

**TWO  
RIVERS**  
WISCONSIN



# City Manager Two Rivers, Wisconsin

Position Profile



Public Administration Associates





# The Community

Two Rivers is in east central Wisconsin along the shores of Lake Michigan. The city was originally called "Neshotah" meaning "twin rivers" because of its harbor where the Mishicot and Neshoto rivers come together. The City encompasses approximately 5.97 square miles of Manitowoc County. It is located approximately 90 miles north of Milwaukee, 35 miles southeast of Green Bay and 182 miles north of Chicago.

Ojibwe, Ottawa, Menominee, Potawatomi and Ho-Chunk Indians had long come to Two Rivers seasonally from other areas of current day Wisconsin. In the 1840s, German and French-Canadian settlers began a sawmill, woodworking factories and commercial fishing operations. Bohemian and Polish immigrants arrived in the 1880s.

A strong sense of Lake Michigan's vibrant past as a fishing and shipping hub can still be found in Two Rivers. Still active as a deep-water sport fishing port, Two Rivers captures the spirit of its heritage with historical buildings throughout the city. It also takes pride in being the birthplace of the ice cream sundae, invented here in 1881. That year, Ed Berner's ice cream parlor began selling ice cream covered in chocolate sauce, but only on Sundays. Two Rivers also has a rich industrial legacy, particularly the Hamilton Manufacturing Company, a major wood type producer. Today, the former Hamilton site on Two Rivers' waterfront is a targeted redevelopment site for the city.

Today, with a population of a little over 11,000, Two Rivers is known for its thriving commercial fishing industry and manufacturing. Point Beach State Park, on the city's north side, draws thousands of visitors each year for camping, bicycling and hiking along Lake Michigan. Two Rivers also has the Rogers Street Fishing Village, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, features a number of maritime exhibits and 1886, one of the tallest and few authentic wooden structures left on the Great Lakes.

[View the 2023 "State of the City" Report](#)





Two Rivers' active downtown area is marketed by the Two Rivers Main Street organization which actively supports downtown businesses while organizing a variety of special events. Among the 2025 events are the Cool City Classic Car Show and Cruise (June); the Bryan Lee Memorial Blues Festival (July); 32nd Annual Ethnic Fest (September); Downtown Trick-or-Treat; Shop Hometown Two Rivers (November) and the annual Christmas Parade. Two Rivers is nicknamed the "Cool City" due to its location on Lake Michigan which provides refreshing breezes and cooler temperatures, especially during hot summer days, compared to nearby inland areas.

The Two Rivers Public School District offers a comprehensive program for students in per-kindergarten through twelfth grade. The District's educational facilities include two elementary schools, one middle school and the high school (which also include the District's charter school). Student enrollment for the 2024-2025 year is 1,630. There are also several private elementary schools in Two Rivers and nearby Manitowoc and Manitowoc has both Catholic and Lutheran high schools.

Within a 75-mile radius, Two Rivers residents can choose from the following universities: Lakeland University; Lawrence University; St. Norbert College; University of Wisconsin-Green Bay; University of Wisconsin-Green Bay-Manitowoc Campus; University of Wisconsin Green Bay-Sheboygan Campus and the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Lakeshore Technical College, located in Cleveland, Manitowoc and Sheboygan, offers two-year degrees.

Here is a link to a video about Two Rivers made as part of its community branding project several years ago: <https://www.exploretworivers.com/explore/page/our-brand-story>

For more information visit the City website at [www.two-rivers.org](http://www.two-rivers.org).





# The Position

The City Manager is the City's Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for the implementation of the City Council's policies and priorities. The Council-City Manager form of government, which Two Rivers has had since 1924, is fairly unique in Wisconsin as only 14 cities and villages have adopted the form under Chapter 62 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. Under the statute, city managers appoint all department heads (except police and fire chiefs which are subject to appointment by the local police and fire commissions), can create minor administrative offices and generally have the same executive and general administrative powers imposed or conferred by general law to Wisconsin mayors.

Nine City Council members are elected at large on a non-partisan basis for alternating three-year terms. A Council President is elected each year by the Council and presides over all meetings of the body.

