation, the City will host at least one educational event each year, develop and implement a program to create or enhance pollinator-friendly habitats on City land, and create and adopt an integrated pest management plan designed to reduce pesticide use.

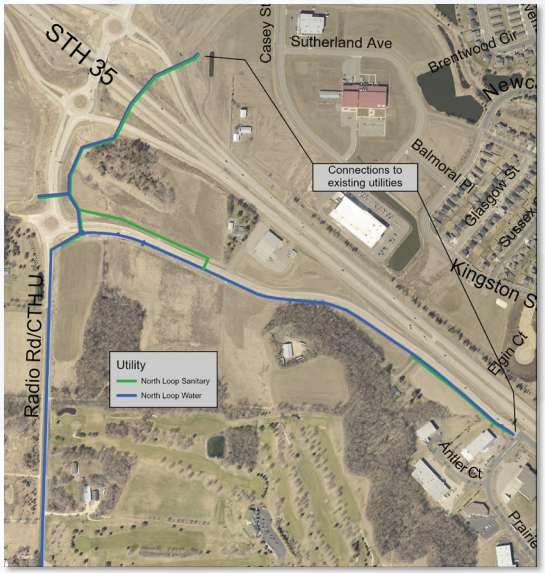
INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

NORTH INTERCEPTOR SEWER REROUTING

In 2022, the City completed the North Interceptor sewer rerouting project after over a decade of planning and design work. The project involved replacing the North Main Street wastewater lift station, which had reached the end of its useful life, with a sewer main pipe that allows wastewater to flow via gravity. The new gravity pipe, which does not require energy to operate, has not only improved system capacity and reliability, but has also enhanced sustainability.

NORTH WATER TOWER

In 2022, the City began construction on a 500,000-gallon water tower in Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park. The new water tower will enhance water system reliability in Whitetail Ridge and Sterling Ponds. It will also provide water availability for new development in the upcoming Mann Valley Corporate Park. Construction is expected to be completed in early fall 2023.



NORTH LOOP UTILITY EXTENSION

The City's north pressure zone, which includes Sterling Ponds, is currently served by a non-looped water distribution system. The North Loop utility extension project, which went out for bid in 2022, will connect the area to the City's main pressure zones, improving water system reliability Sterling Ponds. Construction on the project is expected to be completed by fall 2023.

CONSIDER FUTURE GENERATIONS

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT SPOTLIGHT

BOH ELECTRONICS
WHITETAIL RIDGE

BOH Electronics, a North Hudson based cable and wire harness manufacturer, is set to move its operations to River Falls. The company is constructing a brand-new industrial facility in Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park, which will include a 45,000 square-foot building, loading docks, and parking lot.

Expected completion: Summer 2023

MANN VALLEY

In June 2022, the City Council approved a final design contract with SEH, Inc., for Mann Valley Corporate Park. Mann Valley, which is located on the northwest side of the City, includes 200+ acres for office and light industrial/manufacturing use. It will be the fourth and biggest corporate park in city limits. The largest lot, at 155 acres, is one of the most sizable tracts of land available for industrial development in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The area is already serviced with electric and natural gas. Construction on water, wastewater, street, and stormwater infrastructure is expected to begin in fall 2023 and be completed by October 2024.

"This addition to our lineup of corporate parks will fortify the economic vitality of our community and continue to make River Falls a place where people want to live, work, and play."

Keri Schreiner
Economic Development Manager

View concept map

2022 MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

THE SYCAMORE OF RIVER FALLS

745 Sycamore St.
84 apartment units (68 blended independent and assisted living; 16 memory care) and four twin homes
Expected completion: Summer 2023

LAKE GEORGE LOFTS

137 W. Cascade Ave.
32 apartment units (studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom)
Expected completion: Fall 2023

THE UPLANDS

1875 Paulson Rd.
106 apartment units (studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom)
Expected completion: To be determined

ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Name	# of Units	Style
Highview Meadows 7th Addition	28 units	Single-Family
Dawes Place Phase II	70 units	Multi-Family (attached duplexes)
Sterling Ponds 4th Addition	26 units	Single-Family & Twin Homes
Oak Hill (Wells Annexation)	110 units	Single-Family & Twin Homes
Thompson Heights (Thompson Annexation)	86 units	Twin Homes
The Current (Thompson Annexation)	106 units	Multi-Family
Saturday Townhomes (Thompson Annexation)	190 units	Multi-Family

HOUSING STUDY

In 2017, the City contracted with Maxfield Research and Consulting to complete a comprehensive housing needs analysis for the community. However, to account for changes in the housing market during and after the pandemic, the City partnered with Maxfield again in 2022 to complete an update to the study. The report's findings will assist staff and the City Council in exploring housing policy changes and evaluating new applications for development.

