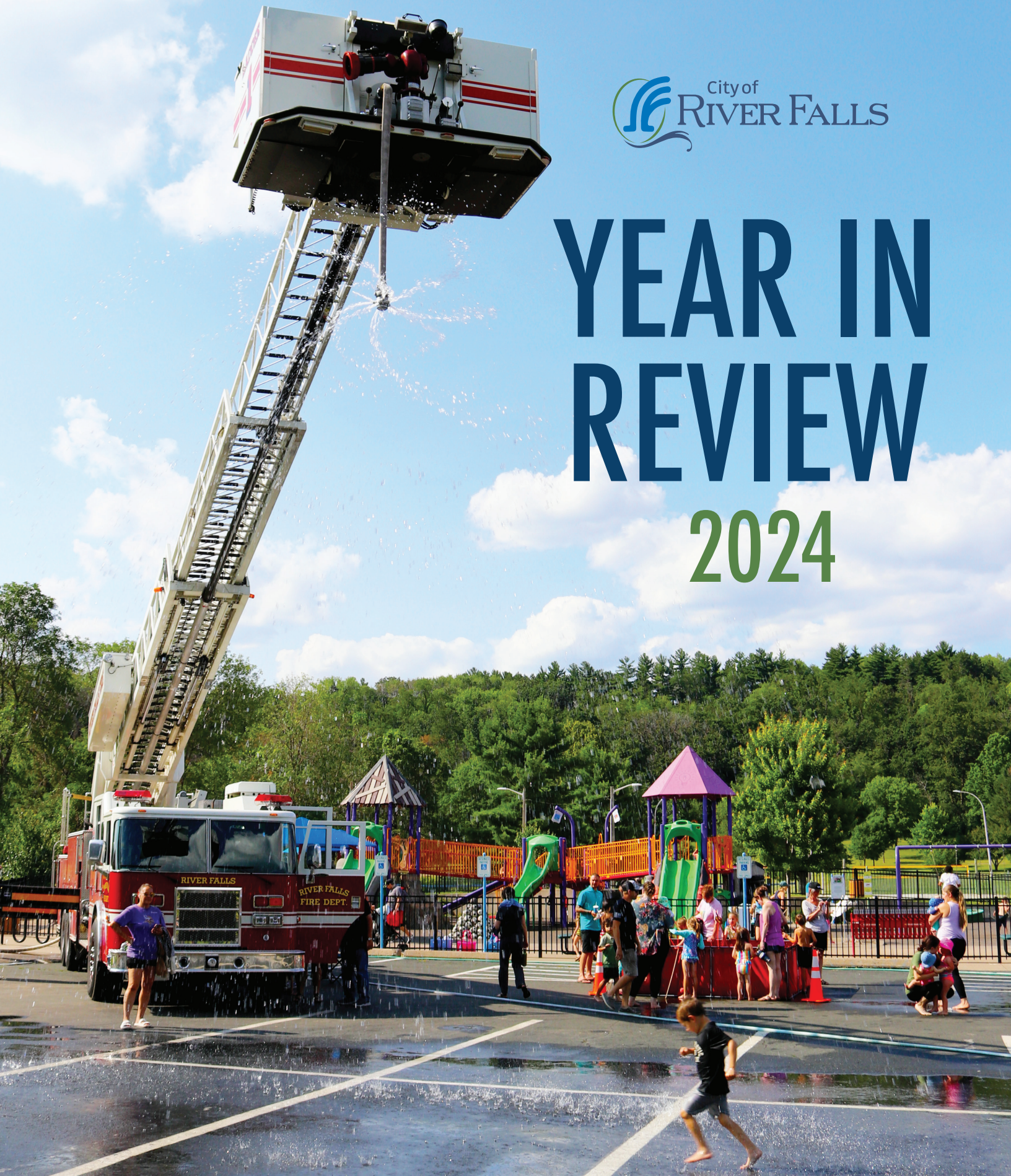


YEAR IN REVIEW 2024



Dear River Falls Community,

2024

has been an extraordinary year for our beloved City of River Falls. Together, we celebrated the 130th anniversary of our water service, a milestone that reminds us of our deep connection to history and the enduring commitment of those who built and sustained our community. We laid the foundation for future growth by opening Mann Valley Corporate Park, the largest corporate park in our City's history. We also secured state and federal funding assistance for a refresh of the library and fire station. Meanwhile, City infrastructure expanded with innovative improvements in utilities and roads.