The City provides a full range of municipal services including police, fire protection, emergency services, public works, parks and recreation, municipal court, building permits/inspections and utilities (including sanitary sewer, stormwater and water). The City also owns and operates its own electric utility. There are 123 Full-Time, and 70+ Part-time and Seasonal Employees currently working for the City. The breakdown of full-time employees is as follows: General-21; Fire-21; Public Works-10; Parks and recreation-15; Water and Electric-16; Police-30; Sewer Utility-5 and Library-5. The city has labor agreements with two employee groups, the Two Rivers Professional Police Association (Leer) and the Two Rivers Fire Fighter Association Local 423 (IAFF, AFL-CIO).

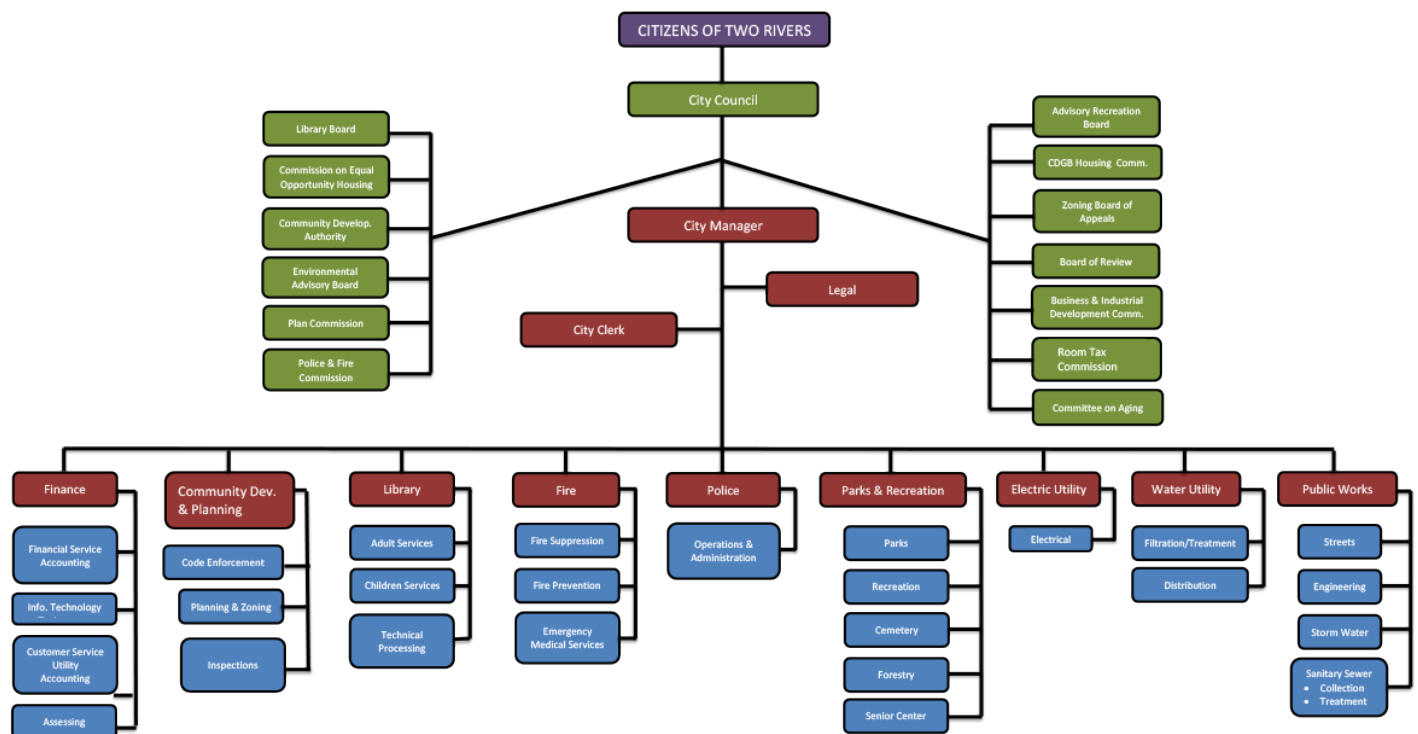
The City Manager supports the work of the City Council by coordinating its official business and providing leadership and direction to the organization. The Two Rivers City Manager is actively involved in economic development projects and is expected to promote and maintain a balanced economic enhancement approach and environment that includes an emphasis on tourism but also on continued commercial and housing improvements.

