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February | 2024

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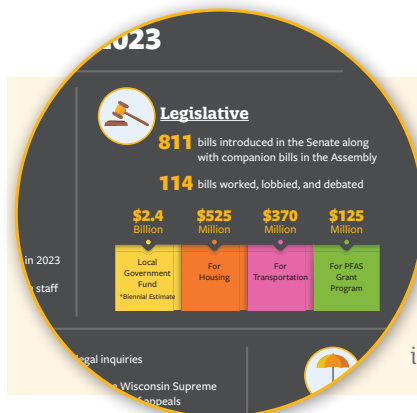
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ON THE COVER: Built in 1923, the former Janesville High School has seen many transitions over the years. In 1955, the school became Janesville Junior High School and then renamed Marshall Middle School in the 1970s. The school closed in 1996 but was given new life in 1999 when it was renovated into 20-year period affordable housing apartments. Original items including lockers, chalkboards, and bookshelves can still be found keeping the integrity of the building and giving a nod to the past. The auditorium was later converted into the home of the Janesville Performing Arts Center in 2004.



Correction:
League Member Engagement in 2023

The \$2.4B referenced in the January edition of *The Municipality* stated it was for “Additional Shared Revenue for 2024.” In fact, the \$2.4B is a biennial estimate dedicated to the newly created local government fund which includes shared revenue, innovation fund, and supplemental aid payments.



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It Starts at Home



The following is from "Welcoming Wisconsin Home; A Statewide Action Plan for Homelessness," published by the State of Wisconsin Interagency Coordinating Council on Homelessness in December 2021

- Do you wish to see your community's economy improve? Invest in housing.
- Do you wish to see your schools have better test scores and outcomes? Invest in housing.
- Do you wish to see crime rates go down? Invest in housing.
- Do you wish to see families stay together and thrive? Invest in housing.
- Do you wish to see better physical and mental health outcomes in the community? Invest in housing.
- Are you a business owner who wishes to have a better pool of potential employees in your local workforce? Invest in housing.

Wisconsin has a critical, statewide, rural and urban housing shortage. By some estimates, the state is lacking 130,000 homes that are affordable for hardworking households making up the bottom half of the income scale. Employers across the state have been putting off major investments in growth because there are no houses for the needed new workers. Homelessness is on the rise, including what experts call "unsheltered homelessness," a polite term to describe people left with no option but sleeping in the woods, on sidewalks or in other not-so-hidden places.

Local governments did not cause the housing shortage. A combination of financial market changes that led to the Great Recession in 2008-09 decimated the housing and development industries. In Wisconsin, those industries still have not returned to normal production levels, and so Wisconsin has seen a decade-and-a-half of underbuilding. Even though this crisis was not caused by local governments, local

governments will need to play a key central role in addressing it. Communities need to do what local government does best: convene the key players, identify the resources, and lead the way to an increase in home production.

The solutions will be varied. Local regulations need to be scrutinized. In some instances, process tweaks that speed up approvals for new housing will be all it takes to "prime the pump." Some communities will do more, and have begun culling decades of zoning ordinances to eliminate duplications, contradictions and to make way for what one builder described as "the housing that we grew up in and loved, but that we can't build anymore because current zoning doesn't allow it."

Addressing this crisis will require major investments. Both public and private financial resources will have to be found to pay for critical infrastructure; the streets, pipes and wires that connect homes to the community. Last year, the League partnered with the private sector, Governor Evers and lawmakers from both political parties to dedicate \$525 million in state funds to support workforce housing in a variety of forms. Major private employers are stepping up to support housing in the communities that have supported them. Local housing funds created by extending TIF districts are becoming more common, and federal resources are available to be tapped by enterprising municipal grantwriters.

Local governments did not cause the housing crisis. Not all communities in Wisconsin have a pressing need for additional housing units. But many of them do, and in those communities, local governments must take the lead in addressing it. Because housing is the lodestone of our society.



Jerry Deschane, Executive Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities. Contact Jerry at jdeschane@lwm-info.org



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Housing Shortage Demands New Tools



Responding to Wisconsin's housing shortage will require an "all hands on deck" sense of urgency, and will demand action and attention by local governments, the state, and the private sector. Old approval practices will have to be reconsidered and new funding sources will have to be identified. Already some municipalities are updating their zoning ordinances to eliminate unintended roadblocks and delays. At the same time, major employers are stepping up to the plate, making substantial investments in workforce housing, because without new housing, Wisconsin employers are unable to expand. And the state is doing its part; in 2023 the Wisconsin State Legislature passed a bipartisan package of housing investment bills, backed up with a record-shattering \$525 million in state resources.

Those actions and resources are essential, but the key to turning all this effort and investment into homes lies in the hands of Wisconsin's small and independent development industry. While government can streamline and big business can invest, the art, science, and sweat of developing new apartments and subdivisions rests with a relatively small cadre of businesses and individuals. Small town developers are asking for three things from local governments: data, openness to new ideas, and resources.

Mike Howe is the President of the Wisconsin Builders Association, a statewide trade group representing the home builders and land developers in Wisconsin. Howe is a Manitowoc-based builder/developer. He is also a former Manitowoc Common Council member. He points out that the housing market is local, and every local housing market in Wisconsin is different from its neighbor, even if those neighbors are less than 20 miles apart. "Every municipality is different," he said. "The market is different, the rules are different, the local expectations are different, and the property values can be wildly different." There is no one-size-fits-all solution to home development.

Sheboygan-based builder/developer Bob Werner explained that this diversity carries through to local rules and regulations, even within one county. "When I go to a municipality to talk about the potential for a housing project, we have to take the time to make sure we are applying the same definitions to the same terminology. Just because a vacant parcel of land is zoned 'R-1,' that doesn't really tell you anything. What one municipality allows in R-1 zoning is likely to be completely different than what is allowed in R-1 zoning in a neighboring municipality."

Werner's first piece of advice for a community trying to attract a developer is to complete a housing study. "What's the demand? If I haven't done business in that community, and there's no data, it's just too big a risk to build something without data." He said communities should also involve their local or regional economic development corporation to uncover other demand indicators such as job openings.

While government can streamline and big business can invest, the art, science, and sweat of developing new apartments and subdivisions rests with a relatively small cadre of businesses and individuals.

The City of Sheboygan holds an annual gathering for developers. At that event, the city provides printed materials identifying all buildable parcels in the city. There often isn't one source where all this information can be found and this also allows the city to show developers the local job market and why the community is a great place to live, work, and play.

One common element of the state's historic housing investment in 2023 was a call for "truth in zoning." Wisconsin Act 16 requires a municipality to approve a permit that meets all current zoning requirements. It's an effort to expedite developments that meet a community's rules and regulations. The League worked with lawmakers on the language of the bill and ultimately supported the bill, which was signed into law by Governor Evers in June of last year.

Act 16 will help, but what about those frequent situations where what the community needs is not within current zoning rules? Both Howe and Werner said the best municipalities will sit down with developers and work in a collaborative manner. Howe cited his experience with the City of Manitowoc and a seven-acre parcel of land. Howe proposed building 33 housing units on the property, to which the city responded with a suggestion that he reduce the density to 15 units. The city was open to his ideas, however, and was receptive when he pointed out that the cost of infrastructure to serve the property would guarantee that, at only 15 units, the project would lose money. It took time, several years in fact, but in the end the city worked with Howe. Construction on the attractive new addition to the city began in 2023.