Reflecting on what it takes to bridge the past and the future, we see that progress is not by chance but by deliberate strategy. Every achievement this year was shaped by our connected plans, hard-working staff, forward-thinking City Council, and — most importantly — the engaged residents who share their vision for our future.

Your input has been our compass. Through engagement activities and surveys, you've made

your vision for River Falls clear — a distinct, vibrant, and safe community. That vision is the driving force behind every initiative, ensuring that our shared plans always put people first and create opportunities for generations to come. We are profoundly grateful for your support, involvement, and enthusiasm. Your contributions go far beyond keeping the lights on or water flowing; they build a thriving community where we can all flourish.

Here's to continuing this journey together. With our shared energy and commitment, the best days of River Falls lie ahead.

With appreciation and excitement for our future,



Dan Toland
Mayor
dtoland@rfcity.org



Scot Simpson
City Administrator
ssimpson@rfcity.org



YOUR CITY COUNCIL



Scott Morrisette
Aldersperson at Large
and Council President



Diane Odeen
Aldersperson at Large
and Comptroller



Jeff Bjork
Aldersperson at Large



Sean Downing
Aldersperson - District 1



Nick Carow
Aldersperson - District 2



Alyssa Mueller
Aldersperson - District 3



Todd Bjerstedt
Aldersperson - District 4



SCAN HERE
City Council Agenda
and Contact Information
www.rfcity.org

Reach out to your
councilmember any time!
mayorandcouncil@rfcity.org



VISION

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

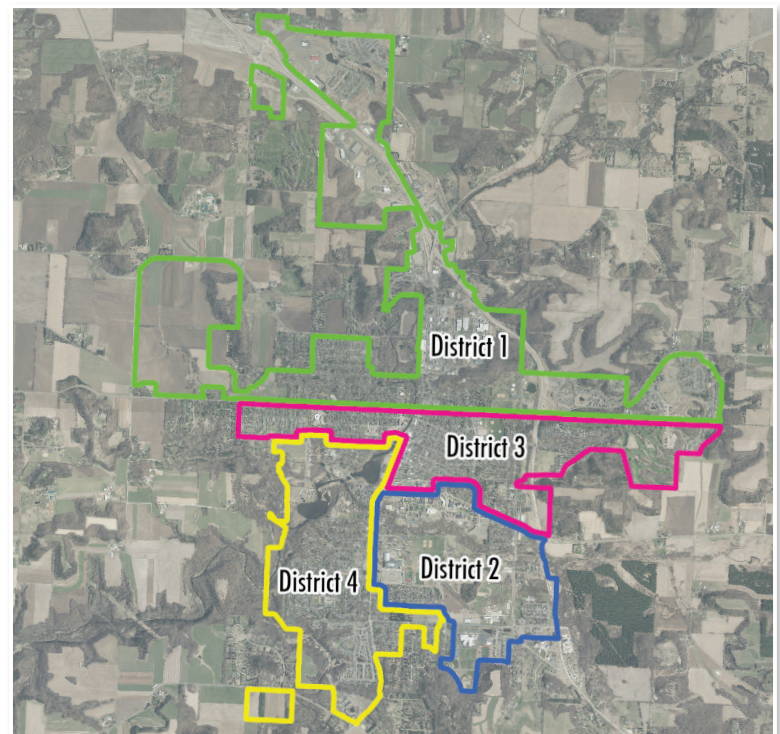
MISSION

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

OUR VALUES

- Put people first
- Pursue excellence
- Act with integrity
- Embrace change
- Serve our community
- Consider future generations

CITY OF RIVER FALLS ALDERMANIC DISTRICTS



DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING



MANN VALLEY CORPORATE PARK

After breaking ground on Mann Valley Corporate Park in 2023, the completion of the work was celebrated on Oct. 16, 2024 with a ribbon cutting ceremony to usher in the opening of the City's newest and largest corporate park.

Situated on the west end of the city, Mann Valley Corporate Park provides an opportunity for new businesses seeking larger acreage than what was previously available at the City's other three corporate parks. Mann Valley offers over 200 acres of developable land, including 10 acres for multi-family housing.

"There are still people that are looking for 10, 15, 20 acres, but the industry has changed and it's the bigger corporate businesses that are looking for 100 acres at a time," said Amy Peterson, Community Development Director with the City of River Falls. "But for us to have 200 acres to offer, it just puts us in a completely different market."

