



**HILLSBORO**  
WISCONSIN



# City Administrator Hillsboro, Wisconsin

Position Profile



Public Administration Associates





# The Hillsboro Community

The City of Hillsboro, WI (Pop. 1430) located in the eastern most portion of Vernon County, is known as the "Gateway to the Driftless Area". This Driftless Area was bypassed by the glaciers during the last intercontinental ice age. Without the glacial deposits of rock, clay, sand, and silt called drift that flattened the rest of the upper Midwest, this region's winding backroads reveal picturesque limestone bluffs, spring filled waterfalls, blue ribbon trout streams, and a rolling pastoral landscape, all nurturing small communities along the way such as Hillsboro. The city has a lively main street, featuring restaurants, a brewery, hotel and a variety of specialty retail shops and historic buildings, providing the best of small-town charm and quality of life. Despite its relatively small size, Hillsboro is home to Gundersen St. Joseph Hospital, a full-service medical facility offering a Level IV Emergency Room, imaging, surgery, rehabilitation & therapy and a large Land O Lakes milk production facility. Located halfway between Minneapolis and Chicago the city is 30 miles to the Wisconsin Dells Recreational area, 60 miles to La Crosse, 80 miles to Madison, 150 miles to Milwaukee & Green Bay, WI. The city encompasses approximately 1.5 square miles and consists of various land uses including single family, farm sites, commercial, institutional and government facilities, and recreation. The local economy is supported in large part by the dairy industry, other agriculture, healthcare industry, and tourism. Hillsboro was spotlighted in an May, 2024 edition of Business View that can be viewed here:

<https://businessviewmagazine.com/hillsboro-wisconsin-vernon-county/>

Hillsboro is rich in history and heritage, with a strong sense of community, embracing the "small town Wisconsin" lifestyle, including stable traditional neighborhoods, new residential subdivisions, strong local industries, and a robust historic Main Street.



## **Recreation**

Noted for being the gateway to the Driftless Area, Hillsboro, and its surrounding area, is rich in scenic, recreational, historical, natural resources and amenities. Hillsboro currently has five (5) parks; Settlers Park, denoting its historical significance as the home of the African American Settlers of the Cheyenne Valley; Field Veterans Memorial Park, located on Hillsboro Lake, with pavilions, a gazebo, a lakeside trail, fishing pier and a boat launch; Albert Field Park, located in the heart of the city, with shelters, a playground, and disc golf course; Hammer & Klopfeisch Park, located on the East side of Hillsboro Lake, primarily undeveloped but current being planned; The Northeastern Spur Trailhead, a trailhead for the Hillsboro State Trail, which connects to the historic "400" State Trail and the Elroy-Sparta State Trail. In addition to these parks, Hillsboro has a full-service public pool and splash pad. Just outside the city limits, recreational opportunities abound, with acclaimed bike and hiking trails, the Baraboo and Kickapoo River provides for some of the best kayaking and canoeing, and fly fishing (Outdoor Life called it the best kept secret in the trout world) in the State of Wisconsin. In addition, there are thousands of acres of State and County forests and wildlife refuge areas, including the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, Wildcat Mountain State Park, and Lost Creek County Forest. Hillsboro and Vernon County is also known for some of the best motorcycle routes in Wisconsin.

## **Schools**

The Hillsboro Area School District serves the Hillsboro community, with an elementary, middle, and high school located within the City's corporate boundaries.

## **Medical Facilities**

Hillsboro has a history of providing high quality health care, since Dr. P.H. Hansberry established the Hillsboro Hospital in 1911. The hospital was renamed in 1949 to St. Joseph's. The medical facilities have continually expanded and improved, including the construction of a new hospital in 2020, known as Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinic, a high-quality regional medical center. In December, 2022, the Gundersen Health System merged with Bellin Health, leading to the formation of Emplify Health St. Joseph's. This merger further enhanced the services available to the community, reinforcing its commitment to providing exceptional rural healthcare.



## Economic Development

Hillsboro's economy is based on healthcare, agriculture, tourism, and industry, which supports a vibrant historic downtown, which includes over fifty businesses, including restaurants, a brewery, a hotel, specialty shops, as well as local goods and services. The city's largest employer is Gundersen St. Joseph's Hospital and Clinic, which opened a new lakeside facility in 2020. Over twenty manufacturing and dairy processing firms are in Hillsboro, including Ornuu Ingredients North America - Hillsboro, Land O'Lakes Dairy, METCO, Verbsky Enterprises, and Hillsboro Brewing Company, among many smaller enterprises. Hillsboro has been an innovator in the region in the provision of support for businesses within its downtown business district, industrial base, as well as providing housing incentives, including:

- Hillsboro Economic Development Incentives Program. A program aimed at incentives for new business within the downtown business district.
- Hillsboro Facade Improvement Program. A program to assist businesses improving their business façade within the downtown business district.
- Hillsboro Building Preservation and Improvement Grant Program. A program targeting building upgrades and repairs in the downtown business district.
- Hillsboro Building Sign Program. A program targeting sign upgrades throughout the Village.
- Hillsboro Tax Increment District Economic Development Programs. This program provides incentives for location and expansion of new industrial and commercial businesses, as well as housing construction outside the downtown business district, such as loans, grants, infrastructure improvement and employee assistance (relocation).
- Hillsboro Revolving Loan Fund. Loans to incentivize the creation of new jobs in the community.

