



AS REVIEWED AND RECOMMENDED
FOR APPROVAL BY PERSONNEL AND
FINANCE COMMITTEE

FORWARDED TO COUNCIL APRIL 7, 2025

Comments on 2024 progress/activities in red
Proposed modifications for 2025 in blue

**CITY OF TWO RIVERS
2024 Strategic Goals & Objectives
Adopted by City Council April 15, 2024**

I. Focus relentlessly on fiscal new revenue streams and operational sustainability.

A. Encourage and facilitate projects that will increase City tax base—both new construction and increase in market value of existing properties.

- Actively market available development and redevelopment sites, both City-owned and privately owned.
- Continue development and marketing of the Sandy Bay Subdivision by the City and its realtor.

--Project proceeded into Phase 3 in 2024; more details follow.

- Seek bids and determine lot pricing structure for Phase 3 of the Sandy Bay Highlands subdivision; award construction contract by May 31, 2024, with goal of completing Phase 3 utilities and graded/graveled streets by November 1, 2024.

--Bids opened July 2024. Contract for first stage of infrastructure awarded by Council in August 2024. Plat finalized Fall 2024; lot pricing finalized and Phase 3 lots conveyed to CDA for marketing December 2024. 2025 City Budget includes funds for second stage of Phase 3 infrastructure.

One Phase 3 lot sold at end of 2024; 4 lots under contract for construction of spec homes in 2024.

As of 2024 year-end, subdivision had 28 homes, with 2 under construction. Average assessed value just over \$400,000.

- Identify potential new sites for one and two-family residential development; engage with developers on ways to encourage economically feasible development of new owner-occupied housing in these areas. This could include City purchase of properties and/or City development incentives.

--Limited activity in this area.

- Actively pursue development of market rate housing, both condominiums and apartments, with emphasis on downtown waterfront sites. Continue work with The Confluence, LLC for successful implementation of market rate apartment development on City-owned Eggers downtown site that is the subject of TID 16 development agreement.
--The Confluence, LLC has withdrawn its development proposal; City reaching out to other developers; need to establish minimum development criteria (on agenda in April 2025). Strike reference to The Confluence, LLC.
- Consider options for short-term (3-4 month) extension of Development Agreement with YBR, LLC, or resume marketing efforts on this site.

--City offered 3-month extension in June 2024, requiring a non-refundable deposit; developer, after delay, declined; no longer applicable. Strike this item.
- Continue work with Scott Crawford Development for successful implementation of affordable housing apartment development, West River Lofts, on former Eggers West industrial site that is the subject of TID 17 Project Plan.
Scott Crawford Development relinquished the tax credits reserved for the project in November 2024; reportedly re-evaluating its options for the Eggers West site. City secured WEDC Idle Sites grant for \$250,000, for site and seawall work; may need to release the grant, as project is not progressing.

Keep this goal, as Scott Crawford still controls the property; modify to read “for successful redevelopment of the former Eggers West industrial site.
- Continue to promote private investment at the Woodland Industrial Park, using TID 14 resources for business grants and infrastructure investment as appropriate.

City staff and BIDC/CDA worked with Rush Logistics to identify a site to meet the company’s needs for a new, 6,000 SF facility at the Woodland Industrial Park. Work included obtaining Phase I ESA and wetlands assessments, certified survey and land division to create the site. Sale of 2-acre site closed in December 2024. Plans up for Plan Commission and BIDC/CDA review in March 2025; construction will start Spring 2025. WG&R Bedding continues to hold ROFR on 2 acre expansion site next to their plant. Hawk Energy Storage continues to hold option on 9 acre development site.
- City Manager and Community Development Director to continue to meet with prospective developers over the course of 2024, regarding several key redevelopment sites and greenfield sites in the city, including:
 - Former Hansen the Florist site
Extensive work with new site owner/developer, including preparation of draft developer grant agreement for TID 15 assistance
 - Former Eggers West plant
Scott Crawford project currently on hold after big investment of City staff time. See comments above.
 - Former Eggers East site

The Confluence, LLC no longer pursuing development; outreach to other developers has begun. [See comments above.](#)

--Former Paragon site, including vacant parcel listed for sale on Columbus Street
[Periodic contacts with owner Art Dumke.](#)