The work done between the groundbreaking ceremony and the ribbon cutting included many infrastructure additions: four and a half miles of water main, two and a half miles of

sanitary sewer, one mile of storm sewer, and electrical work to allow for lighting of the street and a new two-mile trail, which received funding from a DNR Stewardship Grant.

The land where Mann Valley Corporate Park is located was originally acquired by the City in 2011 when the River Falls City Council passed a resolution to purchase an initial 85 acres from RiverBank. The City also secured a right of first refusal for an additional 243 acres, which was exercised in 2013.

That forward-thinking decision more than a decade ago is finally coming to fruition now that Mann Valley is officially open for business.

"A day like this allows you to appreciate the fact that it takes a lot of hands to get this kind of work done," said City Administrator Scot Simpson. "The community has to have the right attitude. You have to have good leadership in place for elected (officials), good volunteers on boards and committees and commissions, and some really solid work by staff and consultants to get something this massive pulled off."

DEVELOPMENT

In 2024, 79 single-family and six two-family homes were permitted. An additional 211 multi-family units are under construction at The Current on Radio Road (105 units) and The Upland on Paulson Road (106 units).

There were two new commercial/industrial projects permitted in 2024 – the biosolids facility at the wastewater treatment plant and Little Adventures daycare in Sterling Ponds Corporate Park. Starbucks opened on N. Main Street earlier in 2024, and there is a new tenant in the 108,000-square-foot industrial building in Sterling Ponds Corporate Park.

Looking ahead, there are 241 multi-family housing units in the planning process, including 75 units of supportive housing (Red's Place). The final 65 lots at Oak Hill will likely be platted this fall. The City is also working with a developer on a housing project on 10 acres in the Mann Valley Corporate Park. This project may include more than 200 additional housing units on County Highway M.



The Upland



Little Adventures

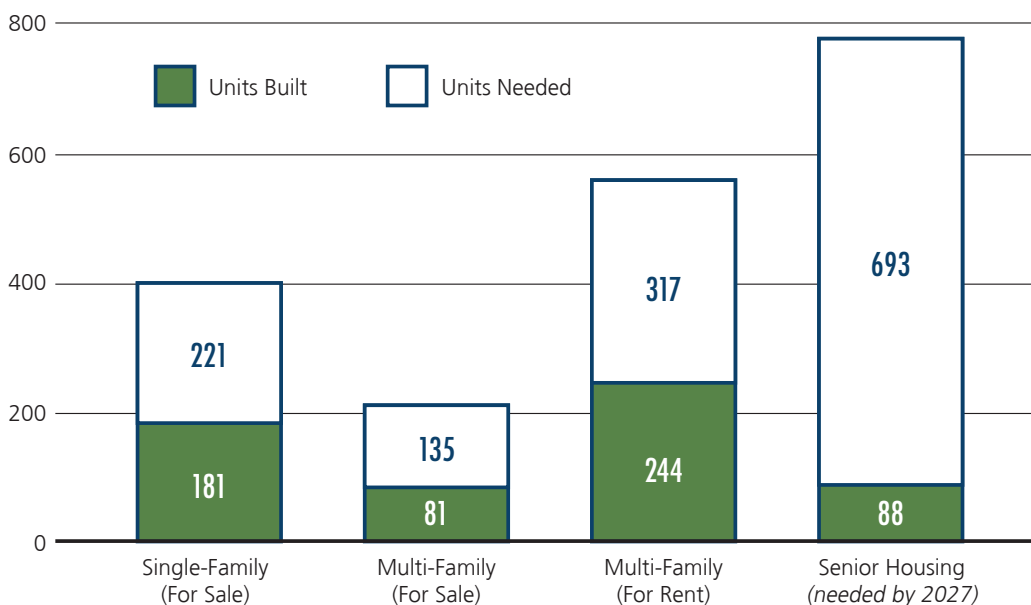


Starbucks

HOUSING NEEDS ANALYSIS

An update to the Comprehensive Housing Needs Analysis was prepared by Maxfield Research and Consulting in 2022. This projected a continued demand for most housing types in River Falls, confirming that the for-sale and rental housing markets in River Falls are inadequate to meet the projected needs of the community. The study identifies a target number of units based upon estimated demand for development in future years.

HOUSING UNITS NEEDS BY 2030 - BUILT VS. DEMAND



The chart (see left) shows the number of permitted housing units from 2022 through Oct. 15, 2024, and the estimated number of units demanded by 2027 (senior housing) and 2030 for each additional category of housing. These numbers do not include projects in the planning stages.

