



**TWO  
RIVERS**  
WISCONSIN

**City Manager's Report City Council Meeting August 19, 2024**

## 9. City Manager's Report

### B. Status Update/Reports

#### 1. Staffing Updates

##### Ongoing Recruitments:

- Police Officer Full Time – Completing Interviews
- Fire Department – Completing Interviews
- City Planner/Community Development Director—Re-advertising with September 13 deadline
- **NEW:** City Manager's Admin. Assistant/Deputy City Clerk-Lisa Kuehn has announced plans to retire after the November election--Advertising with September 13 deadline



CITY COUNCIL MEETING – AUGUST 5, 2024



**TWO  
RIVERS**  
WISCONSIN

*Recruitment Announcement*

**Community Development  
Director / City Planner**

##### ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Two Rivers, Wisconsin is a historic Lake Michigan shoreline city of 11,271, located 90 miles north of Milwaukee and 35 miles southeast of Green Bay.

Located in Manitowoc County (population 81,500), Two Rivers and the larger, neighboring City of Manitowoc together form an industrialized, urban center of about 45,000 people. The balance of the county is mostly rural, with significant agricultural activity.

Outdoor recreational opportunities are abundant in Two Rivers, and have helped attract new residents, new business investment, and increased tourism activity in recent years. These assets include:

- Point Beach State Forest, with 1,800 acres of forests, ridges and swales, 6 miles of unspoiled Lake Michigan shoreline, Historic Rawley Point Lighthouse and a bike/hiking trail connection to the city.
- Woodland Dunes Nature Center, with 1,200 acres of forests, meadows and wetlands along the West Twin River.
- The VanDerBrohe Arboretum, currently under development on the City's northeast side.
- Neshotah Park and beach, a 50 acre city-owned shoreline park that's home to the Best Beach in Wisconsin.
- The Rawley Point Trail and Mariners Trail, which together form a 12-mile bike/pedestrian trail connecting Two Rivers to the State Forest to the north and Manitowoc to the south.
- The East and West Twin Rivers, which course through the City to their confluence at the harbor at Lake Michigan, providing kayaking and canoeing opportunities as well as ready access to the big lake for sailing, powerboating and sport fishing.



Two Rivers has a traditional downtown business district, which remains a vital, thriving center for business and for community activities, thanks to both City and private reinvestment. Two Rivers is a Wisconsin Main Street Community. Redevelopment of former industrial sites along the City's downtown river corridors is an ongoing effort.

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#### 2. Roosevelt Street Reconstruction Project Update

- All utility work is now complete: water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer mains and laterals
- Paving subcontractor Vinton Construction is working south from 12<sup>th</sup> Street with excavating and placement of new sub-grade material, in preparation for concrete paving



**9. City Manager's Report**  
**C. Status Update/Reports**

**3. Revaluation Project: Upcoming Open Book and Board of Review**

Representatives of the City's contract assessing firm, Accurate Assessors, are meeting with property owners for Open Book on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week at City Hall:

Monday, August 19	4:00 to 6:00 PM
Tuesday, August 20	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesday, August 21	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Board of Review will meet on Wednesday, September 25 for a minimum of two hours, starting at 4:00 PM.



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#### 3. Revaluation Project: Upcoming Open Book and Board of Review

Two Rivers has not conducted a city-wide revaluation since 1999. State law requires that a revaluation be completed if WI Department of Revenue sales studies show that the total assessed valuation of the municipality varies by more than 10 percent from actual market value for a period of five years or more.

As shown in the graphic at right, Two Rivers' Aggregate Assessment Ratio, as determined by the WI Department of Revenue, was "in compliance" for the years 2018-2020, but went out of compliance in 2021 and has moved further out of compliance over the next two years, due to rapidly escalating home values—this trend is true here and across the country.

City of Two Rivers Overall Assessment Ratio, 2018-2023	
Assessment	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
2018	1.0166
2019	0.9622
2020	0.9266
2021	0.8177
2022	0.7294
2023	0.6302



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**3. Revaluation Project: Upcoming Open Book and Board of Review**

Rapidly rising home values have been reflected in the WI Department of Revenue’s “Statement of Changes in Equalized Value” for the past several years. Based on the percentages shown in the summary table to the right, existing residential properties have increased in value by over 66 percent over the past five years. This is based on DOR sales studies for each of those years.

Overall, the City’s recently-completed 2024 revaluation shows an average increase of 94.4 percent for residential properties. (As of 2023, residential properties made up about 77.5 percent of the City’s total assessed value.)