--Various properties on Washington Street in the downtown business District
[Staff has worked with various parties showing interest in Washington Street properties, including Starbucks and Taco Bell developers, and current tenants to be relocated by Taco Bell Project. Outreach to realtor who has listing for the US Bank property. Work with realtor doing current \(first quarter 2025\) site search on downtown sites. Work with BIDC and business owner on City loan and façade grant for The Hook Lanes and Games, façade grant for Kouba building.](#)

--Vacant former Elks Club on 15th Street

[--Staff has worked with developers as they considered purchase of the property, and with structuring City assistance that includes BIDC loan, TID 12 pay-go grant for up to \\$130,000, and \\$20,000 joint City/Main Street façade grant. \\$1.6 million redevelopment project at what was a blighted and abandoned downtown property.](#)

--NE corner of Monroe and 16th Streets (former Ginny's Resale)
[--Staff has discussed redevelopment plans and possible City assistance for mixed-use redevelopment with owner/developer.](#)

--SW corner of Washington and 22nd Streets
[--No recent activity; have provided site information to developer interested in downtown area site assembly.](#)

--Former M & M Restaurant and adjacent properties
[--Several discussions with current owner and his design/build firm about redevelopment options.](#)

--Burrows waterfront property on the West Twin downtown (behind Kurtz's)
[--Only limited discussion with owners development consultants, during Plan Commission and City Council consideration of owner's proposal to put self-storage warehouses on this property. City denied the request for conditional use permit for that use.](#)

--Former Ralph Schroeder property on Garfield Street
[No activity to report.](#)

--Undeveloped portion of East Point
[No activity to report. Continue to make residential developers aware of that site.](#)

--Sites in the Columbus and Woodland Industrial Parks
[--See other comments on Rush Logistics and Woodland Ind. Park. Discussions with prospects about Columbus Ind. Park site.](#)

--Vacant former Union State Bank on Lincoln Avenue

--Sold and redeveloped in 2024. City façade grant assistance provided to new building owner Meridian Wellness (\$10,000 from TID 8).

--Vacant former St. Mark's School on 12th Street

--Contacts during 2024 with 2 different owners of the property.

--2023 Washington Street (former UniMart site)

--Work with current owners and City Council to amend 2022 property sale/development agreement; amendment approved by City Council January 2025. Per amended agreement, owner has property listed for sale.

- Strive for at least three percent annual increase in the City's equalized valuation, 2022-2023 and ongoing.

--Two Rivers' equalized valuation increased 16 percent 2022-23 and 13 percent 2023-24, increasing faster than the rest of the county. This trend has improved some important ratios, including:

- City G.O. Debt. Statutory Debt Limit is 5 percent of total equalized value; City policy goal is to not exceed 60 percent of that limit (3 percent of total EV)—percentage is down from about 3.25 (65 percent of limit) percent to 2 percent (40 percent of limit) over the past 5 years).
- TIF. By statute, new TID's cannot be created nor existing TID's amended if EV of all increment exceeds 12 percent of total EV. That ratio has declined from 5.73 percent in 2019 to 4.6 percent in 2024.

- B. Recruit businesses that can take advantage of available water and wastewater treatment capacity, to help stabilize or reduce rates for those utilities Develop a targeted strategy for marketing these assets: high quality water and available water and sewer capacity.

--Have not yet developed targeted strategy. BOD loading and solids in wastewater stream have posed challenges in recent years for the wastewater system—issue has been addressed by Engineering and Wastewater staff over the past 2-3 years, working with a local industry.

- C. Increase the General Fund's Unrestricted Fund Balance to \$2.2 million—improve by at least \$200,000 per year (Ongoing).

--Unrestricted fund balance (GF balance net of any negative balances in other funds) was -\$138,136 in 2022, -\$164,279 in 2023. Still a marked improvement from -\$850,000 in 2017. Expected to improve as of 2024 year-end.

- D. Eliminate Water Utility deficit—reduce by at least \$200,000 per year

--Water Utility cash deficit improved by \$184,794 in 2023. Accelerated improvement in cash position expected with significant drop in debt service in 2024, even with having started the 3-year payoff of \$500,000 loan from TID 7 (intake cleaning project). Improved by another \$260,000 in 2024 (unaudited).

- E. Pursue acquisition for redevelopment of the vacant, tax-delinquent parcel fronting on south side of 12th Street, between Adams and Monroe Streets, from County for redevelopment.

--No activity in 2024; revisit in 2025.