Senior housing includes active adult, subsidized active adult, congregate, assisted living, and memory care. Due to the variety of senior housing types, senior housing demand is projected to 2027.

CITY FINANCES

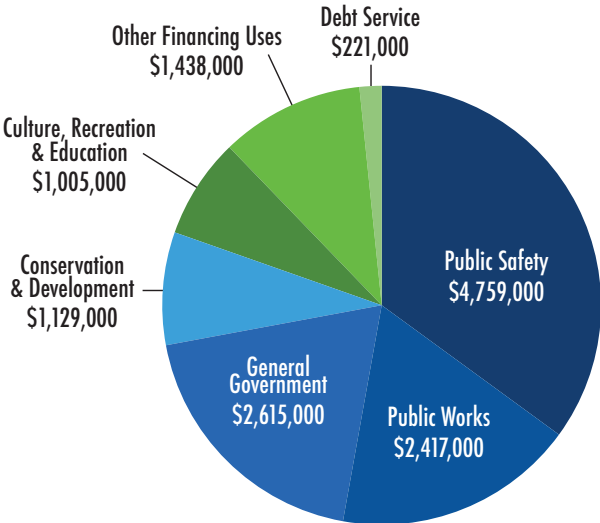
In 2024, the City focused on implementing projects and initiatives that were financed in 2023. For example, the City finished construction of Mann Valley Corporate Park and made significant progress on the new biosolids facility, both of which were financed with borrowing in 2023. As a result, the City issued no new debt in 2024. Obtaining alternative funding sources, such as grants,

was a major initiative in 2024. Over \$4 million in grant funding was obtained for a remodel of the library and \$1.4 million in grant funding was obtained for renovations of the fire station. The grant funding will significantly reduce the amount of debt financing required for these projects in 2025.

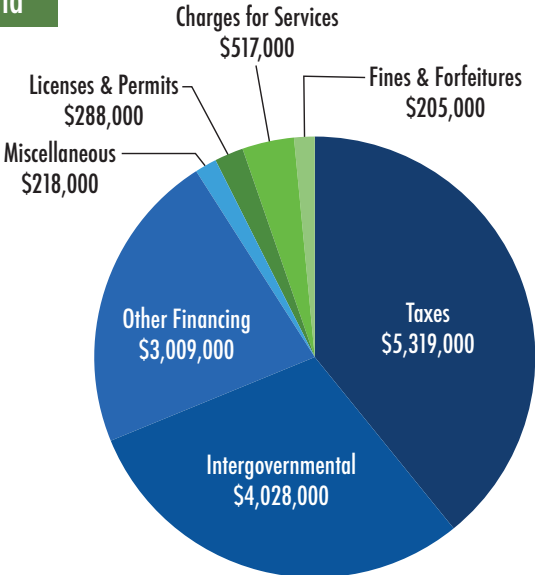
Where did your 2024 property taxes go?