HOUSING VACANCY RATE

0.7% River Falls

7% national target rate

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
Housing vacancy rate is the percentage of all housing units in a community that are unoccupied at a particular time. The rate in River Falls, 0.7%, is significantly below the national target of 7%. A low vacancy rate means there is a scarcity of available units, which results in higher housing prices.

UNITS NEEDED BY 2030

336 rental

618 for sale

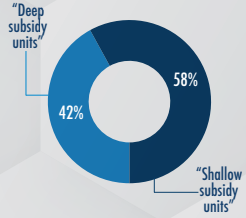
781 senior housing

AFFORDABLE RENTAL UNITS

The study concluded that the City will need 336 additional affordable rental units by 2030 to meet the community's needs.

SHALLOW SUBSIDY
household makes 30-60% of area median income

DEEP SUBSIDY
household makes 30% or less of area median income



CONSIDER FUTURE GENERATIONS

FOCUS RIVER FALLS

In the beginning of 2022, the City began Focus River Falls, a large-scale, collaborative effort with SRF Consulting Group and the community to update three critical City planning documents: the Comprehensive Plan, Outdoor Recreation Plan, and Bike & Pedestrian Plan. The objective of the plans is to provide short- and long-term goals and recommendations, aligned with the community's priorities, that will guide the City's legislative decisions and financial actions for years to come. During the planning process, staff completed extensive community outreach, holding open houses, tabling at local events, and collecting feedback through surveys and online activities. Each plan also had a steering committee comprised of various community members that met to review progress each step of the way. On March 28, the City Council voted to adopt the Comprehensive Plan, Bike & Pedestrian Plan, and Outdoor Recreation Plan.

View the adopted plans

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POWERS THE PROCESS

PHASE 1
DATA COLLECTION

FEBRUARY 24, 2022
Public Kickoff Open House at River Falls Public Library

FEBRUARY-MARCH
Focus River Falls Community Survey

APRIL 25, 2022
Pop-Up Booth at Earth Fest

APRIL & MAY 2022
Open House at Our Neighbors' Place

APRIL & MAY 2022
Spring Pop-Up Booths at UWRF and Veterans Park

JUNE 22, 2022
Pop-Up Booth at Rush River Brewing

JULY 9, 2022
"Meet River Falls" Booth Fair at River Falls Days

JUNE-AUGUST
"Building River Falls" Survey

JULY 2022
Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Feedback-Gathering Bike Tour

JULY 2022
Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Feedback-Gathering Walking Tour

CONSIDER FUTURE GENERATIONS

SPECIAL THANKS

to the Plan Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Bike & Pedestrian Plan Advisory Committee, and the community.

PHASE 2
PLAN ANALYSIS

JULY 21-22, 2022
Stakeholder Group Conversations

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2022
Virtual Bike & Pedestrian Mapping Activity

SEPTEMBER 2022
Fall Pop-Up Booths at Art on the Kinni, River Falls Youth Football game, and River Falls Community Food Pantry

SEPTEMBER 2022
Outdoor Recreation Survey

PHASE 3
PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS AND REVIEW

FEBRUARY 9, 2023
Plan Review Open House at City Hall

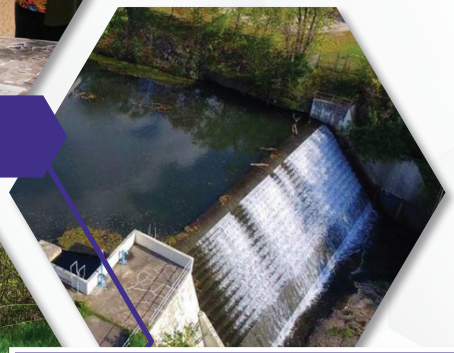
FEBRUARY 10-26, 2023
Public Comment Period for Draft Plans

EMBRACE CHANGE

PARTNERSHIP WITH U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS ADVANCES KINNI CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The City Council adopted the Kinnickinnic River Corridor Plan in 2018 to set a future vision for the Kinni River Corridor that meets residents' needs and desires, reflects the values of the community, and protects the river for future generations. The two-year planning process was centered on community engagement, with residents' voices prioritized as the City Council considered the future direction of the river corridor.

Engagement results revealed that residents overwhelmingly desired a restored Kinnickinnic River that is better connected to the City's downtown, with enhanced opportunities for fishing, paddling, birding, biking, and hiking. The planning process culminated in a recommendation by the Kinni Corridor Project Committee, a steering committee comprised of community stakeholders, to remove both dams. It also called for the creation of a public-private partnership to bring the vision to life.