- F. Pursue location at or near the Woodland Industrial Park for correctional facility.
--No action to date; State of WI has made no decision on future of Green Bay Correctional Facility, nor on any replacement facilities.
- G. Pursue development of hydroponic produce growing and processing operations.
--No action to date.
- H. Highlight cost containment and efficiency measures achieved by the City in its 2024 Budget
--Limited attention to cost containment measures; achieving balanced General Fund operations in 2024 (unaudited) with extra-ordinary expenses presented by the Elijah Vue case was a notable achievement. Likewise for developing and adopting a 2025 City Budget with zero tax increase.

2024 Year-End Financials show balance operations (unaudited) with a small operating surplus (\$22,000) on a \$12 million budget. Revenues and expenditures each within 1 percent of budget.

City Tax Levy History, Recent Years: City tax levy up by a total of 7.78% in the five-year period 2019-2024 (average of 1.5% per year).

City General Fund Budget, Recent Years: Budgeted General Fund spending up 18.3 percent in the five-year period 2020-2025 (average just under 3.5% per year)

II. Deliver outstanding city services & innovations for both sustainability and to support future growth.

- A. Develop, implement and act upon feedback mechanisms for local residents and businesses (Ongoing)
- Pursue re-engineering/reinvigorating Two Rivers' Citizen Academy—a program started in the Police Department in the 1980's. The City of Two Rivers was a national pioneer in the development of Citizen Academy. Evaluate virtual academy options, to either replace or supplement traditional classroom and hands-on approach to Citizen Academy.

--No action on this in 2024.
 - Hold periodic community forums on specific topics: Community development, housing issues, public safety, infrastructure issues, etc. Begin in third quarter 2024.

--Not accomplished in 2024. City Council has initiated quarterly listening sessions in 2025.

- Expand “Coffee With a Cop” concept to include community outreach by other City Departments.

--“Coffee With a Cop” resumed in Fall 2024. Limited outreach activities by other departments; increase emphasis on this in 2025.

B. Invest in technology to drive delivery of quality services and to achieve economies

- Continue to develop and expand the ExploreTwoRivers.com website. Encourage more local businesses to submit events; add more features on local attractions; encourage use of the site by local businesses in order to maximize the business impact of special events.
--Website for ExploreTwoRivers is being improved, still sharing platform with two-rivers.org but with a more distinct appearance.
- Continue and expand on City-produced ‘focus’ features on local businesses.
--No expansion of these efforts in 2024
- Implement new permitting software in Inspections; expand to include on-line submissions for permits.
--2023-24 budgeted item

--Efforts slowed with vacancy in Community Development Director position.

- Continue to add cameras in parks and public spaces to enhance public safety, deter vandalism and prosecute ordinance violations (vandalism, dumping, other offenses): Add signage about presence of cameras, as an advisory to the public and deterrent to criminal activity.
--Cameras being added to Central Park West March-April 2024; plan to add to new Neshotah Park playground area. 2025 Budget includes funding for installation and activation of 8 new Flock cameras at major community entry/exit points by the Police Department.

C. Develop and implement a strategy for better informing the public about city services and infrastructure and their contribution to economic development and community quality of life.

- Presentations to groups and service clubs by City Mgr., Department Heads.
- Continue to implement short informational videos on various City services, produced by Communications Coordinator.

--Limited progress on this; City Manager and department heads do continue to make presentations to civic and business groups, but there is low participation/engagement in those traditional settings. City continues to provide information on infrastructure efforts through the monthly newsletter in utility bills. Should produce several informational videos in 2025.

D. Pursue community sustainability and resiliency initiatives where considered appropriate, with input from the Environmental Advisory Board and involving community partner organizations.

--EAB has not led a major community sustainability initiative, but with staff support has actively engaged the community on sustainability and resiliency issues, through its speaker series, front yard gardens pilot project and other initiatives.

- E. Implement SwimSmart beach advisory system in 2024 at Neshotah Beach and New Beach, with funding from Room Tax Commission, involvement of NOAA Marine Sanctuary.

--Accomplished. Beach safety will be further enhanced in 2025 with Fire Department putting rescue jet ski (2025 capital budget item) into service.

Modify to read: Continue to enhance beach safety with Fire Department purchase and training on rescue jet ski.

III. Drive strategic community development.

- A. Secure the former Hamilton property for redevelopment by 2024 year-end.