2024 General Fund



EXPENSES



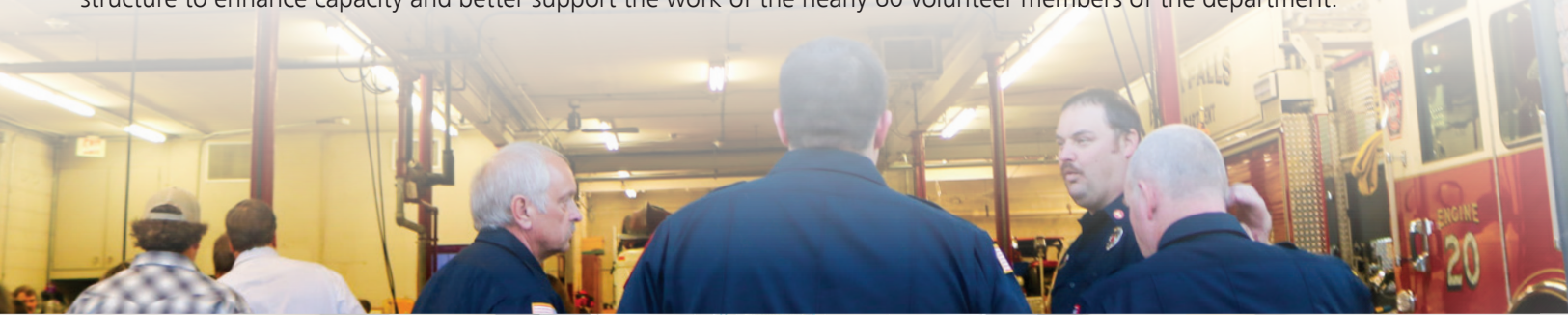
REVENUE



FUNDING OPPORTUNITY	AWARD DETAILS
Flexible Facilities Program WI Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources	\$4.08 million River Falls Public Library
Community Facilities Program U.S. Department of Agriculture	\$1.4 million Fire Department
State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program WI Division of Enterprise Technology	\$16,862 City of River Falls
Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program National Park Service	Technical assistance Community Development

FIRE STATION RENOVATION

The City of River Falls was awarded \$1.4 million in federal funding through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024, signed into law by President Biden on March 9, 2024. Secured by Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Rep. Derrick Van Orden (R-WI, 3), the funding will support vital renovations at the River Falls fire station that was originally built in the 1950s. In 2017, feasibility studies commissioned by the City revealed that significant portions of the fire station were beyond their useful life and needed replacement. The renovation project will include partial demolition, construction of a new apparatus bay, and minor modifications to the existing structure to enhance capacity and better support the work of the nearly 60 volunteer members of the department.



LIBRARY REMODEL

The River Falls Public Library has received a \$4.1 million grant from Wisconsin's Flexible Facilities Program (FFP) for remodeling to improve accessibility, efficiency, and technology. Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers visited the library on Oct. 7, 2024 to discuss how the funds will support the project, which aims to enhance space for programs, provide better internet access, and ensure the library's long-term sustainability. The library, originally opened in 1997, will undergo its first major renovation since 2008. The grant is part of a \$107 million initiative to support library upgrades across the state, helping meet the needs of growing communities like River Falls. Library leaders and local officials are excited for the transformative changes ahead, which will ensure that the library will remain a vital resource for the next 25 to 50 years.



SCAN HERE
to view renovation plans

INFRASTRUCTURE

WATER ANNIVERSARY

The past year was a big milestone for the River Falls Municipal Utilities (RFMU) water utility, which celebrated 130 years of service.

The occasion was honored with a poster drawing contest for elementary-aged children in May. The top three winners, who followed the theme of “What Water Means to Me,” all had their designs on display during the River Falls Days parade.

The first water system was installed in River Falls in 1894. That initial system consisted of approximately 21,000 feet of water main and 39 fire hydrants – enough for the population of around 2,000 residents. Today, RFMU’s water utility serves roughly 17,000 residents and 4,000 college students annually, with 979 fire hydrants and 425,000 feet of water lines.



TOP 10 WATER UTILITY CUSTOMERS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. UW-River Falls | 6. River Falls Mobile Home Park, LLC |
| 2. Best Maid Cookie Company | 7. River Falls Housing Authority |
| 3. School District of River Falls | 8. Allina Health – RF Area Hospital |
| 4. River Falls Soccer Club | 9. River Falls Municipal Utilities |
| 5. Crystal Finishing Systems Inc. | 10. Kwik Trip #453 |



SOUTH WASSON LANE

In July, a major project began as the City partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to reconstruct South Wasson Lane, from East Cascade Avenue to Cemetery Road. One of the biggest pieces of this project was the installation of a roundabout at the intersection of East Cascade Avenue and South Wasson Lane, which aims to support increased traffic flow and enhance safety at the intersection.

The City received grant funding of \$3.5 million, which covered approximately 80 percent of the project. In addition to the roundabout, a new high-capacity storm sewer was added to improve flood migration and runoff quality, and a walking trail was constructed along South Wasson Lane.