Unfortunately, in the development business, the old adage that "time is money" applies. Homes that Howe intended to market in the sub-\$300,000 range will be priced closer to \$400,000. The carrying cost of the land and the loans needed to finance the purchase and development of that land, coupled with inflation in the housing market, conspired to quickly push the cost of the project upward.

This was Howe's first development. That rapid inflation experience has him already thinking about the next one.

"It took four years to bring this project to market, and that was working with a helpful local government. Looking down the road, if I expect to keep my crews busy three years from now, I realized that I had better get started right away." He has purchased a 20-acre parcel and is working on preliminary designs.

A cooperative government is at the top of Werner's list of priorities when looking for his next development project. "They have to be open to ideas; they have to be pro-development." Over the years, Werner has learned that communities not willing to explore those development ideas simply create too many hoops that have to be passed through on the way to approval, and in his words, "Life's too short. There are a lot of great municipalities in my area; I will choose the ones willing to work together with me."

Being open to new ideas sometimes means looking to the past. In a recent effort to build more affordable workforce housing, Werner found he had to go back 20 years and "dust off plans for houses that we don't build anymore." Houses built 20 years ago were smaller, on smaller lots, but subsequent zoning code changes have inflated the necessary size of both the home and the lot. "It's ironic. All these houses that we grew up in, that people loved living in; our kids can't have those; we've zoned them out of existence."

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Inflation, workforce shortages, and the rising cost of materials make it imperative today that the municipality has to bring resources to the development table. In order to consider working in a municipality both Werner and Howe have said that the local government has to help them with the cost of infrastructure. “My costs for pipes and other infrastructure are about the same as they are in the suburban Milwaukee market, but I can’t get anywhere near the same price for the lot; the difference has to come from somewhere or the numbers just don’t make sense,” said Werner. All of his current projects require some sort of municipal participation to make the costs align with what the market can afford to pay.

In Howe’s case, it was a matter of showing the same numbers to city officials and working in collaboration to reduce costs by narrowing streets, reducing housing setbacks, and not installing sidewalks. The city worked with him to locate a stormwater pond on municipal property and other matters, all of which didn’t make the project profitable, but made it feasible.

“I’m not making any money on the development side of this,” acknowledged Howe. The increasing sales prices of the finished homes will compensate for the steep expenses of developing the property.

Housing markets vary widely among Wisconsin communities. Not every municipality is struggling to attract the attention of developers, and high-growth municipalities see no need for the sort of public financial participation discussed by Howe and Werner. But in many Wisconsin cities and villages housing is in short supply; particularly housing that is affordable for lower-income working families. And, in many other communities, businesses complain that economic growth has been stymied by the lack of homes where new workers can live. In those communities, which comprise the majority of places in Wisconsin, local governments are finding that the old rules and the old ways of doing business just will not meet today’s housing needs.



Jerry Deschane, Executive Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities. Contact Jerry at jdeschane@lwm-info.org

The League is Coming to You



Starting this month, the League is hosting six regional meetings. These early evening gatherings are meant to bring municipal leaders together to share ideas, learn from each other and League experts, and provide a place for local officials to interact with state legislators. League Executive Director Jerry Deschane said these regional meetings will be the focal point of League services.

“We’re returning to our roots,” Deschane said. “Since the creation of the League in 1898, our members have

consistently told us that the most important resource they need is a place and time to get together and learn from one another. In this busy era, that can’t be done in one central location; we need to go to our members.”

Roundtables start with one hour of local education programming, followed by a light meal, League updates, and a member roundtable. The roundtable is an open discussion of current issues and questions unique to that part of Wisconsin. There is no cost for these events but preregistration is requested to provide a count for meals and refreshments.

“The League exists to serve both elected and appointed local officials. We want to meet and hear from every elected official, department head, and clerk in every city and village. Tell us how we can help you as you serve your community,” said Deschane.

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Strategies for Creating More Housing

Wisconsin municipal officials, like local leaders nationwide, are struggling to make more affordable housing options available in their communities. The availability and pricing of housing is not meeting the financial realities of people working in jobs vital to the success of Wisconsin communities, such as nurses, teachers, police officers, plumbers, small business owners, and service industry workers.

As part of a housing deep dive at the League's Annual Conference in Green Bay last October, three speakers outlined different strategies municipalities can use to generate more housing.

1. Matt Lambert, Chair of the Congress for the New Urbanism; Partner, DPZ Co-Design; and co-author of the League's *Enabling Better Places: A User's Guide to Neighborhood Affordability*, spoke about *Removing Barriers to Housing from your Zoning Code*. Lambert discussed several small zoning changes communities can make to better enable the creation of more workforce housing such as duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes featured in the League's 2022 code reform guidebook.¹

Lambert pointed out that local zoning regulations in Wisconsin often require large lots, deep setbacks, low densities, limited housing options, restrictions on re-purposing existing buildings, and excessive parking requirements. He recommended communities initially focus on making small, incremental changes to their code to address these common barriers to more housing, such as:

- Realigning lot widths and areas to match historic patterns favoring narrower lots.
- Reducing setbacks to historic distances to allow greater use of existing lots.

After that, Lambert suggests that communities consider making more difficult code changes such as:

- Allow three-plex and four-plex housing as permitted uses in single-family zoning districts that have historically included two-family and multifamily.
- Allow accessory dwellings by right for all single-family zoning districts.



- Permit residential uses within downtown and Main Street zoning districts.
- Permit residential uses, including multi-family, in commercial districts.
- Reduce or eliminate parking minimums.
- Assess and streamline the subdivision and workforce housing application process, including standards that direct development outcomes and a time limit on municipal response.

These code changes and more are described in greater detail in the League's handbook *Enabling Better Places: A User's Guide to Neighborhood Affordability*.

2. A second housing deep dive speaker, Sheboygan Falls Mayor Randy Meyer, discussed a unique public-private housing project that his city has entered into with local industries in need of housing for employees. The Founders' Pointe subdivision, a partnership between the City of Sheboygan Falls, Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC), Johnsonville, Kohler Co., Masters Gallery Foods, Sargento Foods, and Sheboygan County started construction in April of 2023. Fifty-four homes will be constructed in phase 1. This project was made possible by both the city's adoption of a new Nostalgic Residential zoning classification as well as an innovative special assessment where the City of Sheboygan Falls will pay for water/sewer enhancements and the developer refunds the city as building permits are pulled.

The city's Nostalgic Residential Zoning District allows for dense development that was typical of most American cities prior to WWII. These smaller lots, with minimum lot sizes of 60 x 120 allow for a smaller and lower-cost house to be built. Each home in Founders' Pointe will have three bedrooms, two baths, a two-car garage, and a full basement, and the homes will range from 1,322 to 1,512 square feet. The goal is to sell the homes at an affordable price point to encourage workers to relocate to Sheboygan County. The goal is to sell 80% of the homes to people outside Sheboygan County with 20%

1. <https://www.lwm-info.org/DocumentCenter/View/5566/WI-Zoning-Guide-Final-2-2022>
 2. <https://www.lwm-info.org/DocumentCenter/View/6657/9-2023-Innovation-Magazine-PDF?bidId=>

available for people already living in the county. The mortgages on the homes are projected to be under \$250,000, with the value of the lot being used as downpayment assistance.