--Not yet accomplished. Achieving this goal still largely depends on progress in the ongoing environmental investigation activities of property owner Thermo Fisher Scientific, working with its environmental consultants and WDNR. This should nonetheless remain one of the City's highest priorities.

- B. Emphasize continued redevelopment in the City's downtown and downtown waterfront areas

- Work with The Confluence, LLC to successfully implement project on former Eggers downtown property

--The Confluence, LLC's plans have gone inactive as of July 2024; City staff is commencing outreach to other prospective developers. Change to: continue to pursue redevelopment of the former Eggers downtown property.

--Consider options for short-term (3-4 month) extension of Development Agreement with YBR, LLC, or resume marketing efforts on this site.

--Delete.

- Pave “Phase 2” of South Breakwater Trail project—a trail segment south along the shoreline, behind DPW and back out to Mariners Trail just north of the Lighthouse Inn property. Relocate DPW concrete storage and processing to new site, opening this area up for more public recreational use.

--Not pursued to date; tie to overall planning/design effort for this area. PW Director did meet with BIDC and CDA in 2024 to present preliminary site plan for relocating DPW concrete storage and processing to a lot in the Columbus Industrial Park, to get that activity off the lakefront and open up more area for future recreational use. Implement this change in 2025.

- Continue grant program to help fund for façade and sign grants, both downtown (in partnership with Main Street) and along major commercial corridors (City TID or Economic Development funding) ~~Funded at \$100,000 in 2024 City Budget; strive to expend 100% of these funds, leveraging business investment and improving downtown in the process.~~ \$40,000 in new funding in the 2025 Budget, plus \$55,000 carryover committed to projects; stive to expend 100 percent of these funds, leveraging business investment and improving downtown in the process.

--\$10,000 TID 8 façade grant paid to Meridian Wellness, Lincoln Avenue

--\$25,000 City TID 13/\$5,000 Main Street façade grant encumbered to The Hook Lanes and Games (completion deadline extended to May 31, 2025)

--\$5,000 City TID 13/\$5,000 Main Street Façade Grant encumbered to Kouba building, 1606 Washington (completion deadline extended to May 31, 2025)

--\$10,000 TID 8 small business grant encumbered to Pop-Start Pizza, 1033 22nd Street

--\$10,000 TID 8 façade grant encumbered to The Wave TR, LLC, 2015 Jackson Street

2025: \$15,000 City TID 8/\$5,000 Main Street façade grant approved March 3 to Violet Inn, 1415 16th Street. As of March 12, 2025, \$25,000 remains available for new grants in 2025.

- Work within City government and with community groups to both maintain the new Central Park West 365 project to high standards, and to continue to program and promote the park as a year-round hub for downtown activities. Expand Summer season programming and build on the success of Cool City Christmas event to fill the period from Thanksgiving to Christmas with downtown activities, helping drive business activity.

--2024 Summer season saw expanded activities, with the addition of Sponsor-supported Friday night concerts; 2025 acts are booked. Second annual Cool City Christmas was a success and plans for 2025 are already in place. Park has been maintained to a high standard, including installation of irrigation system as 2024 Budget item.

Project received awards in 2024 from WI Park & Recreation Association, WI Main Street Program and the Chamber of Manitowoc County.

- Develop plans and community fund-raising strategy for next phase of downtown Christmas decorations and lighting.

~~Implement “Phase 2” of downtown Christmas decorations upgrade in 2024.~~
 Work with Main Street, TRBA and other local organizations to expand and improvement downtown holiday decorations in 2025.

Downtown Christmas decorating activities extended in 2024 with tree decorating contest and display in Central Park—event had great participation, was well-executed and drew positive community feedback. Supported with donations by Sprang’s Christmas Trees, Lowe’s (tree stands) and the many community groups that decorated trees.

- City Council rep and City Manager actively participate as members of the Main Street Board. Continue to cooperate with Main Street in:
 - Expanding streetscape and signage to better incorporate the 22nd Street corridor as part of the downtown district
 - Offering façade and sign grants to businesses in the BID district
 - Promoting public art in the downtown area
 - Filling vacancies in downtown storefronts
 - Encouraging historic preservation and promotion of design standards for Downtown.
 - Main Street’s 2024 public art activities included a new “Bird City” mural, continued summer art banner program, and downtown “yarn bombing.” Main Street has partnered with City on façade grant commitments to The Hook and the Kouba building (2024 funding commitments) and Violet Inn (2025).
- Place high priority on development of new, market-rate housing (rental or condo) on the downtown waterfront to aid in revitalizing downtown.
 - No development activity finalized; needs new effort in 2025.

