



**OFFICIAL NOTICE & AGENDA**  
REGULAR MEETING

**MEETING:** Parks and Recreation Committee  
**DATE/TIME:** Monday, December 1, 2025 at 5:15 PM  
**LOCATION:** Wausau City Hall – Council Chambers  
407 Grant Street, Wausau WI, 54403

**MEMBERS:**  
Lou Larson (C) Carol Luken (VC)  
Lisa Rasmussen Sarah Watson  
Tom Neal

DATE: 11/25/2025

TIME: 3:00 PM

POSTED BY: Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director

- 1 Public comment on agenda items and reading of the City of Wausau Public Comment Statement.
- 2 Consideration of the minutes of the preceding meeting(s).

**October 7, 2025 Regular Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes**

- 3 Discussion and possible action.
  - a. Discussion and Possible Action on Marathon County Historical Society Request for Display Along River Edge Trail
- 4 Discussion.
  - a. Presentation on Urban Forestry Initiatives and Current Work Plan
  - b. Educational Items: A. Location of Speed Limit Signs on River Edge Trail, B. Location of No Swimming Signs, C. Mowing Overview, D. Progress on Park Commission & City/County Committee Structures, E. Project Update (Oak Island, River Edge Trail/Riverlife, Riverside, Sylvan Hill, Tenth St, Urban Forestry, Season Tasks)
- 5 Adjournment.

Lou Larson, Chair

**NOTICE POSTED AT CITY HALL (407 GRANT STREET) AND  
TRANSMITTED TO THE OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED NEWSPAPER**

**DATE:**

**TIME:**

**POSTED BY:**



This meeting can be viewed on  
YouTube and Channel 981 on Cable TV

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the City of Wausau will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities. If you need assistance or reasonable accommodations in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the ADA Coordinator at (715) 261-6622 or ADAServices@ci.wausau.wi.us to discuss your accessibility needs. We ask your request be provided a minimum of 72 hours before the scheduled event or meeting. If a request is made less than 72 hours before the event the City of Wausau will make a good faith effort to accommodate your request.



City of Wausau  
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[wausauwi.gov](http://wausauwi.gov)



## CITY OF WAUSAU – PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: Oct 6, 2025, at 5:15 p.m.

Location: Council Chambers, City Hall

Parks and Recreation Committee Members Present: Lou Larson (c), Carol Lukens, Tom Neal, Lisa Rasmussen, Sarah Watson

Others Present: Jamie Polley-Parks Director, Tegan Troutner-Assistant City Attorney, Eric Lindman – Public Works Director, MaryAnne Groat – Finance Director

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner. A quorum was present, and the meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m.

1. Public Comment – None
2. Approve Minutes – September 2, 2025 – **Motion** by Neal, second by Lukens to approve the Park and Recreation Committee September 2, 2025, minutes. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 5-0.
3. Discussion and Possible Action of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Items within Proposed City Budget – The committee discussed the different aspects of the budget and the merits of having a feasibility study to separate the parks department from the city. **Motion** by Rasmussen, second by Watson to recommend to the finance department to keep all the pools open for the 2026 season and to refuse to fund the feasibility study to separate the city from the county parks department. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 5-0.
4. Discussion and Possible Action Replacing Riverlife Adirondack Chairs – It has been determined through trial and error that the color of the iconic Riverlife red Adirondack chairs cannot be restored. Staff are recommending replacing them with a similar chair, but in brown/gray that will not fade. The cost is \$8,500 to replace the chairs, and the City small project fund can be utilized. **Motion** by Neal, second by Watson, to replace the Riverlife Adirondack Chairs with the no-fade color utilizing the City small project fund. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 5-0.
5. Education Items –
  - A. Project Update – Sylvan Hill had woodchips added to bowls and berms. Summer mowing on the hill is complete. Seasonal Tasks – Clearing vistas, closing the ball diamonds, and winterizing water systems have begun. Big Eau Pleine – In order to monitor firewood sales and theft, cameras have been installed. Marathon Park – The mat system has been installed in rink 2. Pipe has been installed and insulated, and chilling of rink 2 will begin the week of October 2. The splash pad at Marathon Park tank and line installation is happening during the week of September 29 and concrete will be poured shortly after that. Self-registration camping began October 1 and ends October 31. Boat and Camper winter storage began September 30 and ends October 18. Rink 1 has been up and running for almost two weeks and the first Cyclones game was last Friday night. Nine Mile – Chalet fascia and soffit to be finished. Gable ends are to be reinforced. Ragnar events finished up last weekend which signals a slowdown in special events for the remainder of the year. Sports Complex hosted its final tournament, but regular use will continue until early November. SunnyVale Softball Complex is closing for the season.
6. Future Agenda Items – Wharf docks, Forestry Report – planting season (how much/where and efforts to manage trees during road construction projects), update on Forestry Grant
7. Next Meeting: Monday December 1, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., Council Chambers, City Hall 407 Grant St, Wausau, WI 54403
8. Adjournment – **Motion** by Watson, second by Lukens to adjourn at 6:35 p.m. Motion **carried** by voice vote; vote reflected as 5-0.