A critical feature of the development is the partnership of investors. Four private companies: Sargento Foods, Masters Gallery Foods, Johnsonville, and Kohler Co., invested \$2 million each into the county's Forward Fund. Sheboygan County has added \$2 million of ARPA funds and Sheboygan Falls is contributing TID incentives. SCEDC, through the Forward Fund, purchased the property and is acting as the developer.

For more information on this public-private housing venture, see the article² by Mayor Meyer published in the October 2023 issue of *The Municipality* magazine.

3. City of Madison staff also spoke at the housing deep dive and discussed the city's recent zoning code changes designed to eliminate barriers to building more housing. Katie Bannon, Madison's Zoning Administrator and Matt Tucker, Director of Madison's Building Inspection Division, explained that the city has made the following changes to its zoning code in the last three years:

- From discretionary design review to zoning code design standards.
- From conditional use permits to permitted uses.
- Making it easier to build townhouses by allowing two-family residential buildings within 300' of other two-family or multi-family buildings as permitted use.
- Allowing accessory dwelling units within single-family residential districts.
- Increasing rental household size limits and eliminating requirement that tenants in same unit be related.
- Allow for more density and reduced parking requirements in the newly created transit-oriented overlay zoning district.



Curt Witynski, JD, Witynski Consulting LLC.
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Please Join Us!

Curt will moderate a discussion with Poynette Village Administrator Craig Nalin and Ripon City Administrator Adam Sonntag about strategies their communities are deploying to create more affordable housing.

February 27 | 12 pm - 1 pm

Food for Thought
 Monthly Brown Bag Lunch Series
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City of Marinette Completes Its First Small Home Project on In-Fill City Lot



Facing growth in its shipbuilding sector and associated job growth, Marinette has an urgent need to add more housing. This required an approach to identify existing property and introduce a less-common housing type – smaller homes.

“The city had vacant parcels that we acquired from the county through an In Rem tax sale,” said Marinette Mayor Steve Genisot. “And those parcels were beyond repair. They were demoed and then just vacant lots.”

In 2022, the city issued a Request for Proposals for the development of 10 vacant lots. The development criteria included:

- Property shall remain taxable
- Building shall be prefabricated or stick-built
- No single-wide or double-wide modular structures are allowed
- Home appearance and architectural features shall be consistent with surrounding homes in the respective neighborhood

- Livable space shall be no less than 600 square feet
- Project shall be finished, and an occupancy permit issued within 16 months of signing the Development Agreement

In exchange, the city offered an incentive of free land, new public sidewalks along the parcel, sanitary sewer lateral and water service extensions from the mains to the outside of the building foundation, and a new concrete entry walk from the public sidewalk to the front entry.

“We’d love to see these ‘tiny homes,’ we call them, all throughout the community. We’d love to see a larger scale, maybe a small development of tiny homes,” added Genisot.



Zach Vruwink, Chief Operating Officer, League of Wisconsin Municipalities. Contact Zach at zvruwink@lwm-info.org

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Housing is a marketplace, and like every marketplace, when there's a shortage of supply, prices go up as buyers compete for what's available. When prices go up, those on the lowest end of the economic ladder suffer first and most. Some get pushed right out of the market. When that market is housing, a shortage pushes people out of the market ... and onto the street.

"We're seeing an increase in homelessness, particularly unsheltered homelessness, which is very concerning," said Michael Basford. ("Unsheltered homelessness," is the somewhat clinical term for people who have nowhere to sleep but the woods, a sidewalk or a cardboard box.) Basford is the Director of the Interagency Coordinating Council on Homelessness at the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration. As the name implies, the council's job is to bring state, federal, and local resources together with the experts and volunteers working on homelessness. He serves as the primary resource contact for both public and private organizations. "I will be anybody's partner," said Basford of his agency's work. Its goal is simple: End homelessness.

But that's hard to do in the midst of a housing shortage. While many other social, medical, and economic issues swirl around people who don't have a permanent address, Basford said, "the main barrier is the availability of housing." Lacking "places to put people" is the major barrier to ending homelessness.

The numbers are daunting. The best studies put the number of missing housing units in Wisconsin at about 129,000. Those are the additional homes or apartments needed to provide adequate housing for households who exist within the bottom half of Wisconsin's income scale. Compare that number to 21,072, which is the total number of building permits issued in the state in 2022. The Great Recession decimated Wisconsin's housing sector and the result has been almost 15 years of building fewer homes than demand requires. For decades prior to the recession, Wisconsin produced on average 34,000 new housing units annually.

Asked to assess Wisconsin's efforts to end homelessness, Basford describes some success and some work yet to do. Wisconsin did a good job putting the influx of emergency



federal dollars to work providing shelter and rental assistance. That effort alone kept more than 60,000 people from becoming homeless.

He is concerned about the future. First, and foremost, there is the supply shortage. The need for 129,000 additional housing units with a housing “pipeline” producing only 21,000 annually suggests that the shortage will not be resolved anytime soon. On top of that, when the COVID-driven federal resources go away, Wisconsin will have to face the uncomfortable fact that the state is spending the same amount on homeless programs and services that it was spending in 2009. As with the broader housing crisis, local leaders will need to play a role.

“What is important for municipal leaders to understand is that, in their community, they have to take an active role,” he said. Coordination is key. Identifying and networking with the municipal, county, state, and federal agencies is a starting point, but when it comes to homelessness, there’s also a lot being done by nonprofit and faith-based organizations. Their contributions, often as simple as a local church opening its basement to families in need, cannot be overlooked.

Also, reality cannot be ignored. Homelessness in Wisconsin is not a “Madison and Milwaukee problem.” Basford works with communities around the state to identify resources and coordinate solutions. In December he was touring a homeless shelter on Main Street in Loyal, Wisconsin. Loyal was one stop on a tour that included Neillsville, Amery, Menomonee Falls, Superior, Bayfield, Ashland, Odanah, Wausau, and Chippewa Falls. Homelessness is everywhere.

On one specific evening every January, agencies and volunteers go out and count the number of people living on the street or in shelters. This annual “Point in Time” count is one of the primary tools used to get a sense of the breadth and depth of the homeless challenge. It doesn’t capture people who have temporary living arrangements such as living with friends or

family members. During the most recent count, there were people living on the street or in a shelter in 36 of Wisconsin’s 72 counties.

Housing is the first and most important element of the most successful local efforts to combat homelessness. In fact, the strategy which has been identified as the best model for 20 years is called, “Housing First.” Housing First acknowledges that people have economic, social, and medical needs, but before any of those can be addressed, people need a home.

Basford, who has worked for decades providing housing for persons with serious mental health issues said, “To get people out of homelessness, you have to get them housing first, then you have to wrap services around them.”

Those services cover the same spectrum of medical, economic, and emotional needs that are present in all of society. But in addition, individuals who have been homeless for a very long time can oftentimes need simple life skills training.