C. Emphasize redevelopment investment along Memorial Drive and Lake Michigan shoreline south of downtown

- Develop master plan for upgrades to Spirit of the Rivers Wayside and adjacent lands acquired by City in January 2020
 - Not yet developed; should build on work associated with shoreline planning project described on next page.
- Pursue funding for rehabilitating that portion of Mariners Trail located in Two Rivers not resurfaced in 2020-21 and for replacing split rail fence along trail.
 - No action in 2024; continue to list as goal.

- Pursue funding for ~~Complete~~ installation of pedestrian-activated flashers on Memorial Drive at 12th, Madison and Columbus (in that priority order) in 2025 and future years, to make these crossings safer.

--Funds for ped crossing improvements on Memorial at 12th/Lake And at Madison are available in the 2025 budget for TID 12; City will need to pursue funding for crossing at Columbus Street. This work will need to be completed after the 2025 WisDOT-funded resurfacing project on Memorial Drive. WisDOT has indicated that they do not have funds to assist in these projects.

- Complete improvements between Washington Street bridge and Jefferson Street (East Gateway Corridor), which included an improved, off-street trail; this \$100,000 improvement has been deferred for two years and needs to be completed in ~~2024~~2025-. Include plans for permanent display of Coast Guard motor lifeboat.

--Portion of this trail connection completed in 2024; complete balance, across the Kozlowski property, in 2025. No progress to date on display of restored USCG boat, stored at Wood Type Museum.

- Aggressively pursue acquisition of CN Railroad right-of-way to aid in redevelopment in this corridor; get contract with CN signed and process underway in 2023. Finalize commitment to this property purchase in 2024.

--No action in 2024. Pursue in 2025.

- Develop and pursue implementation of plans to upgrade Lake Michigan shoreline adjacent to City Public Works and Utility facilities and south of Lighthouse Inn to Manitowoc for improved public access, habitat restoration and shoreline protection/resiliency.

--City in late 2023 and 2024 secured \$506,000 in funding, from three grant sources, to fund plans for shoreline stabilization, stormwater management, improved public access and habitat improvement along its Lake Michigan shoreline in the areas described above.

Funding sources include:

--\$280,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Sustain Our Great Lakes (SOGL) program, for planning and design work, and some improvement projects, all along the shoreline.

--\$66,000 from the Fund for Lake Michigan (approved March 22, not yet announced), to cover local most match on the above grant. Balance of approximately \$33,000 local match would be in-kind staff time or Storm Water Utility investment in demonstration projects along shoreline.

--\$160,000 from the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway Cities Initiative, which in turn was funded with a NF&WF National Coastal Resilience Fund grant. (No local match requirement.) The Cities Initiative solicited coastal resiliency project proposals from communities around Lake Michigan, seeking to award funding for 4 projects. The project submitted by Two

Rivers: planning and design for shoreline restoration and stabilization, improved natural habitat and public recreational use for the Lake Michigan beach between the South Pier and the Lighthouse Inn (from the City's 2013 Harbor Master Plan, was selected for funding.

These grant-funded activities should be completed in 2024 and 2025, and will lay a solid foundation for seeking implementation funds to improve the publicly-owned Lake Michigan shoreline in these areas.

--Complete in 2024 the planning and design activities for the City's south lakeshore, as funded through Save Our Great Lakes, Coastal Resiliency and Fund for Lake Michigan grants (\$506,000 total); make these plans the basis for securing funds for implementation of physical improvements to this area of shoreline. [Revise to 2025.](#)

--In tandem with the above planning activities, develop a site-specific master plan for the City-owned properties between Taylor Street and the Chamber of Commerce (10+ acre area, comprised of two major waysides. Pursue funding in ~~2024~~[2025](#), undertake planning in ~~2025~~[2026](#).

[Funding agreements were finalized in 2024, consulting services agreement given final approval in January 2025. As of March 2025, project is delayed due to uncertainty of the status of previously-approved Federal funding, based on actions of the new Trump Administration.](#)

--Also in tandem with the above planning activities, undertake a space needs assessment for ultimately replacing and relocating the City's public works yard and garage, as well as the water and electric service building to a new, non-lakefront location.