## Parks, Recreation, Forestry

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**DATE:** December 1, 2025  
**TO:** Parks and Recreation Committee  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion and Possible Action on Marathon County Historical Society Request for Display Along River Edge Trail

### **PURPOSE**

### **BACKGROUND**

The Marathon County Historical Society is partnering with the Wisconsin Historical Society on a statewide initiative connected to America's 250th anniversary, designed to bring local history directly into public spaces in an accessible and engaging way. As part of the "History Makers Tour," the Wisconsin Historical Society will install a series of temporary interpretive signs highlighting key moments and figures from our region's past. The signs will be placed along the River's Edge Parkway Trail, which was identified as the preferred location due to its high walkability, steady daily foot traffic, and excellent visibility for both residents and visitors. Signage will be installed on May 18th or 19th and will remain in place for approximately 6-8 weeks. The Wisconsin Historical Society will be responsible for all installation, monitoring, and maintenance throughout the display period. Our goal is to activate the trail as a moving educational experience leading up to the America's 250th commemorations, while encouraging community engagement with our local history in a safe, scenic, and heavily used public space.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

None

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Parks and Recreation Committee is asked to approve the Historical Society's display along the River Edge Trail

**History Makers Tour**  
**Wisconsin Historical Society**  
**Office of Programs and Outreach**

816 State St.  
Madison, WI  
53706

# History Walks

We Fight For What We Believe In.

Learn about the things that make up Wisconsin's cultural identity through these pop-up history displays.

**We Fight  
For What  
We Believe In.**

# History Walks

We Fight For What We Believe In



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# We Fight For What We Believe In.