“Just getting used to the idea of going ‘home’ is foreign to some people. We often see people who are placed in housing for the first time sleeping on the floor near the front door.” It has been so long since they’ve had a home that they feel compelled to be ready to escape, fearing that someone is going to tell them to get out.

Visit the DOA Interagency Council on Homelessness webpage to learn more.



Jerry Deschane, Executive Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities. Contact Jerry at jdeschane@lwm-info.org

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Addressing Veteran Homelessness



Based in Racine, WI, Veterans Outreach of Wisconsin's (VOW) mission is to assist homeless and at-risk veterans with normalcy in life by providing food, clothing, shelter, and other basic human needs. As the first and most successful project of its kind in Wisconsin, VOW has been recognized nationally as a model for other communities.

In 2017, we received the community support needed to build and supply our 15 tiny homes for homeless veterans. Our program services include financial literacy, veteran peer support groups, weekly wellness activities, job facilitation, work training opportunities, education opportunities, and service hours, allowing our residents to engage with the broader community. We have served more than 90 veterans in the villages since opening.

Glenn, a 58-year-old Navy veteran, was homeless for two years, sleeping on couches and outdoors. He said the last straw was waking up cold and wet at the lakefront, thinking "What am I doing out here?" Glenn said the first night he was in his tiny home, he sat on the bed and cried. "I had a roof over my head. I had clothes and food. I decided that this was it. I was going

to go balls to the wall to stay sober and do something with my life. And I have." Unfortunately, Glenn's situation is prevalent among veterans. US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimates more than 40,000 veterans are homeless every night nationally. Housing is only one component of providing holistic support services.

Addressing Food Insecurity

Veterans face 7.4% higher rates of food insecurity (USDA).

VOW operates a food pantry, the Marketplace, and serves more than 450 veterans. VOW added a Mobile Marketplace serving veterans who are homebound or are unable to get transportation to the site, and they distribute information on veteran benefits, services, and programs during these stops.

JC is a 98-year-old WWII Army veteran who utilizes the Marketplace weekly. JC has never married, has no children and no family in the area. He was deployed to France and England during WWII, enlisting at the age of 18. He said, "I don't have a lot of needs, but money is tight." He worries about the day he can no longer drive and access the assistance at the pantry.

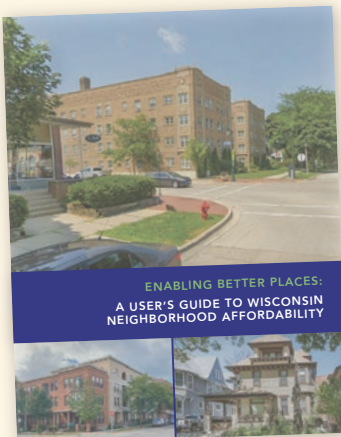
Addressing Suicide

Recently, VOW created the 9-LINE/VOW program to address suicide prevention in the veteran population. Wisconsin has more than 300,000 veterans located throughout 72 counties, and one in five suicide deaths in the state are veterans.

VOW has had support from the City of Racine and Racine County government. Both entities believe that having a stable veteran presence in their communities makes them stronger.

Veterans Outreach of Wisconsin was founded in 2015, serving any veteran in Wisconsin with primary focus areas in Kenosha, Racine, Walworth, Waukesha, Jefferson, and Milwaukee counties. We welcome the opportunity to work with other communities and are actively working with Veterans 1st in Brown County and a group of community members in Rhinelander in their pursuit to combat veteran homelessness. VOW can be reached at (262) 221-8350 or vovvillages.com.

✓ New Housing Resource for Municipalities



The League, in partnership with the Wisconsin Builders Association and Wisconsin Realtors Association, has created an information hub on housing and development, tailored to the practical needs of local governments. Former League Deputy Director Curt Witynski will direct operations of this housing information center, which will provide:

- ✓ A dynamic new series of short briefing papers describing how local governments can streamline and encourage the development of housing or take advantage of the variety of tools available to them to facilitate housing. Each briefing paper will include model ordinance language or sample ordinances where appropriate.
- ✓ Monthly interviews with municipal practitioners who are breaking new ground and innovating in the provision of a variety of housing options.

Witynski organized the production of *Enabling Better Places, A Users Guide to Neighborhood Affordability*. This groundbreaking guidebook, written by the prestigious Congress for the New Urbanism, provides cities and villages with practical ideas for zoning reform. It was a collaborative effort involving the League, CNU, AARP, and the housing industry.

Witynski was the League's chief legal counsel and lobbyist for many years and has a statewide reputation as a trusted resource for local governments.

Funding for this effort is provided by the League, the Wisconsin Realtors Association, and the Wisconsin Builders Association. More information and resources from this collaborative will be available soon.

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Minimum Parking Standards

Parking minimums can significantly increase the cost of housing, and can result in negative environmental impacts. Most parking standards are generic, not based upon local parking studies or usage norms. Reduced parking minimums are becoming more common across the country; even large retailers like Walmart have reduced parking minimums in the last decade. However, parking is frequently a point of contention and must be carefully negotiated locally. Emerging best practice is to allow the market demand and financing criteria to control parking minimums, and for municipalities to regulate parking location, access, and loading. The suggested text amendment below provides a default historic neighborhood condition and an alternative which requires parking for more suburban conditions. One thing of note in this sample is that parking location is more important than parking minimums. Suburban parking locations have scarred historic neighborhoods, reduced walkability, and created points of conflict with pedestrians and cyclists.

Sample On-Site Parking and Loading Amendment

1. On-site parking spaces are not required. [Alternative for suburban condition: “Onsite parking spaces must be provided in accordance with Table 1. Each on-street parking space directly adjoining the site will replace two parking spaces otherwise required by Table 1.”]
2. Parking spaces constructed on-site must be located behind buildings relative to the front property line. Where site configurations make this impossible, parking spaces may be placed on the side of buildings provided they are set back at least 30 feet from the street.

3. Access to on-site parking and loading areas is limited as follows:
 - a. Access must be from a rear alley where available.
 - b. Access may be from a street adjoining the rear or side property line if a rear alley is not available.
 - c. If access is not possible from a rear alley or rear or side street, access may be provided from a driveway along the front property line.

Table 1. On-Site Parking Spaces (suburban condition alternative)

Uses	Minimum parking spaces required
All Residential Units	1 space per dwelling unit
All Lodging Units	1 space per room
All Assembly Uses	1 space per 4 installed seats
All Retail and Service Uses	1 space per 300 sq. ft. of display floor area
Medical Office	1 space per 400 sq. ft. of gross floor area
All Other Office	1 space per 500 sq. ft. of gross floor area
Food and Beverage	1 space per 4 indoor seats

Source: Excerpt from *Enabling Better Places: A User's Guide to Wisconsin Neighborhood Affordability*; available on the League's website.

Kit Homes Return, A Way to Address Housing Cost and Availability?