--[Staff pursuing relocation of material storage and processing from DPW campus to Columbus Industrial Park in 2025; seek to fund space needs study in 2026 Budget.](#)

E. Invest in critical infrastructure, leveraging available funding from non-City sources to maximize investment.

- Complete street/utility reconstruction projects budgeted for ~~2024~~[2025](#).

[--Roosevelt Avenue reconstruction completed: major reconstruction project, including all utilities, at a cost of \\$3 million. Modify to say the same about 2025 projects \(Harbor/16th/Emmet reconstruction; Pierce Street paving\)](#)

[Low-interest State and Federal funding and grants/principal forgiveness secured for these projects.](#)

- Identify 2025 street and utility projects and begin providing information to impacted property owners not later than July 31, 2024.

[--Direct communication to impacted property owners did not happen until January 2025, but neighborhood awareness did not appear to be an issue, given advance public discussion of the project. Adopt similar goal for 2026 street projects.](#)

- Continue to aggressively pursue funding for lead water service lateral replacement throughout the city.
--City has continued aggressive pursuit of funding and implementation of its programs to “get the lead out.” 2024 projects will replace 50 lsl’s on Roosevelt Ave. and about 200 at scattered locations. New fund to allow use of Safe Drinking Water Fund low-interest loan monies, created at March 18, 2024 City Council meeting, will further assist homeowners with “private side” lsl replacement.
--Successfully implement the program described above in 2024; develop strategy for continued lsl replacement for years 2025-2027.

--Update to reflect ongoing efforts to replace lsl’s. 2025 funding for about 200 lsl replacements is qualified for 100 percent principal forgiveness for the “private side.”

--Cite outside funding secured for lsl replacement in recent years.

- Develop plans for effective use of American Rescue Plan Act funds; work with County to use all available City and County ARPA funds for city infrastructure.

City expects to make full use of available City and County-shared ARPA dollars (approx. \$1,155,000 each), all for lead lateral replacement.

--Done: agreements in place with County—still some question about ability to use ALL available County funds.

Implement low-interest loan program to aid in funding private side laterals, using Safe Drinking Water loan funds. Identify any additional sources of State and Federal funding to keep local costs for lead abatement at the minimum level necessary.

--City is making use of DNR low interest (0.25 percent) loan funds for both public and private lateral replacement under 2024-25 lsl replacement program.

F. Implement City of Two Rivers Tourism Program, under the direction of the Room Tax Commission (Post-MAVCB)

--Explore Two Rivers, Inc. established at a 501(c)6

--New director hired March 2023, January 2024. After an initial setback, the program is on the right track.

--Local tourism promotion and development efforts continue to see success:

--Room tax revenues grew by 3 percent in 2024, when many other markets saw declines.

--Room Tax Commission and Explore Two Rivers, Inc. reached agreement on a services contract for calendar year 2025.

--Explore Two Rivers Board has welcomed new members for 2025.

--Two Rivers is effectively partnering with the City of Manitowoc in jointly promoting area tourism.

- Develop updated concept plan and cost estimates for adaptive re-use of historic water pumping station at Memorial Drive and Lake Street as Two Rivers welcome center. Adopt strategy for making this project a reality by 2026, with at least half of the estimated \$1.2 million project cost to be funded from non-local sources, and the bulk of local source funding from room taxes and TID funds.
- --Updated plans and cost estimates have been developed, with funds provided by the City through TID 12 in 2024; updated plans have been shared with Room Tax Commission, Explore Two Rivers and the Advisory Council for NOAA's Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Progress toward a joint funding arrangement with NOAA has been complicated by possible NOAA budget cuts and the current situation with the Federal budget.
- Design and implement new system of wayfinding signage, to guide visitors to community attractions and destinations by Summer 2025.2026.
- --No activity in 2024; keep as goal for 2025.
- Maximize tourism benefits to Two Rivers from implementation of National Marine Sanctuary: "Wisconsin's Shipwreck Coast"
 - City Manager and Tourism Director have actively participated in meetings of the Sanctuary Advisory Council, advancing Two Rivers' interests including the water pumping station's conversion to a community and sanctuary welcome center.
 - Keep this goal
 - City Manager, Tourism Director and Park & Rec Director have continued to be in touch with Sanctuary staff on this matter; a pre-application by staff for \$250,000 in State funding for this project was well-received, but activities currently on hold, given uncertainties about Federal funding.
- Recommended New Goal: Work to better document the local economic impact of tourism, using tools like geofencing to identify where overnight visitors and day-trippers are coming from, where they are staying and visiting in the community. Use such data to increase the beneficial economic impact of visitor spending and to help evaluate measures like possible parking fee at the beach.