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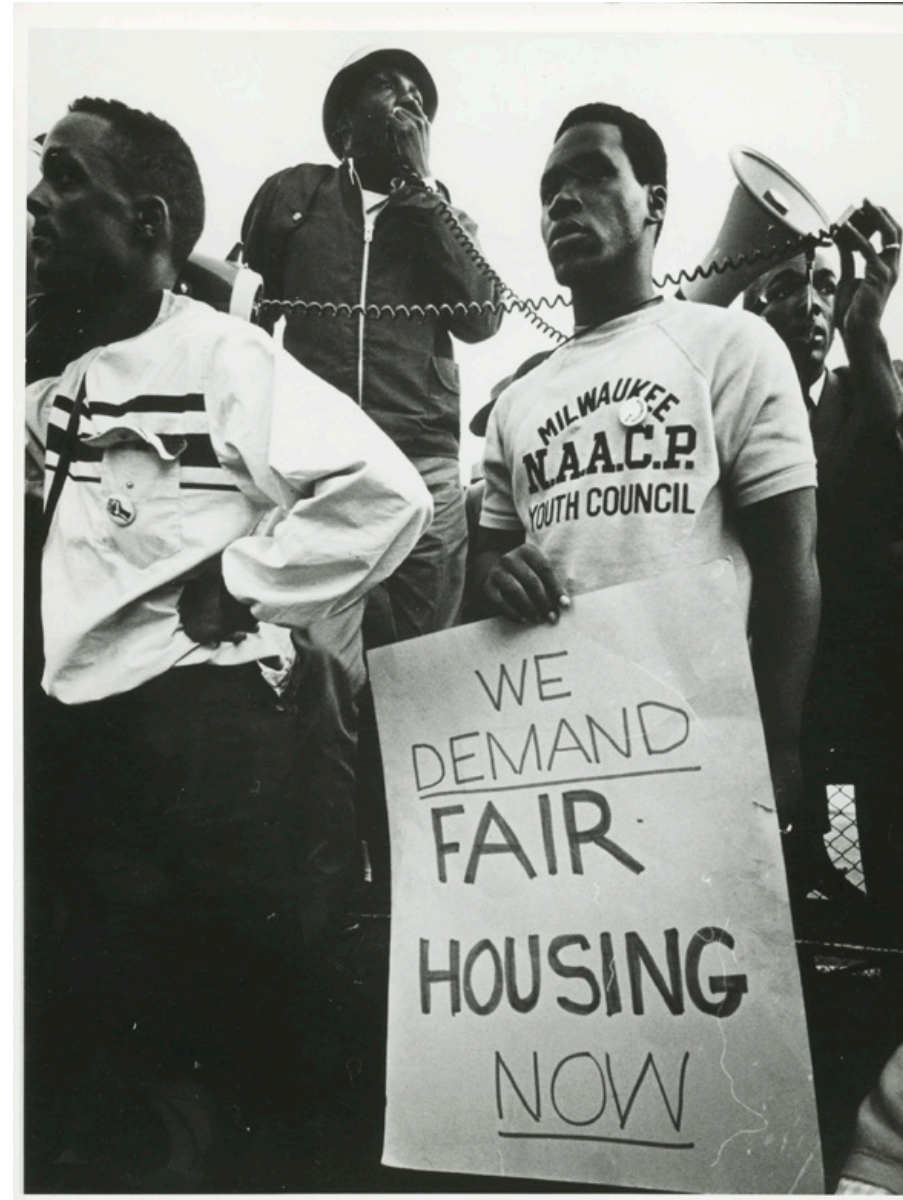
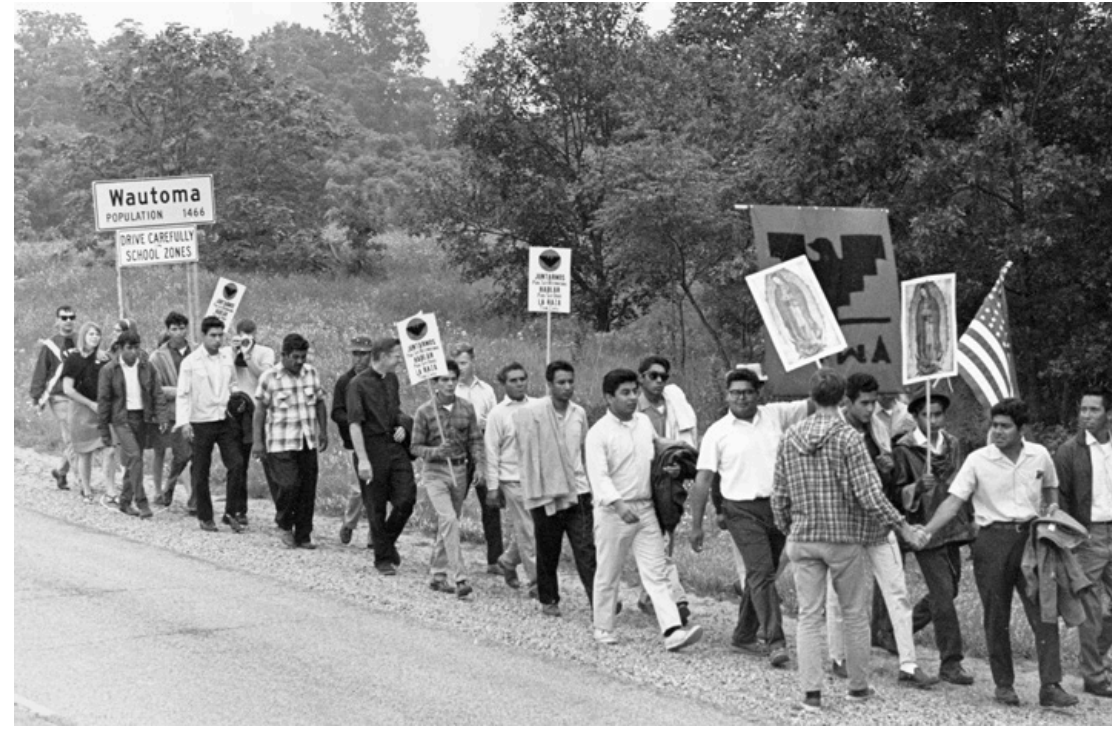
This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.  
Grant Number: MA-253159-OMS-23