The City Council and general community are very supportive of the city-manager form of government. Greg Buckley has served as city manager since 1995 after coming to Two Rivers from a similar position in Michigan. The community has had only twelve city managers in its history and past managers have been successful by: 1) clearly and articulately providing information to the City Council, City Staff and community stakeholders; 2) possessing an open and approachable demeanor in community engagement; 3) serving as role model for the organization in displaying dedication, energy, vitality and the ability to accept new and exciting challenges, while at the same time being able to learn from and bounce back from setbacks, and 4) having the experience, capabilities and confidence to negotiate, review and administer many different and complex contracts, including employee/union contracts, intergovernmental cooperation agreements and developer agreements.

# Organizational Chart

## CITY OF TWO RIVERS

*Organization Chart [2024]*







# City Finances

The City of Two Rivers has a total 2025 Budget of approximately \$31 million with a break-down as follows:

General Fund-\$12,510,657  
Debt Service Fund-\$2,551,538  
Electric Utility-\$9,589,095  
Sewer Utility-\$2,997,456  
Storm Water Utility-\$541,483  
Water Utility-\$2,972,818  
Solid Waste-\$898,900  
Telecommunications-\$16,000

[View The Detailed 2025 City Budget Presentation](#)

Two Rivers currently has twelve (12) active tax increment districts (TIDs); ten (10) have assisted redevelopment projects and two (2) have assisted greenfield industrial development projects. The TIDs include three (3) created in 2021 and another created in 2022.

Eleven (11) of the Two Rivers TIDs are producing sufficient revenue to meet their respective obligations. As of January 1, 2024, the aggregate increment value of the these TIDs was approximately \$42.2 million, and the total equalized value was \$60.8 million. These TIDs are projected to have a significant impact on the community in coming years. Wisconsin's tax increment finance (TIF) law has created new opportunities for existing TIDs to spur additional development. The City has used its \$2.5M Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund to help finance various commercial and manufacturing projects.

TID #15 was created in 2021 to assist in the redevelopment of a long vacant parcel in one of the City's main commercial corridors. There is a new proposed development that would feature two buildings with a total of 52 market rate apartments.

TID #16 was also created in 2021 to assist in the redevelopment of a former industrial site with frontage on the East Twin River. Part of the site has been developed as a City Stormwater Pond, but the remainder is planned for residential development.

TID #17, created in 2022 to assist in the development of an apartment complex and redevelopment of several vacant industrial properties along the West Twin River. The TID property is over five acres and improvements could include shoreline and pedestrian trail improvements along the river. There is a proposal from a Milwaukee-based developer on this site but currently no agreement is in place. The property remains a priority redevelopment site for the City.

In accordance with Wisconsin Statutes, total general obligation indebtedness of the City may not exceed 5 percent of the equalized value of taxable property within the City's jurisdiction. The City debt limit as of December 31, 2024 was \$45,939,895. Total general obligation debt outstanding at year-end was \$17,408,871 or 37.9% of its debt limit. \$2,595,776 in debt principal payments (along with \$ \$665,978) in interest) is scheduled to be paid off by the City in 2025.

The City is scheduled to issue \$3.295M in General Obligation (GO) Promissory Notes in April, 2025 for street improvement, parks, fire department, police department, wastewater and public works projects and equipment. The City also expects to borrow in 2025 for certain utility projects, including for the street projects being undertaken through the GO borrowing, which may be through the Wisconsin Safe Drinking Water Loan and Clean Water Fund Loan programs in the approximate aggregate amount of \$3.9M. The City typically borrows annually for its capital projects but the timing and the amount of such borrowing for 2026 is not known yet. The City may also pursue additional borrowings for economic development and utility projects in 2025 or 2026 but those amounts are not known yet as well.