BIOSOLIDS

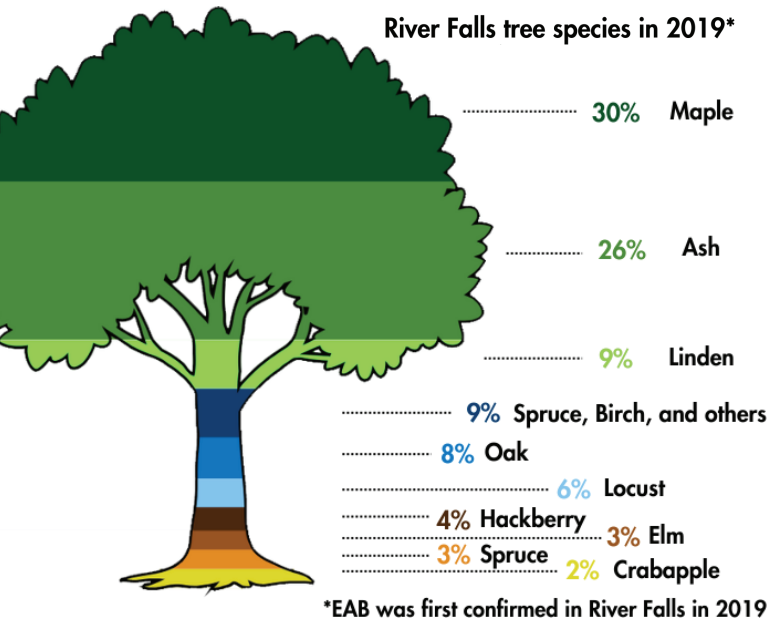
In 2024, construction began on a new biosolids dryer facility, which will allow the City to treat solid waste byproducts on-site at the wastewater treatment plant. This will eliminate the need for trucks to haul the product daily and will produce an environmentally friendly end product that can be land applied as an all-natural fertilizer. This change will have a positive fiscal and environmental impact on the City of River Falls.

Currently, solid waste byproduct from the plant is hauled daily by a semi-truck to nearby Ellsworth, where it is treated and land applied. In 2024, approximately 3 million gallons of end product sewage were hauled to West Central Wisconsin Biosolids in Ellsworth – over 8,000 gallons per day. That equated to just over 13,000 miles of tanker truck travel for the year and at a cost of \$621,000 in 2024 – an expense that won’t occur once the facility is completed.



SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Guided by the City's mission to deliver essential services and create a sustainable future, City staff prioritize transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of the community. In 2024, this included priorities like maintaining a free and fair election, adding new services, urban forestry management, public works crews keeping roads clear in the winter, and much more. At the end of the day, it all comes back to the question: how to serve the nearly 17,000 residents of the City of River Falls? Here are some examples of what that looked like in 2024.



EMERALD ASH BORER

Work began in 2024 to help remove trees impacted by emerald ash borer (EAB), an insect that attacks and kills trees in the ash family. Approximately 1,600 of the City's ash trees were affected by EAB. A total of about 500 trees had been cut down by the end of 2024, with more scheduled for removal in 2025. Those trees set to be removed were marked with either pink or white paint to indicate when they will be cut down. The five-year plan is to replant the 1,100 ash trees that will be removed. The City will be planting an estimated 240 trees annually. The urban forestry plan will include planting a variety of trees in the boulevard to combat the spread of tree-specific diseases.

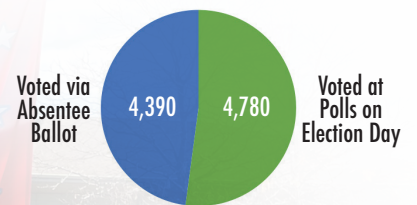
Snow Plowing

In 2024, the City of River Falls' snowplows covered 2,593 miles as they worked to keep the streets cleared. That is almost as far as driving from the East Coast to the West Coast of America!

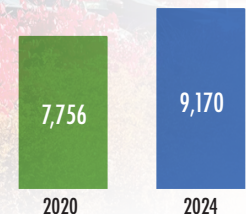
ELECTIONS

It was a big election year in 2024. City clerks and the numerous poll workers were very busy throughout the year – especially in November and the weeks leading up to the Nov. 5 election. In total, 9,170 people voted in the City of River Falls in the general election. Thanks to the tireless work of our city clerks, the electoral process ran smoothly in River Falls.

2024 Election Voting

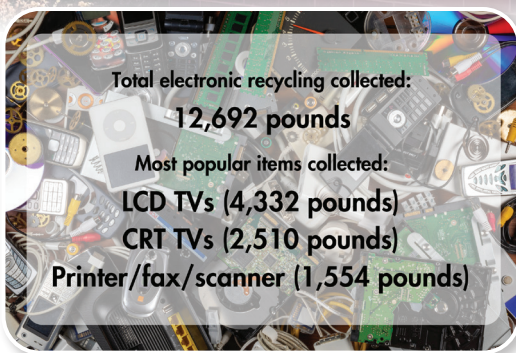


Total Voters in 2020 vs 2024



ELECTRONIC RECYCLING

A new service was added for residents in 2024. The City partnered with First Choice Recycling to include a container at our yard waste site where residents can bring electronics to be recycled. This service used to be held annually during a single-day drop-off event, but now provides continuous access to electronic recycling on a seasonal basis. From old TVs and computers to smaller electronic items, this new service proved to be a popular one.