Sponsor Here



# History Walks

Image Selection



# History Walks

We Fight For What We Believe In



# History Walks

We Fight For What We Believe In



# History Walks

We Fight For What We Believe In



# History Walks

We Fight For What We Believe In



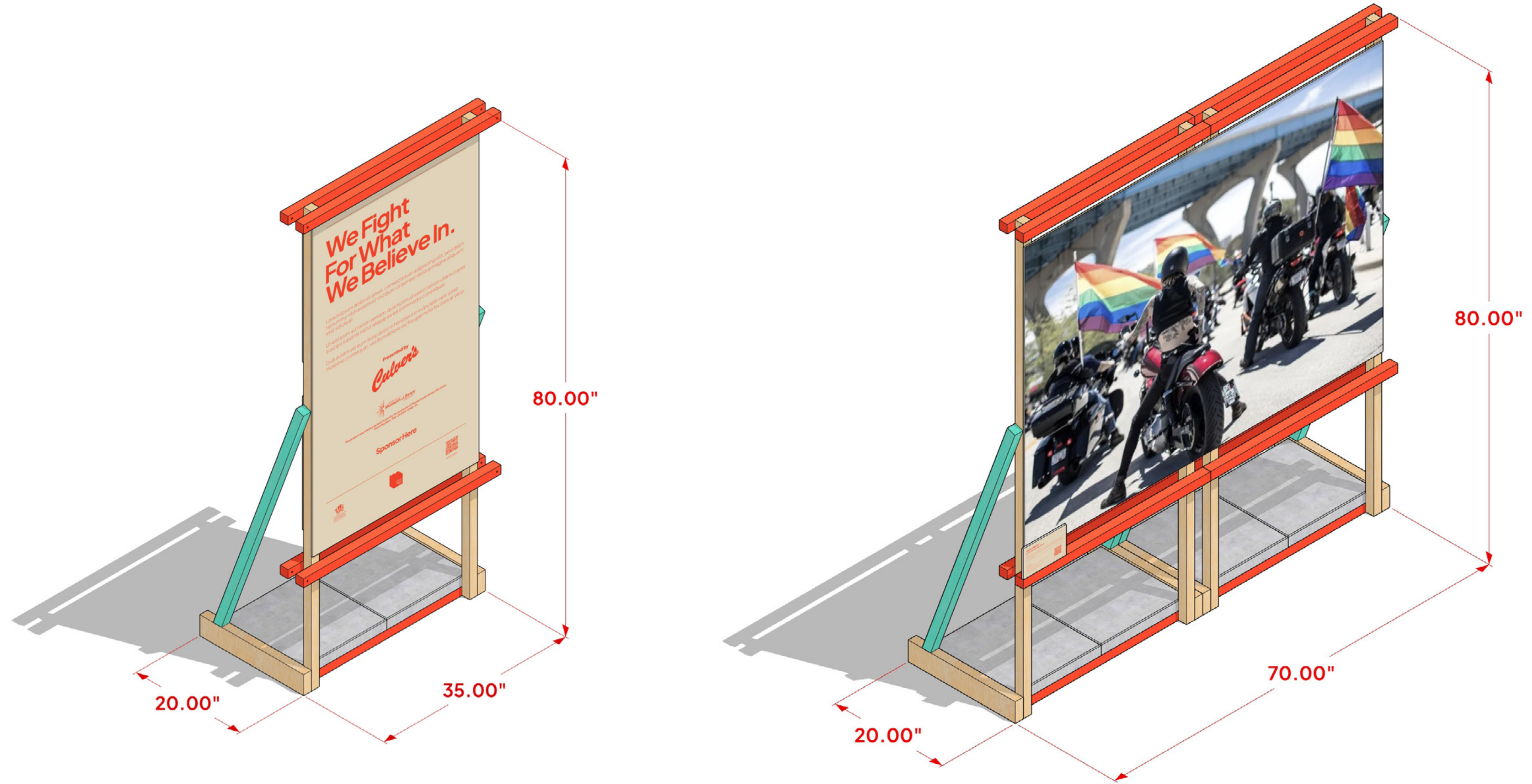
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We Fight For What We Believe In