Hillsboro also has been an innovator in supporting the downtown business district vitality through programs such as:

- Hillsboro Business Incubator Program. This innovative program supports locally grown startups by offering shared workspace, mentoring, and operational support. Managed through a partnership with a local building owner, the incubator will run for an initial 18-month pilot period to cultivate entrepreneurship and reduce barriers to business creation.
- Pop up Shop Program. Incentive to offer low-rate, short-term leases to local entrepreneurs, to occupy vacant storefronts and/or share retail spaces.

Hillsboro also support traditional and new community events throughout the year:

- Hillsboro Charity Tractor Pull
- Firemen's Labor Day Festival
- Boro Block Party
- Hillsboro Drag-A-Way (drag racing strip on abandoned airstrip)



## The Position

The City of Hillsboro, Wisconsin is looking for a dynamic professional to replace its current City Administrator who has served since 2021 and has accepted another position. Starting salary range is \$80-\$95K DOQ plus an excellent Benefit Package.

[Benefit Package Information](#)

The City Administrator oversees the daily business affairs of the City including supervision and oversight of all departments and staff. Appointed by the Mayor and 8-member Council, the City Administrator plays a key role in budget development & management, project coordination, personnel oversight, economic development and provides leadership in policy implementation and planning for the City.

[A full position description may be found here.](#)

## Key Initiatives and Projects

Hillsboro is widely recognized for its forward-thinking economic development strategies, particularly its "Main Street" revitalization efforts—including façade upgrades, building preservation, improved signage, and targeted business enhancement programs. The city has received over \$800,000 in state funding to support downtown and commercial development and actively fosters entrepreneurship through pop-up shop opportunities and a regional, one-of-a-kind business incubator program. The new City Administrator will lead a dynamic portfolio of initiatives, including:

- The full reconstruction of State Trunk Highways 33/80/82, scheduled for construction in 2028;
- Continue the strategic redevelopment of key vacant properties in the downtown district;
- Coordinate upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant;
- Facilitate new housing developments
- Manage development of a combined childcare and senior center
- Implement a DNR Stewardship Grant-funded park project and a train restoration project.



# Budget and Workforce

The 2025 budget of \$3,698,455 consists of the following:

- General Fund - \$1,463,108
- Public Library Fund - \$150,185
- Debt Service Fund - \$245,458
- Tax Increment Districts #4 & #5 \$245,509
- Water Utility (enterprise fund) - \$436,652
- Room Tax Fund (Special Revenue) - \$43,617
- Refuse/Recycling fund - \$101,050
- Capital Projects Fund - \$300,000
- Wastewater Utility (Enterprise Fund) - \$711,876

As of December 31, 2024, \$1.97 million in outstanding debt exists. The city has a healthy fund balance of \$971,870, 30% of its general fund budget.

[The 2025 adopted budgets may be viewed here.](#)

Staffing includes 14 full-time equivalents plus seasonal staff. The number of employees by department are as follows:

- Administrative Offices 4 full-time (Administrator, Clerk, Treasurer, Administrative Associate)
- Public Works and Parks Department - 2 full-time plus seasonal
- Wastewater and water Utility – 2 full-time
- Police 4 full-time
- Library 1 ft and 3 part-time
- Pool 10 part-time
- Fire/EMS varies paid-on-call staff.

[See Organizational Chart](#)





# Municipal Organization

Elected officials includes the Mayor and eight alderpersons, elected on a staggered non-partisan basis for two-year terms.

The Hillsboro Public Library is located adjacent to the municipal complex, updated, and expanded twice since 2010 facility, open 5 days a week: 30 hours per week.

The Hillsboro Area Fire District services Hillsboro and surrounding towns funded by an applied allocation formula and oversight by a District Board.

The Hillsboro Area Ambulance District services Hillsboro and surrounding towns funded by an applied allocation formula and oversight by a District Board.

The Hillsboro Police Department services the City with the Police Chief, 3 full-time officers and several part-time officers. The Vernon County Sheriff's department supplements the locally provided service.

Hillsboro sanitary sewer and water utility operates a 300,000 gallons per days plant, which has been updated twice since 2010, and is required to be updated again in the next few years. Hillsboro is served by two municipal wells. A Superintendent, Operator and a Utility Clerk services both utilities.

The Hillsboro Streets Department is responsible for maintenance of streets, sidewalks, city property, facilities, parks, and city vehicles. The Department is staffed by two staff members.





# Qualifications and Ideal Candidate Profile

**Education:** Requires a Bachelor's Degree in public administration, business administration or related field; Master's Degree preferred, with a minimum of two years progressively responsible administrative and leadership experience in a municipal organization. Consideration of candidates with private sector or military experience will be made if they can demonstrate accomplishments that relate to skills required.

**Experience:** The successful candidate must demonstrate a verifiable record of past accomplishments in the following areas: community development/planning, budget development and financing, including redevelopment and capital financing, and the ability to effectively manage contracts and projects. The successful candidate should possess a high level of both personal and professional integrity, be a strong team builder and innovator, have acute listening skills, a collaborative leadership style and be able to work harmoniously with elected officials including other governmental entities.

## **Skills:**

- Strong listener with excellent team building attributes.
- Ability to multi-task with good follow up and attention to detail.
- Financial management acumen with knowledge of a variety of economic development tools
- Innovative thinker, with ability to interact effectively with the public, contractors, developers and elected officials.





# How to Apply

Send cover letter, résumé, references, and salary history via email, in a single PDF to Public Administration Associates, LLC

**Attn:** Shawn Murphy

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

**Phone:** 608-370-1663

**E-mail:** [smurphy@public-administration.com](mailto:smurphy@public-administration.com)

**Application Deadline: 3:00 p.m. CST on May 29, 2025**

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

For more information, visit the City of Hillsboro website: <https://www.hillsborowi.com/>