

Administration

To: Downtown Main Street Task Force

From: Mason Becker, Manager of Economic Development and Strategic Initiatives

Date: July 22, 2025

Subject: Part-time Main Street Reconstruction Project Liaison

Background

As part of planning for the 2028 Main Street reconstruction project, the Watertown Main Street Program began hosting quarterly Downtown Business Meetups, open to downtown business and property owners and other stakeholders. This began in the later part of 2024.

One topic that has come up during these meetings was concern over maintaining timely contact between downtown businesses and the City during the reconstruction project. While City staff will be involved working with WisDOT during the project, there has been some expressed desire to have a dedicated person with “boots on the ground” on a daily or semi-daily basis. It is important to acknowledge that some of these concerns have arisen due to the unforeseen project delays that occurred with the Main Street bridge project.

I was able to connect with Duane Vandermause, Assistant Director of Public Works from the City of Lake Mills, to discuss how their Main Street reconstruction project was handled. In their case, they hired a former city employee to serve as a part-time project liaison. The liaison helped coordinate with City staff, the fire and police departments, and also checked in with downtown businesses and residents on a regular basis. They found this to be very helpful during their project. Note that this was in addition to the Wisconsin DOT rep who was the City’s liaison with the contractor for the project.

This could be one possible solution for the City to consider for 2028. The job description Lake Mills used is included in your agenda packet.

Budget Goal

Supports employee retention and growth, while also evaluating operations and the associated staffing

Financial Impact

The City would need to budget for this position as part of the 2028 city budget. Exact potential salary would need to be evaluated.

Recommendation

Formal action is not needed at this time. This topic is for discussion only.