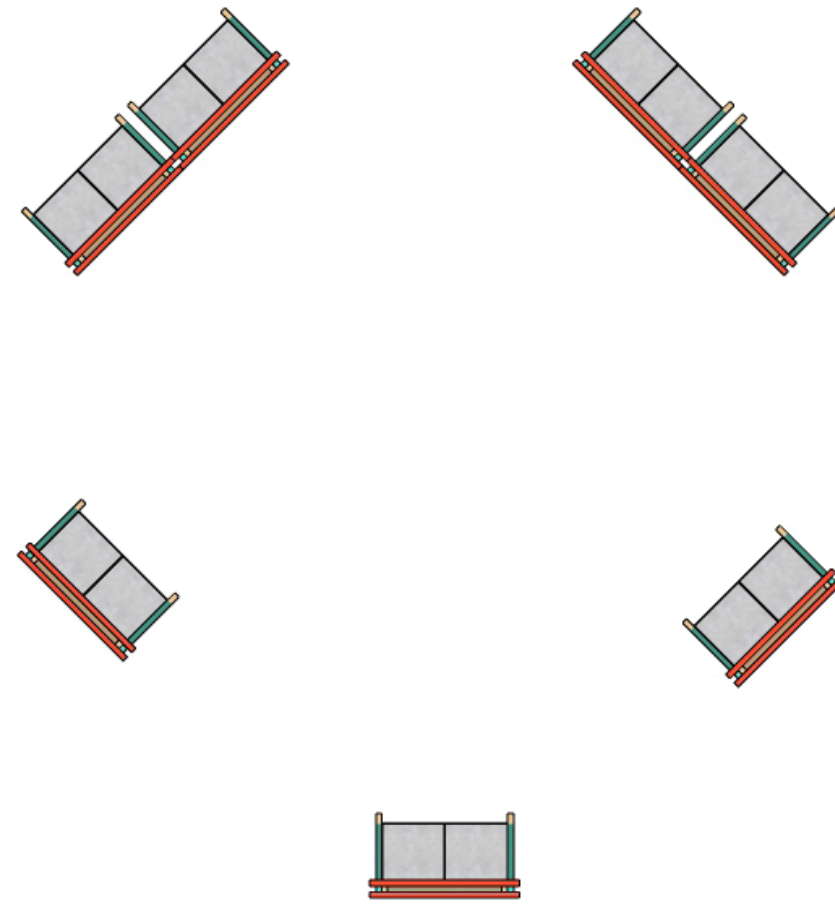


# History Walks

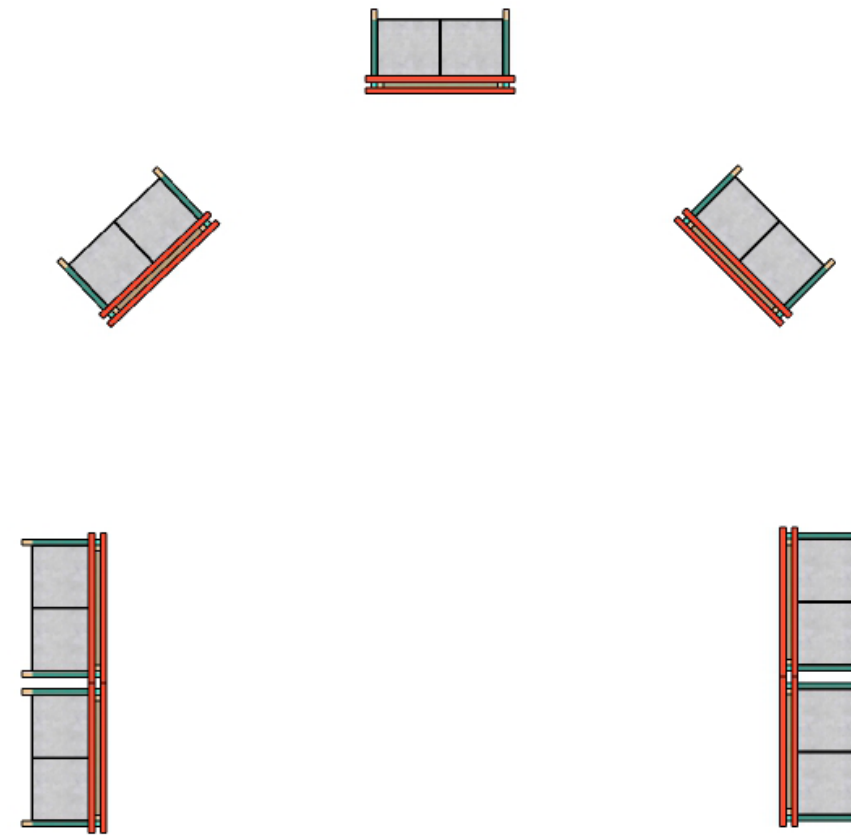
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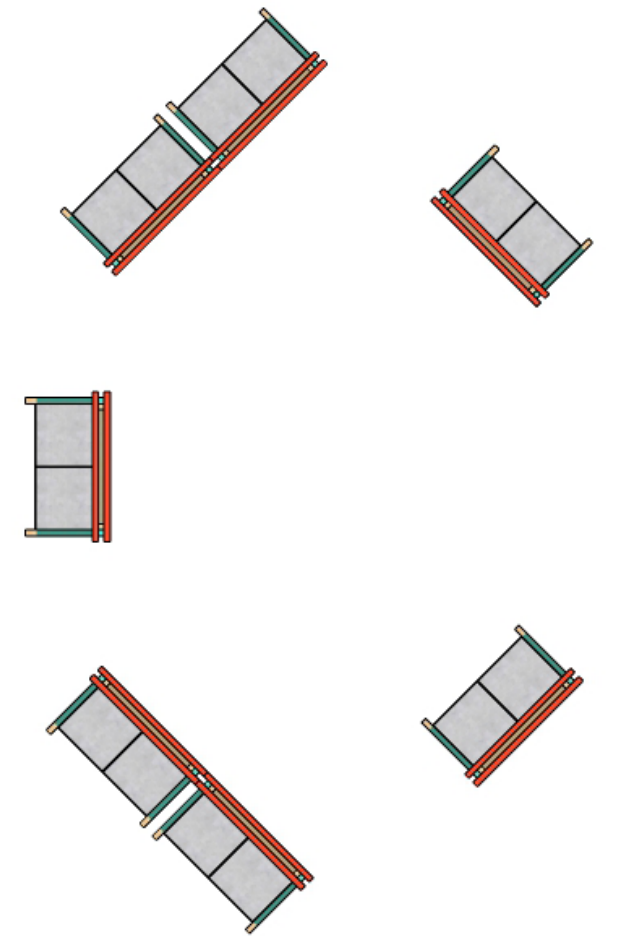
## GROUPING EXAMPLES



1



2



3



# Park & Recreation Committee 12/1/2025

## Urban Forestry Update

### Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan

- 1885 Tracked Ash Removals in TreeKeeper since Winter 2019
  - 250 in 2025 (as of 11/24/25)
  - Average Approx 350/year
- 3134 Inventoried Ash remaining
  - Additional ash in non-inventoried wooded ROW's
  - Goal is to remove 350-375 per year moving forward
- Injections of Mectinite are on a 3-year rotating basis
  - NE portion of the City injected in 2025
    - 771 Injected in 2025
    - Each year the numbers reduce as removals are done
  - 782 Trees not being injected remain. Focused removals on these trees
  - Each year, less trees injected as we thin the population which in turn will go to more removals and replacements
- NOTE: If residents want to keep the ash in the boulevard/terrace – they may pay to have them injected. Resident must contact the City Forester.
- Tree Planting (includes Engineering plantings on reconstructed streets)
  - 970 Planted 2025
  - 540 Planted 2024
  - 415 Grant funded plantings
- Pruning
  - Focus on small tree structure and train pruning
    - Focus on the future urban forest
  - Block pruning has not been completed in several years due to EAB and staffing
  - Focus on stumps in 2025 to get up to date

## Grant Update

\$498,482.08 non-matching grant – ends September 30, 2027.