From 1908 until 1940, Sears, Roebuck and Co. sold over 70,000 kit houses through their Modern Homes and Honor Bilt catalogs. An estimated 70% are still standing. These “kits” came with almost everything that would be necessary to see the final house built, including nails, flooring, doors, and even the paint (cement and plaster were not included, nor were electrical, heating, or

plumbing systems). Once ordered, the homes were shipped via train car and delivered as far as Alaska. These far-reaching effects were owed to the catalog’s great acclaim. In 1939, they reportedly sold around \$7 million in Sears kit homes. A year later, the Modern Homes department had grown to 120 salespeople working out of 16 district sales offices. But preparations for World War II ended the enterprise in 1942, by which time the demand for lumber had exploded. Output simply could not keep pace.¹

Today, as small or “tiny” homes continue their popularity serving a segment of the housing market, modern-day “Sears” retailers – Amazon, Home Depot, and Costco – are selling kits on their websites that allow do-it-yourselfers to build their own tiny homes, which are usually 600 square feet or less. The structures



Home Depot: \$33,000



Source: Wisconsin Tiny Homes

– some of which are classified as accessory dwelling units or ADUs – provide the opportunity to add to existing developed lots where zoning codes allow an affordable housing option. For the non-do-it-yourselfer, there are Wisconsin Tiny Home builders in Rice Lake (Escape Traveler) and Elroy (Wisconsin Tiny Homes) whose prices range from \$48,000-\$143,000 and \$3,000-\$49,000 respectively.



1. Source: thecraftsmanblog.com/the-history-of-sears-kit-homes



Upcoming Events

- ★ **HR for Small Communities** | March 12 - 15 | Webinar | 10 am - 11 am Each Day
- ★ **Building Inspectors Institute** | April 17 - 19 | Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake

City of Rhinelander Approves Conversion of Hotel Into Apartments With WEDC Support



Image source: Agoda.com

Municipalities continue to turn to schools, commercial properties, and even hotels to address emergent housing issues. The Rhinelander community welcomed a new hotel in 2024 and another is under development. This additional capacity provided an opportunity to look at the hotel supply and demand to evaluate a potential change in use. In collaboration with a developer, the City of Rhinelander approved conversion of a Rodeway Inn hotel into 32 studio and one-bedroom apartments plus new office suites. The developer committed to keeping them affordable. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) awarded the project a Community Development Investment (CDI) grant of \$228,000. Visit wedc.org/community for more resources and grant information.

“The city got involved due to the shortage of housing and there’s a desperate need to fix this problem in our community. This affects every person’s quality of life, affects the economy, and affects businesses expanding and coming to our community as well as just the supply and demand pressure,” said Rhinelander Mayor Kris Hanus.

CODE ISSUE: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)



Permitting ADUs within neighborhoods is a good first step toward adding housing with minimal impact on existing development. ADUs occur organically throughout Wisconsin cities and villages, in the upper level of carriage houses or garages, as well as in attics and basements. They are one of the most significant tools for increasing density at a scale that is virtually invisible within a neighborhood. ADUs allow the homeowner to reduce the cost of housing with additional income, enable aging in place by downsizing on the same parcel, and assist with elder care.

Recommended Code Changes

- Accessory dwelling should be allowed by right for all single-family zoning districts.
- Additional parking spaces should not be required for an accessory dwelling.

Source: Excerpt from *Enabling Better Places: A User’s Guide to Wisconsin Neighborhood Affordability*; available on the League’s website.

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The Story of Prairie Haus – an Integrated Rental Community

Most people, when they hear New Glarus, think of the brewing company. If you've ever been, then you might think of the charming Swiss Historic District or perhaps the New Glarus Woods State Park.

Nestled between two rock formations in Green County, is a valley settled in 1845 by Swiss immigrants. The settlers' commitment to preserving their heritage and building a tight-knit community laid the foundation for the settlement's unique character. The shared values, traditions, language, and a collective sense of belonging continue to this day as the heart and soul of this small village of 2,266 people.

In 1968, a senior citizen residence and nursing home was constructed to allow elderly residents to remain in their hometown. It was a plan the entire community rallied behind to keep friends and neighbors engaged and active for the long term. In that same vein, a group of parents with children who needed specialized care began conversations in the 2010s about providing their children a more independent future close to home. Over many years of conversations, the parents began to form the idea that any future must include an integrated building so their kids could interact with dogs and babies and have everyday experiences. After touring many properties that didn't quite fit their needs, the parents formed the idea of starting from scratch and later created a nonprofit called Home Of Our Own (HOOO). One of the parents, Mary Anne Oemichen, J.D. was named Executive Director. Part of the research the group reviewed touched on the need for affordable workforce housing for many Wisconsinites. It became clear that any project must include apartments rented

to a broad swath of people. All abilities, all income levels, and all backgrounds would be welcome.

Today, Prairie Haus Apartments is a thoughtful evolution of community living, emphasizing the crucial need for spaces catering to adults with special needs. Developed with a vision to create an inclusive and supportive environment, Prairie Haus embodies the principles of accessibility, independence, and community integration.

The development of Prairie Haus was a collaborative effort between local government, advocacy groups, and community members, all driven by a shared commitment to fostering a diverse and compassionate community.

The parent group began to discuss the idea among residents in New Glarus as a grass roots effort to show a local face behind the project. They then created a simplified concept plan with the New Glarus Plan Commission. The Plan Commission considered the proposal and unanimously signed a letter of concept approval. A beautiful site overlooking the Little Sugar River with a view of downtown became available.

From there it was about finding the right partner. A chance encounter in 2016 between Oemichen and Mary Wright, President of the Wisconsin Housing Preservation Corporation (WHPC), found the group their developer. Oemichen said, "Wright taught us the process of tax credit development, fair housing, and the complexities of leasing apartments."

The entire 40-unit Prairie Haus project ended up costing \$9 million. Primary funding for the project was a \$5.6 million, Section 42 tax credit allocation in 2019 from the Wisconsin



Housing and Economic Development Agency (WHEDA). WHPC used the next eight months to combine mortgage financing and other funding sources, including \$500,000 in fundraising from HOOO. Other partners included Cinnaire, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago through its Affordable Home Program, the CDFI Capital Magnet Fund Program, Johnson Bank, and the State of Wisconsin as the federal HOME loan project sponsor.

Project construction began in December 2019 and finished in just over a year. Thirty-eight of the 40 apartments are income driven while just two apartments rented at market rate. Ten of the income-driven units are single-story, grade-level apartments specifically designed for individuals with special needs.

Partnering with architects from Midwest Modern, Prairie Haus is designed to meet the unique requirements of accessibility and safety. The incorporation of features such as ramps, wide doorways, and adaptable living spaces reflects a meticulous understanding of the diverse needs within the community.

Prairie Haus embodies a philosophy of community that extends beyond mere housing. The project places a strong emphasis on creating a supportive network through community engagement programs, life skills training opportunities, and partnerships with local businesses. This holistic approach aims not only to provide a home but also to nurture personal growth and independence.

“Prairie Haus is an example of what can be accomplished when a developer, investor, and community collaborate to envision and complete a financially complex project. Along with the strong commitment and hard work of HOOO, we responded to a need and provided a housing model solution for this community.” said Wright.

“This apartment community is the first of its kind. But there are so many disabled adults, and adults who struggle to afford housing, who don’t have their own home. Our commitment at Home Of Our Own is not only to continue to support the residents of Prairie Haus with community activities and

amenities, but also to support groups all over Wisconsin and the U.S. to establish their very own version of Prairie Haus,” said Oemichen.