2016 — Long-range planning process for the Kinni Corridor begins

2018 — City Council adopts Kinni Corridor Plan and passes resolution to remove both dams

2019 — Kinni Corridor Collaborative (KCC) is founded to lead fundraising and engagement efforts during plan implementation

2020 — Lake Louise floods in June and is drained, revealing damage to Powell Dam

2021 — City begins decommissioning process for Powell Falls

2022 — U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and City begin discussions about river restoration grant opportunity

2023 — City and USACE partner to begin feasibillity study

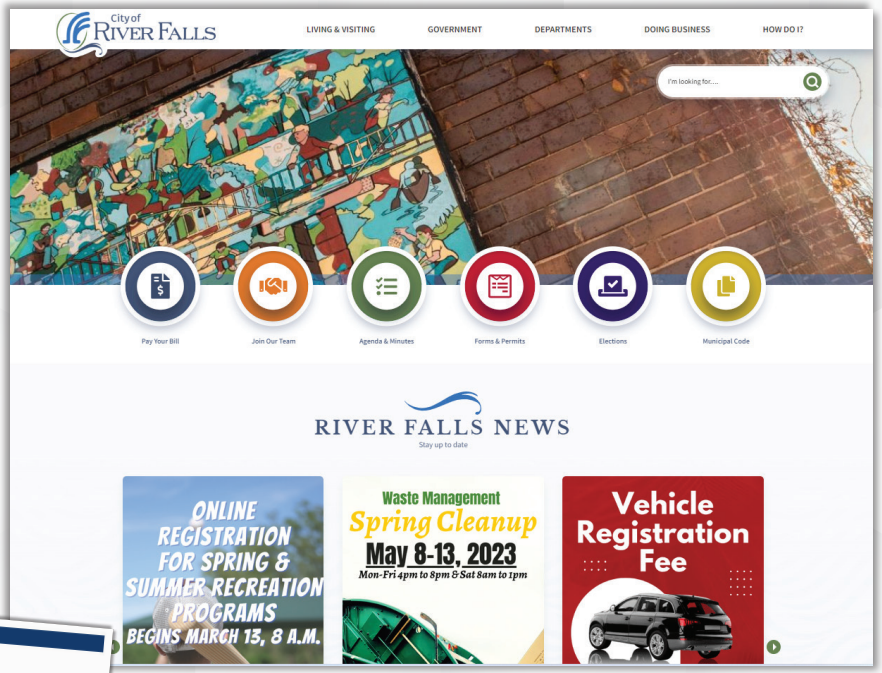
On February 27, 2018, the City Council passed a resolution calling for the removal of Powell Falls Dam by 2026 and Junction Falls Dam between 2035 and 2040. The City began work to identify a partnership that would aid in implementation of the plan, and Kinni Corridor Collaborative (KCC) was founded in 2019 to assist with fundraising and community engagement.

> "Our partnership with the Army Corps presents an amazing opportunity to move us closer than we've ever been toward the community's vision of a free-flowing Kinnickinnic River."
>
> **Amy Peterson**
> Community Development Director and Kinni Corridor Project Manager

The City took a major stride toward plan implementation in 2022 when leaders and staff began conversations with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about a river restoration grant opportunity of up to $10 million. The Army Corps, a federal agency that provides public engineering services and funding, is preparing to begin a feasibility study on restoration of the Kinnickinnic River, a required step the agency must take before beginning a river restoration project. Once the study is complete, the Corps will provide a proposal to City Councilmembers, who will decide whether to move forward with a Corps-led dam removal project.

ACT WITH INTEGRITY

Integrity is about doing what we say, keeping our commitments, and being transparent. Making City documents and data available to the public is an important part of acting with integrity. City of River Falls leaders and staff are always searching for new ways to enhance the accessibility of City information, and we are committed to continuous progress in transparency.



CITY WEBSITE

You can find financial plans, the biennial budget, financial audit reports, checks issued, minutes from Council, board, and commission meetings, and more on the City's website.

RIVER FALLS READER

The River Falls Reader, the City's virtual newsletter, hits subscriber inboxes every two months. From in-depth looks at City programs and initiatives to development and infrastructure news, the River Falls Reader will keep you in the loop. Scan the QR code to subscribe.

YOUTUBE

Are you wondering what goes on when the City Council meets twice a month? Every Council meeting is live-streamed on YouTube and available to watch later at your convenience.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Did you know that the City of River Falls is on Facebook and Instagram? Follow us for news and behind-the-scenes glimpses at City Hall, Public Works, the Police and Fire departments, and the Library.

FROM POSSIBILITIES TO PROGRESS

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Postal Customer

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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