Work completed to date:

1. Tree Planting
  - a. 415 Trees planted in terraces/boulevards in 2025
  - b. Replacing trees lost due to EAB, storms and attrition
2. Private Ash Removal
  - a. 74 Private ash trees removed
  - b. Residents extremely happy to receive assistance
  - c. Very difficult to get new applicants
    - i. \$64,800 left for private removal
3. School Tree Planting
  - a. No plantings/programs in 2025 due to redistricting
  - b. Plan to run programs and plantings at multiple schools in spring 2026
    - i. Working together with school staff

## Street Construction Practices Update

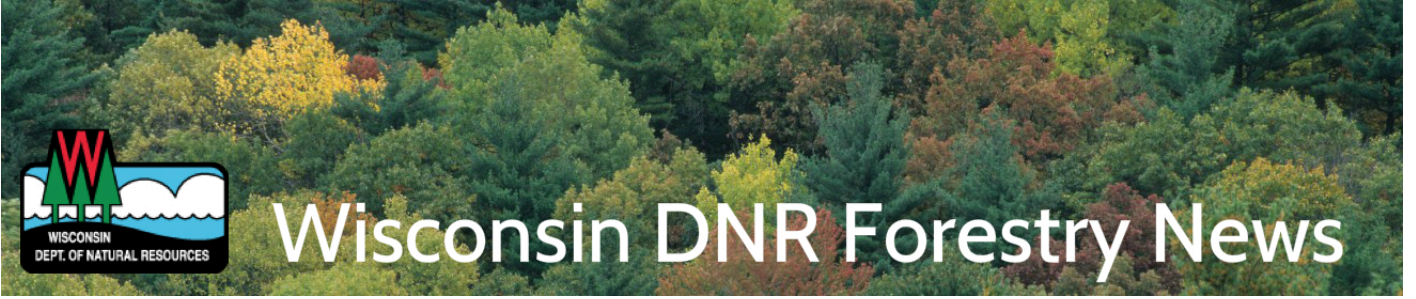
Contacted Ian Brown, City Forester Madison, WI and Jim Wolfe, Madison City Engineer

- Mr. Brown worked as a city forester at Milwaukee before moving to Madison and possesses extensive experience in tree preservation practices that both cities now enact
- Mr. Wolfe has extensive engineering background and has worked aggressively to understand trees and the challenges with street construction

Working Notes:

1. The tree preservation changes in Madison are fairly recent
  - a. The process has taken several years to get to where they are today (6-7 years)
2. Outline of how Madison changed tree policy
  - a. Started with extensive public request for and support to retain mature trees
  - b. City policy changed to make tree preservation a priority
    - i. Specifically define Forestry Department as only entity allowed to perform work on city trees

- c. Urban Forestry Special Charge enacted to sustain required personnel increase and program (Madison 2025 rate of \$7.56 per residential household)
  - d. Change engineering specifications to preserve trees
  - e. Increase forestry personnel to address increased monitoring, assessment and field work
  - f. Training of Engineering staff and contractors regarding tree survival requirements (multiple years)
3. Currently, Parks and Wausau Engineering are conversing together and with Madison to understand the process and how to apply here



# Program Spotlight: DNR’s Inflation Reduction Act Funded Projects Taking Root

Posted on October 21, 2025

By Jay Dampier, DNR IRA Grant Coordinator,  
Jason.Dampier@wisconsin.gov or 920-765-1935

On a crisp spring morning in 2025, shovels break ground along a city street in Wisconsin. In another community, trees are being inventoried and assessed for risk. Elsewhere, a dangerous dead ash tree is being removed with a crane to make a neighborhood safer. It’s all part of a bold, three-year initiative made possible through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and administered by the DNR’s Urban and Community Forestry Program. One year in, the thirteen grant-funded projects totaling \$4 million are already taking root. Grantees include municipalities, tribes, nonprofits and one county. Grant awards range from under \$100,000 to nearly \$500,000 and are helping communities grow healthier, greener and more resilient. Together, these efforts are transforming neighborhoods and creating a legacy of shade, clean air and beautification across Wisconsin.

So far, accomplishments include:

Search...