A second building is planned to be built next to the current site in the coming years. Oemichen has received calls from interested parents in similar situations across the state. She says that developments in La Crosse and Waukesha are likely to come to fruition in the coming years.

After a lull in development because of the cost to develop any property in the rocky hills surrounding its narrow valley, New Glarus is recently experiencing modest growth. New Glarus Village Administrator, Lauren Freeman said, “Getting creative is a must for municipalities. We are currently reviewing zoning ordinances to make more projects allowable through the administrative process, rather than conditional use with the planning commission.”

The village is looking at all options including zero lot lines, AUDs, duplexes, lot coverage, and much more. Freeman expects this section of the code to be ready by late spring 2024. “We are taking a more proactive approach to getting more housing.” Other projects on the horizon for the village include a new water reservoir and a new library building.

Prairie Haus Apartments is a prime example of the desire for New Glarus to keep its identity and close-knit community while addressing the need for housing tailored to adults of all abilities and incomes. Started as a grass roots effort by parents concerned for their children with special needs, Prairie Haus fosters inclusivity, independence, and community engagement. New Glarus seeks to prioritize the well-being and integration of all their citizens.



Elizabeth Yanke, Member Services Director, League of Wisconsin Municipalities. Contact Elizabeth at eyanke@lwm-info.org



Urban Wildlife Management in Wisconsin Municipalities

A majority of the human population in Wisconsin is concentrated in urban areas. Cities are planned and built for the benefit of humans in terms of residential and commercial needs. In addition, there is an abundance of impervious surface to facilitate transportation of people across the urban landscape. Once cities are built, green space is generally retrofitted based on affordability and availability, often resulting in relatively small, fragmented, and disconnected parks and other undeveloped areas.

How cities are planned, zoned, and developed has direct consequences for wildlife. In recent years, an increasing number of the more than 500 wildlife species that call Wisconsin home are living in urbanized areas. Wildlife that inhabit urbanized areas tend to be generalist species, meaning they can use a variety of land uses and covers and typically use a wide range of food sources, both natural and human-provided. Examples of common urban-adapted species include white-tailed deer, coyotes, red foxes, raccoons, songbirds, turkeys, Canada geese, and crows, among many other species. At times, many of the common species found in urban areas can become overabundant, resulting in negative human-wildlife experiences. For example, property damage can occur from wildlife-vehicle collisions, wildlife browsing landscape and garden plants, or wildlife entering homes and buildings.

However, there is also great, unmet potential to create, enhance, and manage public greenspaces, commercial and residential properties, and other habitats within urban areas to attract wildlife like songbirds and other species that enhance people's lives. Creating, enhancing, and managing habitats to attract wildlife in urban areas has many positive benefits, including, among other things, 1) decreasing the number of negative human-wildlife interactions, 2) improving and increasing ecosystem services to moderate climate change, provide flood control, and create human-nature connections, 3) improving ecosystem and human health, 4) higher value and quicker resale of homes, and 5) providing opportunities to increase economic development by creating a community where people want to live and work.

One of the greatest benefits for urban wildlife in spaces municipalities own and manage is to plant and manage a

diversity of native vegetation within public green spaces, and to the extent possible, connect these spaces with one another. Increasing connectivity builds contiguous blocks of habitat, allows wildlife to more easily move across the urban landscape, which could limit their need to cross roads, and provides a buffer between wildlife and the human population, thereby potentially reducing negative human-wildlife encounters. Increasing connected green space containing native vegetation may also provide sufficient quality and quantity of habitat to attract and hold species not normally seen in urban landscapes and/or boost populations of wildlife that are present in urban areas but may not be thriving.

Along with municipal green spaces, residential yards and neighborhoods provide some of the most stable land use within urban areas because once built, these spaces are rarely razed and converted to other land uses. Therefore, providing habitat in municipal green spaces and neighborhoods can have lasting and long-term benefits for urban wildlife. Upon hearing the recommendation to attract urban wildlife, many express the concern about attracting more individuals of species that are not strongly desired; for example, more rabbits, squirrels, and English sparrows. However, providing additional habitat may actually have a counter effect by attracting predators like hawks and owls that may help control populations of less desirable wildlife species. Additional habitat may also help to increase the diversity of wildlife so that the abundant and common species are balanced out by species that are not normally seen in urban areas unless sufficient quality and quantity of habitat is available.



David Drake is a Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His research and extension programs focus on wildlife and wildlife damage management in human-dominated landscapes. Contact David at [ddrake2@wisc.edu](mailto:d Drake2@wisc.edu)

urbanwildlifeproject.wisc.edu/





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The End of an Era

*Congratulations on your retirement,
Claire Silverman!*

Claire Silverman, League General Counsel, will retire at the end of February after more than 31 years spent training, guiding, and helping Wisconsin cities and villages navigate municipal law. Claire started at the League in 1992 as Assistant General Counsel and moved up to General Counsel in 2001. During her time at the League, Claire has been an incredible asset to League members, answering tens of thousands of legal inquiries, teaching countless workshops and webinars on various legal topics important to municipalities, writing numerous amicus briefs that have been relied upon by the Wisconsin Court of Appeals and Wisconsin Supreme Court, writing hundreds of legal articles for the League's monthly magazine, and planning hours of continuing education for municipal attorneys over the last three decades. After listing all that, "end of an era" just doesn't seem to cut it.

In addition to sharing her wealth of knowledge on municipal law with local elected officials and staff, Claire has also brought countless moments of joy to those of us at the League who have had the good fortune of working alongside her. Claire's charming sense of humor and kind spirit make her the type of colleague one can only hope to be so lucky to encounter. Personally, I am grateful that, by joining the League team, I gained not only a strong legal mentor but a fabulous friend. To know Claire truly is to love Claire and the League offices won't be quite the same without her.

To honor Claire and her contributions, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and League of Wisconsin Municipalities Mutual Insurance have created a permanent, endowed scholarship through the University of Wisconsin Law School for students with an interest in municipal law. This scholarship will recognize Claire's incredible career of service to Wisconsin municipalities, raise awareness regarding municipal law as



a potential career path, and expand the pool of attorneys interested in pursuing municipal law after graduation.

Executive Director Jerry Deschane said, “Claire dedicated her career to municipal government law. Through this scholarship in her name, the League hopes to permanently recognize Claire’s incredible contributions and to inspire new attorneys to follow her path of service to local government.”

We thank Claire for all she has done for the League and for Wisconsin municipalities! She will be dearly missed, but we wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement.

*- Maria Davis, Assistant General Counsel,
League of Wisconsin Municipalities*



WISCONSIN POLICY FORUM

Addressing Waukesha County’s Housing Affordability Challenges

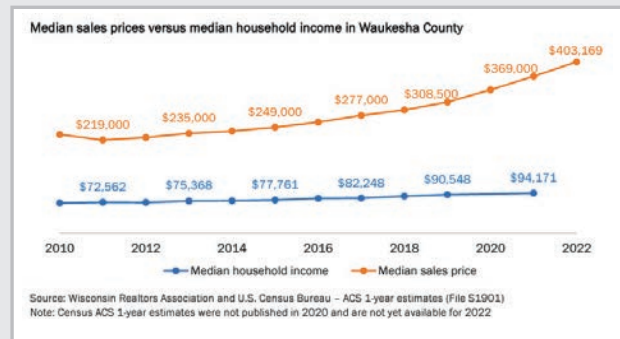
Waukesha County’s affordable housing challenges have reached new heights due to trends stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, demanding consideration of strategies to reduce the cost of renting, buying, and building homes.