COMMUNITY



COMMUNITY APPRECIATION EVENT

More than 1,000 residents attended the annual Community Appreciation Event at City Hall on August 8th.



FIRE DEPARTMENT OPEN HOUSE

The River Falls Fire Department's annual open house gave the community a chance to learn about fire safety and see the fire trucks up close.



NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Members of the River Falls Police Department took part in the annual National Night Out event throughout the city.



RUN WITH THE COPS

The River Falls Police Department partnered with other law enforcement agencies for Run with the Cops at UW-River Falls.



COOKOUT CONVERSATIONS

Mayor Dan Toland's Cookout Conversations continued to be a great opportunity for residents to connect with the mayor and City Councilmembers.

CONNECT WITH US

Cookout Conversations



Join Mayor Dan Toland and
City Councilmembers this summer
for free cookouts!

May 22 - Glen Park 5-7 p.m.

June 5 - DeSanctis Park 6-7:30 p.m.

July 17 - Hoffman Park 6-7:30 p.m.

Sept. 18 - Highview Meadows 6-7:30 p.m.



COMMUNITY APPRECIATION PICNIC

City Hall Plaza (222 Lewis St.)

Thursday, Aug. 7, 2025
4-6 p.m.



RIVER FALLS READER

The River Falls Reader is the City's digital newsletter, sent to subscribers every two months. In each issue of the Reader, you'll find in-depth stories on City programs and initiatives, updates on development projects, a message from the mayor, a listing of community events, job opportunities with the City of River Falls, and much more. Be sure to subscribe to be added to the mailing list to get the River Falls Reader delivered to your inbox every two months.



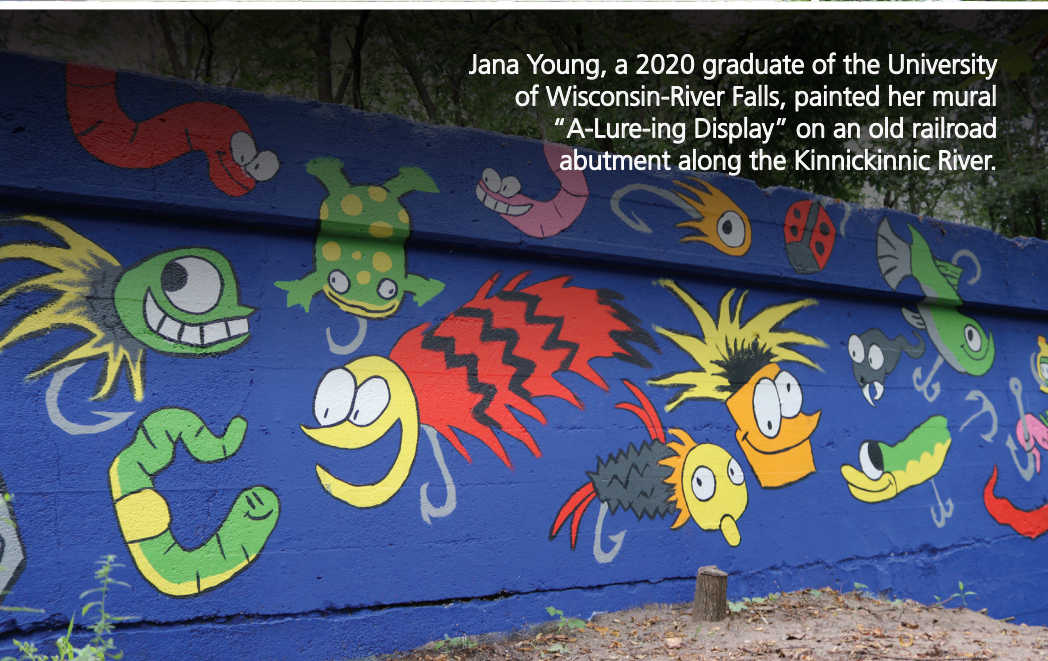
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to subscribe

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"Light Waves," a sculpture created by artist Julia Sinelnikova, was installed at Glen Park in August.



Jana Young, a 2020 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, painted her mural "A-Lure-ing Display" on an old railroad abutment along the Kinnickinnic River.