## Categories

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- Forest Health News
- Forest Products News
- Northern State Forests
- Private Forestry News
- Reforestation News
- Uncategorized
- Urban Forestry News
- Wildland Fire News

## Tags

- #NASF100 Awards
- Best Management Practices

- 5,723 trees inventoried (including trees, stumps and potential planting sites)
- 760 trees maintained (including trees that have been pruned, removed or stump ground to prepare a new planting site)
- 652 trees planted (planted directly by grantees or through a tree giveaway)
- 112 people receiving arboriculture and urban forestry workforce development



A tree planted with IRA funds is poised to provide shade over the parking lot at Maanape Hocira – Ho-Chunk Veterans Housing Complex.

Going beyond the numbers, communities are being transformed. For example, the City of Colby is already seeing the positive impact of their IRA-funded community tree planting. Residents have responded they are “very happy” with how the newly planted trees are improving the community’s esthetics along streets and on private properties. One hundred trees have already been planted with another 100 scheduled next spring.

Homeowners in Marathon County and the City of Wausau are also seeing the positive impacts of their local IRA-funded initiatives. Many communities like Wausau do not typically have a program to help mitigate risk trees on private property. IRA funds are being used to remove dangerous trees from private properties within affected communities. One thankful resident who reached out to the project lead commented, “We want to thank you and your staff for securing the grant for this

## Care for your woods

## Central WI Forest Health

Certification  
Data and analysis

## Did you know?

## Disease Events

Events; Wood utilization

## Financial help

Fire management  
Fire season  
Firewood

Forest benefits

## Foresters

Forest products  
Health benefits

## Insect

## Invasive plant

Inventory

Logs and lumber

Managed Forest  
Law

## Northern WI

## Forest Health



Tree removal by county workers. / Photo courtesy of Marathon County

project, as we wouldn't have been able to do the work being on a fixed income. We are so thankful!"

Other IRA-funded projects are providing urban forestry and arboriculture workforce development. In Madison, the nonprofit Operation Fresh Start has been using IRA funds

to train young adults, providing certifications such as chainsaw safety, while providing important work experiences. One program participant remarked, "The IRA fund has given me professional opportunities to spread my wings... It's given me more of a professional outlook to explore different careers in natural resource management." Another program participant commented, "Since I've been in [the program], I feel like I've really grown as a person. I am meeting new people and participating in different activities and even going to therapy. It has helped me a lot. I've learned so much from this experience. I really enjoy the smoothness and satisfaction of using the chainsaw and cutting down trees. It's honestly very rewarding, and I just love working with trees."

In Milwaukee, another nonprofit is taking a different community-based approach. Milwaukee Water Commons' IRA-funded initiatives are working to build local community capacity, which includes developing a community tree board. One community member said that their participation on the tree board has, "... been an opportunity to connect with

## Partners

## Pest Pesticide

### Pests

Preparing for wildfires

### Preventing wildfires

Publications

Regulations

Research

Silviculture

## South

## Central WI

## Forest

## Health

## Southern WI

## Forest Health

## Statewide

## Forest

## Health

## Taking

## action

Technical

assistance

## Training

Tree seedling sales

## Urban

## wood

## Woodland

## owners

Wood utilization

neighbors, see the positive work happening across the city and engage more deeply in community outreach to support green infrastructure.” Another tree board member has similar sentiment, “As a member of the Tree Board, I’ve been connecting with residents to share the benefits of trees and helping coordinate next steps for community-led urban tree reforestation on Milwaukee’s north side of town.” Next steps in this project will include tree planting within the neighborhood. Another enthusiastic community partner shared, “With this project, we’re bringing beautification and so many of the benefits of trees for a healthier, more beautiful neighborhood for everyone.”

There is still much work to do as the IRA-funded projects hit their first-year milestone of this three-year initiative.

2024-2027  
Inflation  
Reduction  
Act (IRA)  
Urban  
Forestry  
Grant  
Recipients



A newly planted tree brings beautification and other benefits to a residential area in Stevens Point.

- Marathon County Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department: \$498,482.08, City of Wausau Tree Planting and Private Ash Mitigation Project
- Ho Chunk Nation: \$497,630, Ho Chunk Urban Forest Regeneration Program
- Milwaukee Water Commons: \$494,372, Branch Out Milwaukee: Metcalfe Park
- City of Eau Claire: \$486,000, Greening Urban Spaces

## Archives

- October 2025
- September 2025
- August 2025
- July 2025
- June 2025
- May 2025
- April 2025
- March 2025
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- November 2022
- October 2022
- September 2022
- August 2022

- City of Racine: \$453,450, Ash Removal/Replacement and Pruning in Parks and Bilingual Outreach in Neighborhoods
- Urban Tree Alliance: \$450,062, Neighborhood Forest Project
- Operation Fresh Start: \$388,834, Urban Forestry Empowerment Initiative
- Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians: \$188,722.23, Bad River Greenspace Improvement Project
- City of Rhinelander: \$182,000, Rhinelander Urban Forest Recovery and Revitalization
- City of Sheboygan: \$174,616.42, Reforestation and Retention of Trees in the City of Sheboygan to Improve Air Quality
- City of Stevens Point: \$105,500, Shading and Feeding Stevens Point
- City of Colby: \$47,900, To Make the City of Colby Green
- City of Schofield: \$32,431.08, Tree Canopy Addition at the Community Connector Trail