Contributing factors include housing costs that are increasing far more rapidly than incomes, the lackluster pace of production of rental and owner-occupied housing, and regulatory and other barriers to new development.

A recent Forum analysis reveals the median value of homes in Waukesha County was the highest of any Wisconsin county in 2021, while the county’s median rent was exceeded only in Dane County. These difficulties have intensified, as the county’s median home sales price increased by over 41% between 2016 and 2021 – while its median household income rose only 15%.

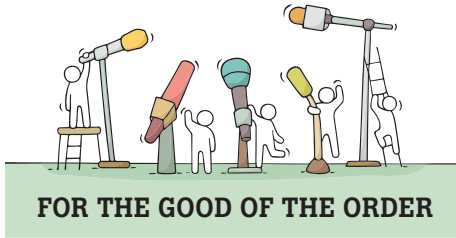
Meanwhile the number of homes listed for sale in Waukesha County has declined, while the vacancy rate in the owner-occupied market was just 0.2% in 2021. The county added nearly 1,200 more households than housing units between 2010 and 2021.

While there is no “silver bullet,” multiple strategies are needed to increase and diversify the county’s housing



supply and to improve affordability. Those identified in our research include zoning and permitting changes, such as allowing smaller homes on smaller lots and permitting duplexes in districts zoned for single-family housing; expediting development approval processes; better funding strategies, potentially via municipal use of TIF or affordable housing funds; and new or expanded use of alternate building methods such as prefabricated housing or expanding the development of attached single-family townhouses.

This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state’s leading resource for nonpartisan state and local government research and civic education. Learn more at wispolicyforum.org.



Amending By Striking Out and Inserting Words

Lauren Greuel, former League Legal Apprentice, and
Maria Davis, Assistant General Counsel

As mentioned in previous columns, there are three main types of processes when it comes to amendments: inserting or adding words or paragraphs; striking out words or paragraphs; and striking out and inserting words or substitute paragraphs or the entire text of a resolution or main motion. Robert's Rules of Order, *Newly Revised, 12th ed.* (RONR) 12:8. This column addresses the first half of the third process – striking out and inserting words.

Unlike the motion to strike, motions to strike out and insert may be used to strike out and modify non-consecutive words. RONR 12:66. A motion to strike out and insert words is generally applied to a single sentence but may be used within two or more consecutive sentences that make up part of a paragraph (but not the entire paragraph). RONR 12:9. This type of amendment is helpful when the only way to achieve the desired result is to strike out and insert within the same motion – e.g., because some members might hesitate to strike out words without guarantee of the insertion. RONR 12:56.

A motion to strike and insert words can be used to strike words and insert different words in the same place or to strike words and insert those same words in a different place. RONR 12:58. The two parts of the amendment must be germane to one another and cannot represent independent questions unless there is unanimous consent to make a combined motion. RONR 12:59. When striking words and replacing them with different words in the same place, the words to be inserted must relate to the stricken words or address the same issue. When striking words and inserting the same words in a different place, the words being inserted may not be materially different than the words being struck.

Secondary amendments (amendments to proposed primary amendments) to motions to strike out and

insert are broken down into the two components – to strike out and to insert. RONR 12:61. The secondary amendment of each component “follow[s] the rules that would apply to two separate motions for primary amendment – one to strike out (amendable only by striking out) and another to insert (amendable in any of three forms relating to words). RONR 12:61. Typically, amendments to the words to be struck are considered before amendments to the words to be inserted. RONR 12:61. For example, if a primary amendment to strike out the names “Sally, John, and Joe” and insert “Jane, Mary, and Jack” has a secondary amendment applied to the words to be struck, that amendment is considered before any secondary amendment to the inserted words. However, the chair may deviate from this order if he or she believes it would be helpful or the body desires to do so. Additionally, if a secondary amendment is introduced for words to be inserted before any secondary amendments are introduced for words to be struck, the chair may determine it is better to address the latter first and inquire whether there are any amendments, or further amendments, to the words to be struck.

Generally, once a motion to strike out and insert has been adopted, the inserted words cannot be struck and the words that have been struck cannot be inserted again, unless changes to the wording or placement present a new question or the vote on the amendment is reconsidered. RONR 12:63. However, if a motion to strike out and insert is voted down, *separate motions* to strike out or to insert those same words may still be made. RNOR 12:64.

Finally, be sure to remember that the body can always modify these rules to meet its particular needs.

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Parliamentary Procedure FAQ 1

What constitutes a quorum? Is the number necessary for a quorum reduced when there are vacancies on the governing body?

A quorum is the minimum number of members of a governing body that may meet and transact business. Quorum must be maintained throughout the whole meeting of a governing body. Although a number less than a quorum can act where specifically authorized (e.g., to adjourn or compel attendance of absent members), the general rule is that any action taken by a governing body without a lawful quorum present is null and void. *Board of Supervisors of Oconto County v. Hall*, 47 Wis. 208, 213, 2 N.W. 291 (1879).

The number needed for a quorum depends on the governmental body in question (see below). Usually statutes, bylaws, or ordinances set forth what constitutes a quorum for a particular body. In the absence of any statute, bylaw or ordinance specifying a quorum, the common-law rule is that a quorum is a majority of the members of a body entitled to vote on all matters. 4 McQuillin, *Law of Municipal Corporations*, sec. 13.34 (3d ed.). In calculating quorum requirements, answers with fractions are rounded up to the next whole number. See *State ex rel. Burdick v. Tyrell*, 158 Wis. 425, 434, 149 N.W. 280 (1914); *Governing Bodies* 321.

Cities: In cities operating under the mayor-council form of government, the mayor and alderpersons constitute the common council. Wis. Stat. § 62.11(1). Two-thirds of the common council's members constitute a quorum, except that in cities having not more than five alderpersons, a majority is a quorum. Wis. Stat. § 62.11(3)(b). The mayor is not counted in determining whether a quorum is present at a meeting but may vote in case of a tie. Wis. Stat. § 62.11(1). In cities operating

under the council-manager form of government, a majority of the members of the council constitute a quorum. Wis. Stat. § 64.29(3). The manager does not have a vote and is not counted for quorum purposes.

Villages: In villages, the trustees of each village constitute a village board. Wis. Stat. § 61.32. The village president is a trustee by virtue of the office and has a vote. Wis. Stat. § 61.24. A majority of the members-elect constitute a quorum. Wis. Stat. § 61.32, Stats. In villages with a village manager, a quorum is still a majority of the trustees. Wis. Stat. § 64.15.

How do Vacancies Affect Quorum?