# Skills and Experience Desired

As part of its preparation for this executive search for the next Two River city manager, Public Administration Associates (PAA) conducted a survey of the City Council and City staff on the experience and personal characteristics that they would like to see in candidates for this position. In addition, a similar community survey was conducted that almost 150 Two Rivers residents responded to! The comparative results of the two surveys follow.

## **Top Candidate Municipal Experience Desired (City Council and City Staff)**

1. Budget Development/Management
2. Capital Improvement Planning and Execution
3. Intergovernmental Relations
4. Economic Development
5. Community Strategic Planning

## **Top Candidate Municipal Experience Desired (Citizen Respondents to Survey)**

1. Budget Development/Management
2. Economic Development
3. Capital Improvement Planning and Execution
4. Community Engagement
5. Waterfront Development and Downtown Redevelopment (Tie)



## Top Candidate Personal Qualities Desired (City Council and City Staff)

1. Integrity (Personal and Professional)
2. Vision
3. Innovative/Outside the Box Thinker
4. Open and Positive Communications Skills
5. Strong Work Ethic-Commitment to Public Service

## Top Candidate Personal Qualities Desired (Citizen Respondents to Survey)

1. Integrity (Personal and Professional)
2. Vision
3. Strong Work Ethic-Commitment to Public Service
4. Innovative/Outside the Box Thinker
5. Conflict Resolution Skills

Based upon this requested input from the community stakeholders, the following composite requested input from the various Two River stakeholders, the city manager selection committee has crafted the following:

Two Rivers is seeking a dynamic and proven municipal leader who has the experience of guiding a municipality through a period of redevelopment and organizational change and the strong ability to cultivate positive and productive relationships with the City Council, City Staff, business community and citizens. Desire experience in budget development/management(TIF experience a plus); capital improvement planning and implementation; economic development with an emphasis on downtown/commercial development and strategic community planning. The successful candidate will demonstrate a high level of both personal and professional integrity; have vision and an ability to think outside the box; possess an open and positive communications approach with a strong willingness to be active and very engaged in the Two Rivers community, while leading by example.







# Future Challenges and Opportunities for the Next Two Rivers City Manager

The following were identified by the City Council and community stakeholders via the city manager assessment surveys on what the main future challenges will be for the next Two Rivers City Manager:

- Waterfront Redevelopment (particularly the former Hamilton site and in TID's #15, #16 and #17)
- Continued Development of Market Rate Housing (Rental and Condominium)
- Maintenance of Balanced Economic Growth including Tourism and Main Street
- Continuance of High-Level Community Engagement
- Strategic Community Planning and Visioning
- Maintenance of Current Municipal Services Under State Fiscal Constraints
- Long-Term Relocation of DPW and Utility facilities from Current Lakefront Locations

**More information on future City plans can be found in the following documents:**

Two Rivers Comprehensive Plan, Harbor Master Plan and Hamilton Site Redevelopment Plan: <https://www.two-rivers.org/planning/page/plans>



# Qualifications

The position requires a master's degree in public or business administration or related field with five(5) or more years of progressive municipal management experience. Hiring salary range is \$130,000-\$150,000 DOQ with an excellent fringe benefit package including health insurance, Wisconsin State Retirement, life and disability insurance and generous leave benefits.

Residency in the City is strongly encouraged, particularly for emergency response purposes. Relocation expenses will be covered by the City with other possible incentives for living in the City.

## How to Apply

Send cover letter, resume, salary history and 5 work-related references (in one PDF file) to Public Administration Associates, LLC

**Attn:** Kevin Brunner,

**Address:** 1155 W. South Street Whitewater WI 53190

**Phone:** 262-903-9509

**E-mail:** kevin.brunner1013@gmail.com

**Application Deadline: April 28, 2025**

*Confidentiality must be requested by the applicant and cannot be guaranteed for the finalists.*



**Watch the Two Rivers City Manager Video Announcement**

<https://youtu.be/AMe9u6O1M-c>