July 2022  
 June 2022  
 May 2022  
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 March 2019

Additional information for each project can be found at [Urban Forestry Inflation Reduction Act Grants Webpage.](#)

(Visited 47 times, 1 visits today)

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[Urban Forestry Projects](#)   [Urban wood](#)

← [Urban Wildlife Damage](#)

[Community Tree Care And](#)



## Parks, Recreation, Forestry

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**DATE:** December 1, 2025  
**TO:** Parks and Recreation Committee  
**SUBJECT:** Educational Items: A. Location of Speed Limit Signs on River Edge Trail, B. Location of No Swimming Signs, C. Mowing Overview, D. Progress on Park Commission & City/County Committee Structures, E. Project Update (Oak Island, River Edge Trail/Riverlife, Riverside, Sylvan Hill, Tenth St, Urban Forestry, Season Tasks)

### PURPOSE

This agenda items covers a number of informational updates regarding programs and projects within the city parks.

### BACKGROUND

A. Location of speed limit signs on River Edge Trail - At a previous meeting of the committee, staff was directed to install 15 mph speed limit signs on the River Edge Trail. 15 signs have been installed on the trail on the east side of the river. Additional signage will be installed on the west side of the river in the spring and as trail sections are developed.

B. Location of No Swimming Signs – At a previous meeting of the Committee, staff was directed to install no swimming signs at various established water access locations. Signs have been installed at all boat landings, the ADA kayak launch at Riverlife and along the Riverlife Wharf.

C. Mowing Update – At a previous meeting, members of the committee asked staff to provide an update on when we mow areas that are mowed once a year to prevent woody vegetation from becoming established. These areas include natural areas, channel banks, drainage areas, hard to reach areas that are not regularly in need of mowing, ditches and steep banks. Timing of the mowing is based on the availability of our one larger tractor with wing mower and the availability of staff to operate the equipment. Mowing of these areas begins in late summer/early fall, when the majority of the growing season is complete. This is similar to highway ditch mowing. The areas, such as Scholfield Park, have not been managed for native plants and are self-populated. Areas established for native plants are managed based on the plan and intent of the plantings. Our current annual mowing plan (subject to change based on weather, activities, staffing, etc) is as follows:

Mountain Bay Trail, Paff Woods, Sylvan Hill, Memorial upper and lower sections, Scholfield, Riverside, River Edge Trail from Oak to Whitewater, County Forest Units.

D. Progress on Park Commission and City/County Committee Structures – In 1974, when the City turned over the responsibilities of the City parks to the County, the City and County dissolved their individual committees and jointly formed the Park Commission. Today the Park Commission is made up of 3 City Council members, 3 County Board Supervisors and 1 member

at large. In 2011, the City brought back their Parks Committee and, as time evolved, the practice has been to take city park items to the city committee and county park items to the Park Commission. This structure and the authority of the committee and the roles of the City Council members on the Park Commission were questioned last year as the city and county finalized their intergovernmental agreement. At that time, the City chose to keep the Parks and Recreation Committee as a standing committee. Staff has proposed to the County Rules and Review committee an updated structure based on the needs of the department. The proposal is to add the parks component to the existing County Forestry and Recreation Committee, where staff will take county park items. The Park Commission will remain a joint policymaking committee that will oversee policy, rules, regulations and structure of the department. The Park Commission will meet quarterly or as needed and will be responsible for items such as budget approval, policy development and review, ordinance updates, etc. The County Rules and Review committee will be making a recommendation to the new County Board that will be seated in April 2026.

#### E. Park Updates:

- Oak Island: Working on the skate park ramp renovation
- River Edge Trail/RiverLife: Installation of 15 mph signs ongoing, No swimming signs installed, Snow Maintenance signs ongoing.
- Riverside: Repairs to main shelter roof leaks completed
- Sylvan: water/pumps were put back together and some snow was made 11/8-11/10. Snow making will resume over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.
- Tenth St: Recall work on teeter totter playground equipment completed
- Urban Forestry
  - Fall ash/stump removal completed by the contractor
  - Fall planting complete: 235 by contractor, 128 by Park
- Seasonal tasks
  - Holiday trees installed the week of 11/24
  - Docks, kayak launches and piers have been removed
  - All water systems have been winterized
  - Tennis and Pickleball nets have been removed.
  - Started to remove signage from around parks to refinish over the winter months. If people see missing signage, that would be the reason.
  - Final round of playground inspections to be completed soon
  - Prep throughout the city for snow maintenance work

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

None

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

No action is recommended.

15 MPH Speed Limit Sign Locations