The average increase for commercial properties was 39 percent.

	<b>Economic Change</b>		
<b><u>Year</u></b>	<b><u>Existing Residential</u></b>		
2018	-3%		
2019	4%		
2020	10%		
2021	9%		
2022	19%		
2023	12%		



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#### 3. Revaluation Project: Upcoming Open Book and Board of Review

As has been noted in information provided to the community by Accurate Assessing, a big increase in your assessment does not necessarily mean a bit increase in your property tax bill.

Generally, taxing entities adjust their tax rates to effectively make any increase in assessed values “revenue neutral,” but given that property taxes are apportioned to every property in the city based on their assessments, there will be a good number of properties whose tax bills go up and a good number whose tax bills go down.

Revaluations are a process for helping assure that the tax burden is spread equitably, based on the relative market value of individual taxable properties. They are done to assure equity, not to generate more revenue for the taxing entities.

In the case of the City, our annual tax levy for operations (General Fund and Library) is capped by WI's Expenditure Restraint law and can only increase year over year based on net new construction. The other piece of the City tax levy, for debt service, is based on the amount actually required to make annual principal and interest payments on debt issued for capital projects. The City Manager and City Council strive to keep the amount of this levy relatively constant from year to year.



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#### 4. WI Department of Revenue 2024 Report on Equalized Values

This year's report on equalized values, released by WDOR in early August, showed an overall increase in equalized value of 14 percent over 2023.

A major driver was "economic change" of +12% for existing residential properties. Comparable figures for the county and the City of Manitowoc were 8 percent and 9 percent, respectively. Existing commercial properties were up 26 percent (very unusual, as this property class usually shows small increases or decreases and existing industrial up 3 percent.

Also in Two Rivers, there was \$4.5 million in new residential construction and minimal new commercial or industrial construction in 2023.





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#### 5. BIDC Approval of Loan to Assist Former Luigi's Redevelopment

The City's Business and Industrial Development Committee (BIDC) on August 5 approved a \$63,000 loan to Pop Start Restaurant Group, LLC, to help renovate, equip and re-open this property, vacant for nearly five years, as a wood-fired pizza kitchen and specialty catering business.

The City loan financing is part of an overall financing package of \$420,000 for the project.

The City Council also approved a \$10,000 grant from Tax Incremental District No. 8 to assist in this redevelopment project.

Partners in the business are Justin Ulness and Nathan Hulsey. They hope to open before year-end.



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#### 6. Lester Library Summer Reading Program

##### Summer Reading Program Stats for June-July:

Participation:        228 Adults  
                              52 Teens  
                              362 Youth

TReasure Quest:  
                              50 teams  
                              188 players

Tom Pease Program on the Library Lawn, August 14:  
                              175 attendees  
                              \$900 in Brat Fry profits to Healthiest  
                              Manitowoc County Investing Early  
                              Coalition, which includes the  
                              Reach Out and Read Coalition

Overall Program Attendance for June-July:  
                              14 Adult Programs with 228 attendance  
                              67 Youth Programs with 4,769 attendance



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**7. Upcoming Special Events**



Thursday Night Concerts in the Park  
Dr. Bombay  
Thursday, August 22 6:00 to 8:00 PM  
Schmitt Brothers Stage, Central Park West



Dragon Boat Bonanza—Cruisin' for Camille  
The Metal Ware Corporation/West Twin River  
Thursday, August 22, 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM  
Food trucks, beverages, games, silent auction, all to benefit Camille  
Hawkinson, a three-year-old from Mishicot battling B-Cell Acute  
Lymphoblastic Leukemia

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**Downtown Friday Night LIVE!**  
**Suzie and the Detonators**  
**Friday, August 23, 2024, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM**  
**Schmitt Brothers Stage, Central Park West**



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2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Back to School  
Carnival

Saturday, August 24, 2024  
9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Two Rivers Senior Center

A chance for local kids in need of  
school supplies to get the items  
they need to head back to school



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**Bands on the Beach**  
**Big Mouth and the Power Tool Horns**  
**Sunday, August 25, 2024**  
**2:00 PM to 6:00 PM**  
**Two Rivers Rotary Pavilion at**  
**Neshotah Beach**



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**Kites Over Lake Michigan, August 31 and September 1 at the Two Rivers High School Campus**

**Thank You, Chow Chong  
For 19 Great Years of Kites Over Lake Michigan!**



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