G. Lobby Federal government for needed investment in Lake Michigan harbor infrastructure to address shoaling and storm surge issues

--Limited dialogue with USACE in 2024; keep this goal. Get USACE Chicago District reps to Two Rivers for a meeting in 2025.

H. In pursuit of all the above goals, make strategic use of development incentives

- Make strategic use of TIF for housing initiative cited above and for infrastructure work cited above.
- Stay on top of State and Federal funding programs that may assist with local development, including Community Development Block Grant funding and various funding programs offered through the WEDC (Idle Sites, Community Development Investment Grants, etc.), WI Department of Tourism, etc.

- City continues to do so. Examples cited throughout this document.
- Keep this goal.
- Provide detailed listing of grants received in recent years.

IV. Continue to grow a vibrant, sustainable, safe & connected community while respecting our traditions & history to attract new residents, visitors & new businesses.

- Address the need for additional tools (ordinances, policies, grant and loan programs) and enforcement resources (possible additional personnel) to address deteriorated properties
 - Consider licensing and inspections program for all residential rental properties
 - Consider licensing program for hotels and motels

--Limited progress in 2024; set goal of adopting a rental properties registration ordinance in 2025; drop goal related to hotel/motel licensing, as this has been a subject of litigation in other communities.

- Develop **voluntary** design standards and incentives for investment in historic properties This goal has been a subject of discussion at several meetings of the TR Main Street Design Committee, including consultation with representatives of the State Historical Society. A current topic with that committee.
- Develop design standards and incentives for new development and redevelopment in the downtown and downtown waterfront areas.

--City staff and Plan Commission worked to address design standards for new development in the downtown area in 2024, with proposed Zoning Code amendment to create a “downtown overlay district.” While some zoning restrictions specific to that district were approved by City Council, the Council rejected the proposed design standards for new development.

TR Main Street in early 2025 has started a working group to take a look at possible measures to support historic preservation and design standards for new development in the downtown.

--Suggest changing to: Work with downtown area stakeholders to consider changes to zoning ordinance, sign ordinance and other regulations related to downtown land uses, historic preservation and design standards

- Update and continue implementation of 2013 Bike/Ped Facilities Plan

--No progress on this in 2024; keep this goal for 2025.

- Continue phased implementation of Neshotah Park Master Plan that was adopted in 2023.

--Following major playground upgrade in 2023, improvements continued with completion of trail and lighting upgrades, installation of beach conditions warning system in 2024. Also, design work on plans and cost estimates for a future

upgraded beach house. Staff pursued and secured grant funding for 2025 capital projects through WDNR (\$210,000), West Foundation (\$100,000) and the City Room Tax Commission (\$30,000). These grants, totaling \$340,000, will fund nearly half of the \$700,000 in improvements at Neshotah Park planned for 2025.

- Complete and adopt updated Park and Open Space Plan (AKA Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, CROP)

--Developed over the course of 2024 by Parks and Rec Director and Advisory Recreation Board; adopted by City Council September 2024. Parks and Rec staff is pursuing implementation, using the Plan as guide for needed park improvements.

- Foster development of the local arts community as an integral component of community quality of life and economic development
--Continued cooperation with TR Main Street on downtown projects that include hanging planters, art banners, new "Bird City" mural. New, arts-based business, Inky Blues, opened in 2024; two other parties with arts-related businesses have contacted the City in 2025 about possible start-ups.

- Support downtown murals as part of joint façade program with Main Street

--Façade Grants program did not fund any murals in 2024; 2025 grant funded for Violet Inn project incorporates artwork into the building façade; possible mural site on the now-exposed south wall of Casa Mexico is being explored for 2025.

- Review and consider modifications to local regulations on short-term vacation rentals.

--Topic for two City Council work sessions in August 2024 and February 2025; these discussions have resulted in a set of ordinance amendments that will go to the City Council for consideration in April 2025.

V. Encourage employees' personal and professional development, invest in employees to deliver the highest quality services for our community today and tomorrow while

being a preferred city for career opportunities.

- A. Recruit and retain employees whose professional and educational backgrounds and interests are consistent with the City's goals. Recent recruitments/promotions/hires at the department head level have strengthened the City's management team: Engineer/DPW Director, Parks & Rec Director, Fire Chief, City Clerk and Tourism Director were all newly hired or promoted within the past two years. Filling Finance Director position with a qualified individual is a high priority.

