



# City Administrator Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Position Profile



Public Administration Associates



# The Community

Chippewa Falls is a vibrant and historic community in northwestern Wisconsin, serving as the county seat of Chippewa County. Strategically located along U.S. Highway 53, the City provides convenient access to regional destinations, including Eau Claire just 15 minutes to the south and the Twin Cities approximately 90 minutes to the west.

With a population of approximately 15,000 residents, Chippewa Falls offers an appealing blend of small-town character and regional amenities. The City is situated along the scenic Chippewa River and is surrounded by natural beauty, including parks, trails, and nearby lakes such as Lake Wissota—a premier destination for boating, fishing, and year-round outdoor recreation.

Chippewa Falls is perhaps best known as the home of Leinenkugel's, a nationally recognized brewery that has been part of the community since 1867. The local economy is diverse, with strong sectors in manufacturing, healthcare, education, retail, and tourism. The City continues to experience steady residential and commercial growth, supported by its strategic location and high quality of life.

The community offers excellent educational opportunities through the Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District, several parochial schools as well as access to higher education institutions such as the Chippewa Valley Technical College and the nearby University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire.

Residents enjoy a high quality of life with access to arts, culture, and recreation. Annual events such as the Northern Wisconsin State Fair and community festivals contribute to the City's strong sense of identity and civic pride. Chippewa Falls offers a welcoming, family-friendly environment with a balance of economic opportunity and natural beauty.



# The Position

Chippewa Falls has a City Council form of government organized under Chap. 60, Wisconsin State Statutes. The Mayor (Jason Hiess) was recently elected in this leadership role in 2025, succeeding the retiring Mayor who served for 17 years and the seven (7) Alderpersons are non-partisan positions, elected in staggered 2-year terms.

The City Administrator will oversee a staff of 120 Full time and over 20 part-time and seasonal employees as well as the day-to-day City operations guided by policies and directives approved by the City Council. The City Administrator prepares the annual budget in coordination with the 9 department heads (City Clerk, Finance Director, Fire/EMS Chief, Library, Parks, Recreation & Forestry, Planning & Zoning, Police Chief, & Public Work Director) and approval of the City Council. Chippewa Falls also operates a full-service Library, municipal zoo, storm water, water and wastewater utilities, an outdoor pool, numerous parks and athletic facilities. The City Administrator also directs internal City operations and external relations, listens to the concerns and requests from the community, and anticipates municipal needs. The City Administrator advises the Mayor, Alderpersons, Commissions and other standing committees based on research, state law and intergovernmental peer discussions.



# Chippewa Falls Finances

Chippewa Falls maintains a stable financial position supported by a diverse tax base and ongoing economic development. The City's general fund supports core services such as public safety, administration, and public works, while enterprise funds account for utilities and other self-supporting operations.

The City has demonstrated prudent fiscal management, including:

- Maintaining appropriate fund balance reserves
- Strategic use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts to support development
- Investment in infrastructure and capital improvements
- Leveraging state and federal funding opportunities

The Administrator plays a central role in financial planning, budget development, and ensuring long-term fiscal sustainability.

Chippewa Falls possesses a healthy reserve of \$38.5M for the General Fund with another \$18.3M in fund balances for CDBG, Debt Service, Capital Projects, Utilities and other special revenue funds (excerpts from the 2024 Financial Audit). Additionally, as of 2024, the City has an outstanding long term debt obligation of \$31M in general obligation and revenue bonds and promissory notes.



# Opportunities and Challenges for the New Chippewa Falls City Administrator

Chippewa Falls is well-positioned for continued growth and success. The next Administrator will have the opportunity to build upon a strong foundation while addressing key priorities, including:

- Continuing economic development and redevelopment initiatives
- Managing residential and commercial growth
- Advancing housing availability and affordability strategies
- Maintaining and upgrading infrastructure systems
- Enhancing downtown vitality and tourism
- Strengthening regional partnerships

Balancing growth with preservation of the community's character and quality of life will be a central focus.

Current developments underway include the Chippewa Crossing Corridor, a newly expanding mixed use corridor, with recently developed commercial businesses, including the new Aspirus Hospital, opening in September, 2026, and more mixed use construction slated for 2027, including both residential, retail and professional office growth.

The Willow Creek residential development is kicking off Phase 6 of 7 in 2026, with residential lots being ready for development this summer.

Lake Wissota Business Park continues to be the premier Industrial Park within the Chippewa Falls area. With several smaller lots ready for development, the City is looking to expand its industrial park offerings to continue to compete for project opportunities.

In the last six years, Chippewa Falls has developed or updated several major planning documents including the Comprehensive Plan, Outdoor Recreation Plan and Safe Route to Schools plans. Current version of these plans can be accessed here:  
<https://www.chippewafalls-wi.gov/235/Plans-and-Studies>

The City currently has 9 Tax Increment Finance Districts, including mixed use, industrial, and blight elimination, created or amended between 2006 through 2022.

# Skills and Experience

Preferred qualifications include:

- Several years of progressively responsible leadership experience in municipal or comparable management
- Demonstrated expertise in budgeting, capital planning, and financial oversight
- Successful experience with Tax Increment Financing and economic development tools
- Strong background in organizational leadership and personnel management
- Knowledge of Wisconsin municipal law and project management

## Qualifications (and Compensation)

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or related field required, Master's degree preferred
- At least 5 years progressive municipal management experience or a combination of education & experience that provides equivalent knowledge, skills & abilities required
- Valid driver's license required
- Residency encouraged
- Consideration of candidates with private-sector, federal, state or military experience will be given if they can demonstrate accomplishments that directly relate to the required skills

The City offers a competitive salary range anticipated between \$135,000–\$160,000 DOQ, along with a comprehensive benefits package. Additional information about the City's personnel and compensation policies can be found in the Chippewa Falls Employee Handbook. Contact Shawn Murphy, Public Administration Associates for a copy at:

Email: [smurphy@public-administration.com](mailto:smurphy@public-administration.com)  
Telephone: (608) 370-1663.

In addition to the benefits summarized, the City will consider relocation expenses for the selected candidate.

## How to Apply

Submit a cover letter, resume, and at least four (4) professional references to Shawn Murphy, Public Administration Associates, at [smurphy@public-administration.com](mailto:smurphy@public-administration.com) no later than **3:00 pm CST, Monday April 27, 2026**.

Confidentiality requests will be honored in accordance with Wisconsin law.