Vacancies probably reduce the number of members needed for a quorum in both cities and villages. Wisconsin Stat. § 62.11(3)(b) states that "two-thirds of the members" constitutes a quorum of the city common council. Similarly, Wis. Stat. § 61.32 states "a majority of the *members-elect* shall constitute a quorum" in villages. The Wisconsin statutes do not define the word "member" in the context of governing bodies. The dictionary definition of "member" suggests that it must be a person. As such, it seems likely that vacant seats would not count as "members" or "members-elect" for purposes of quorum in cities and villages. However, this question has not been addressed by Wisconsin courts or by an opinion of the attorney general's office.

A city or a village could potentially address the uncertainty about the effect of vacancies by adopting a definition of "member" or "member-elect" which specifically excludes vacancies. An example of language that does this can be found in Wis. Stat. §§ 59.001(2m) and 66.10015(1)(bs) which define "members-elect" to mean those governing body members "who have been duly elected or appointed for a current regular or unexpired term and whose service has not terminated by death, resignation, or removal from office." (rev. 12/23)



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Powers of Municipalities FAQ 14 (NEW)

Is there a process by which a municipality may obtain a waiver from a state mandate?

Yes. Wisconsin Stat. § 66.0143 allows municipalities to file a request with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) for a waiver from a state mandate, except for any state mandates relating to health and safety. If granted, waivers from mandates are effective for four years.

Process for Requesting an Exemption From State Mandates

The form for applying for a waiver as well as information and instructions for completing the form are available on DOR's website at <https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Form/govcty-Instruct.aspx>

DOR requires that municipalities requesting an exemption from a state mandate submit the following items in addition to completing the online application form:

1. A copy of the resolution or ordinance from your legislative body (town board, village board, city council, county board) requesting a mandate waiver. Include the recorded vote of that body.

2. A formal attestation from the Governing Body that the waiver is not related to health or safety.

3. A record of public hearing, if one was held, including any adverse impact on public services offered by other municipalities or counties.

DOR has granted municipalities waivers from state mandates pursuant to § 66.0143. For example, since 2019 the department has granted 11 cities and villages* waivers from the mandate under Wis. Stat. § 66.10013, requiring municipalities over 10,000 in population to annually prepare a housing affordability report. The communities receiving the waiver generally cited a lack of capacity and resources to complete the report by the statutory deadline. In each case the waivers were four years in duration.

*The following municipalities successfully applied for a waiver from the housing affordability report requirement in Wis. Stat. § 66.10013 in 2019 and 2020: Hartford, Waupun, River Falls, Hudson, Onalaska, Platteville, Portage, Two Rivers, Caledonia, Germantown, and Richfield. 12/23

Legal Caption

Governing Bodies 424

For the Good of the Order: Column by Lauren Greuel, former League Legal Apprentice, and Maria Davis, Assistant General Counsel, provides an overview of the process to amend a main motion by striking out and inserting words under Robert's Rules of Order, *Newly Revised, 12th Edition*. 2/2024.



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WELCOME

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Welcome Jenny Van Sickle, Superior City Councilor

Jenny Van Sickle was born and raised in Sitka, Alaska. Van Sickle is Tlingit and Athabascan heritage of the Kiks.adi Clan. She earned her degree in Mental Health & Human Service (2013)

from the University of Maine-Augusta graduating *summa cum laude* and served two years as an Ombudsman for the US Coast Guard ALDER. Van Sickle continued her education at the University of Wisconsin-Superior (2016) *summa cum laude* with a bachelor's in social work. She was elected to the Superior City Council in 2017.

In 2018, Jenny introduced the Kids Don't Float life jacket program to promote safety on the water. After passing a ban on Conversion Therapy in Superior, she was named the Leadership Institute's Woman of Excellence in 2019. Following her efforts to create the Fed & Focused elementary school snack drive and the Sweet Streets helmet initiative, she was recognized as one of Wisconsin's Most Influential Natives by Madison 365.

In 2022, the *Duluth News Tribune* named her a 20 under 40 honoree and she was the first woman of color elected to serve as the President of the City Council. Jenny received UW-Superior's 2023 Graduate of the Last Decade (GOLD) Recent Alumni Award for her work on the Wisconsin Point land transfer. On August 18, 2022, the sacred burial ground at Wisconsin Point in Superior was formally returned to the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe.

Jenny is passionate about safe and equitable transportation and serves on the Metropolitan Interstate Council, the Blatnik Bridge Advisory, and is the Public Works Committee Chair. She is excited to represent her community by joining the League Board.



Welcome Tara Tervort, Park Falls Mayor

Tara Tervort was born and raised in Wisconsin with most of her childhood split between Park Falls and the Wisconsin Rapids area. Tara and her husband moved back to Park Falls in 2008 and has been involved in the community ever since. They have raised their four daughters, Alexander, Lexie, Zane, and Zoe.

Tara worked in healthcare, stayed home to raise her young children, then went back into the workforce and had the opportunity to purchase a woman-run, online business called Patchouli Garden that has been in downtown Park Falls for over 20 years. Owning her own business led to many opportunities to work with the City of Park Falls and to create many professional relationships in the area. In a few short years with her drive and work ethic, she tripled sales, increased profit margins, had the brand federally trademarked, and increased social media followers and the customer base by five times. Tara was able to expand, relocate, and remodel the business into another downtown building.

Tara was elected Mayor of the city of Park Falls in April 2023. She ran for office because of her passion for community involvement. She saw opportunities for growth in the City of Park Falls, with a focus on offering a safe community for families, a strong workforce, beautiful recreational opportunities, high ability to encourage new industry and manufacturing facilities, and an adaptable city that can overcome obstacles.

Tara enjoys going to League events and appreciates the resources offered to local governments. She is excited to represent her area on the League Board.

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A Message From the League President



Raise Your Hand if Housing Has Been a Persistent Challenge in Your Municipality...

Having served on the Eau Claire City Council for approximately six years, I can attest that housing has consistently been a key topic of discussion among our residents, businesses, and city leaders. The primary focus of these discussions revolves around the pressing need for affordable and attainable housing in Eau Claire.

Cities and villages serve as the economic hubs of the state, where people live and work. This dynamic also carries a responsibility to ensure that everyone has a place to call home while catering to a diversity of housing needs. Whether it's rental properties or high-end housing options, our communities demand a range of choices to accommodate the various ages, stages, and income levels of our residents.

In Eau Claire, we firmly believe that everyone deserves a safe and quality place to live, regardless of their life stage or financial situation. However, lofty goals alone are insufficient; this vision must be actively prioritized by elected officials, city staff, and the public. In our city, council members run on housing-centric platforms, crafting policies that prioritize housing, and our dedicated staff work diligently to bring

these initiatives to fruition. Crucially, public involvement is key, as community conversations help shift perspectives from NIMBYs (Not in my backyard) to YIMBYs (Yes in my backyard). The business community should also be engaged, as they understand the direct link between housing and economic success.

Recognizing that different municipalities are at various stages in addressing housing challenges, I understand that solutions may look different for cities and villages with unique needs and resources. However, one universal action that all communities can take is to initiate, or continue, community conversations about housing. Moreover, collaboration with the League is invaluable. As we engage in regional discussions, cities and villages can learn from their neighbors and collectively tackle this challenge. We don't have to face this issue in isolation; by leaning on each other, we can transform Wisconsin into a wonderful place to live for all.

Be well,

Emily



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Where Did Transitions Go?

To provide our readers more content, transitions will no longer appear in the magazine.

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