--Finance Director position filled with a quality candidate; transition has gone well. More recently, City Manager's Admin. Assistant position filled November 2024 with a quality hire. Filling the Community Development Director/City Planner position (vacant since July 2024) has proven to be a real challenge; position remains vacant at this time.

- B. Retain good employees by encouraging ongoing professional development, supported by City budgeted resources and through active pursuit of grant funding.
--Individual department budgets continue to support staff training and development.

--Recent highlights have included:

- Recognition of Senior Center Director and Parks & Rec Director among Manitowoc County's 2024 "Future 15"
- Recognition of Parks & Rec Director Mike Mathis as Manitowoc County Young Professional of the Year;
- Recognition of Deputy Police Chief Melissa Wiesner as 2023 WI Woman Police Officer of the Year.
- Recognition of Lester Public Library Assistant Director Terry Ehl as 2024 Wisconsin Librarian of the Year

Training is actively supported and promoted throughout the City organization, including use of resources of the FBI National Academy, National Fire Training Academy, National Recreation and Parks Association, American Public Power Association, WPPI Energy, and other organizations.

- C. Ongoing emphasis on staff development. Highlight professional development activities through periodic reports at City Council meetings.

--See above

- D. Recruit and retain good employees by maintaining competitive, market-based pay scales.

Add: Negotiate responsible labor agreements with Police and Fire unions as successors to current agreements, which helped keep wages competitive, aiding employee retention, while recognizing the need for fiscal constraint..
Fund a non-union wage study in the 2026 City budget.

- E. Implement modified Summer hours for City Hall on a trial basis in 2024, as a no-cost enhanced benefit for non-union support staff and possible enhancement to customer service.

--Modified hours implemented on a trial basis in Summer 2024, adopted as standard hours for 2025. Delete this goal.

- F. Lay groundwork to implement performance appraisal process and merit pay adjustments at department head level in 2024.

--Keep this goal. Baseline appraisals and 2025 goals for department heads being developed in 2025 to assist in transition to new city manager.

- G. Develop and maintain succession plans for positions of City Manager, department heads and other key positions.

Delete: Plan and budget for recruitment, selection and hiring of a new City Manager in mid-2025, based on current retirement plans of incumbent.

Delete: City Council, under the lead of the Personnel and Finance Committee, to evaluate search consultant options and make recommendations regarding recruitment and selection process.

Add: Complete recruitment and selection process for a new City Manager; bring new CM on-board by mid-July 2025.

--City Council in September 2024 established a City Manager Recruitment and Selection Committee to take the lead in this process. Committee to date has Issued a search consultant RFP, recommended a search consultant to the City Council (approved November 2024), and contracted with that firm, Public Administration Associates, to assist in the recruitment and selection process.

Process is underway to identify a top candidate for the position and have that person on-board by mid-July. Current City Manager retiring August 8, 2025.

- H. Proposed New Goal: Encourage local students to pursue careers in public service, expanding and highlighting use of high school youth apprentices, shadowing programs, and college-level internships. Highlight and celebrate the contributions of these student employees, as well as their future career accomplishments.

--In 2025, there will be at least six youth apprentices working in various City departments.

VI. Enhance and promote the City's identity and brand story throughout the region.

- A. Tell Two Rivers' story through effective implementation of branding strategy, using the most effective communication channels, digital and traditional, both for tourism and overall economic development
- B. Target message to drive economic development, new residential growth, and tourism.

- C. Continue to expand “Made in Two Rivers” initiative; create “Made in Two Rivers” link on EXPLORETWORIVERS.COM website.
- D. Leverage community and regional resources to help promote Two Rivers’ brand story, including:
 - TRBA
 - Two Rivers Main Street
 - Two Rivers Historical Society
 - Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum
 - Woodland Dunes Nature Center

 - Local Arts Community
 - Area Realtors—
 - Local Employers—meetings about “Made in Two Rivers” by Brand Ambassadors
 - Progress Lakeshore
 - Manitowoc Area Visitor and Convention Bureau
 - Chamber of Manitowoc County

--Logos and themes of the City’s adopted brand strategy are being used extensively in City communication efforts, including marketing work by the City’s Room Tax Commission and Explore Two Rivers, Inc.