

City of River Falls, Wisconsin

Community Opportunities Profile



Housing Opportunities in the River Falls Opportunity Zone



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Location Information and Community Features

Proximity to Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area

River Falls, Wisconsin is conveniently located along State Highways 35, 65 and 29, just minutes from I-94, less than 30 minutes from downtown St. Paul, and 40 minutes to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

St. Croix County recently improved Radio Rd from the Interchange to CTH MM and renamed it Mann Lane, providing additional access to land southwest of the new interchange.

Population

The 2019 population of River Falls is estimated to be 15,835 residents. This is an increase of 835 people and a 5.5% increase since the 2010 census. These numbers do not include the full student population of the University of Wisconsin – River Falls.

River Falls is located in St. Croix and Pierce counties, both of which are recognized among the State of Wisconsin's fastest growing counties. Additionally, both St. Croix and Pierce counties are included in the 16-county definition of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan area. The population in the Twin Cities is estimated to be 3.6 million residents.

Colleges & Universities

River Falls is home to the [University of Wisconsin-River Falls](#) (UW-River Falls) and the [Chippewa Valley Technical College](#) (CVTC).

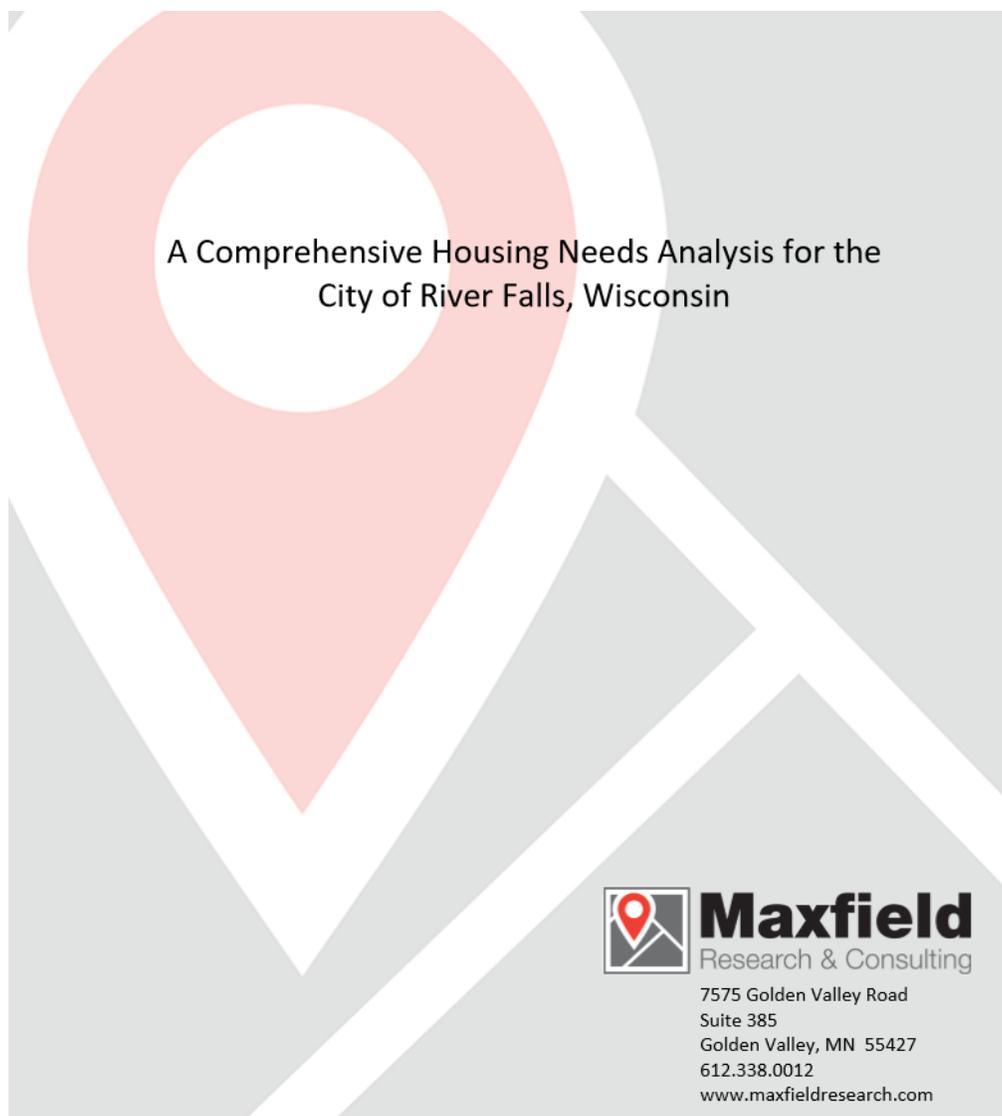
UW-River Falls is a NCAA Division III institution that has been a staple of the River Falls community since 1874. The main campus is situated on 226 acres in the heart of River Falls and includes 26 buildings and two lab farms. Enrollment is approximately 6,110 students.

CVTC is part of the Wisconsin Technical College System and serves an 11-county region of west central Wisconsin. CVTC has an enrollment of 1,128 students and completed a \$1.7 million expansion project to the campus in 2018. In addition to the River Falls campus, CVTC has locations in Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, Menomonie, and Neillsville.

Comprehensive Housing Needs Analysis

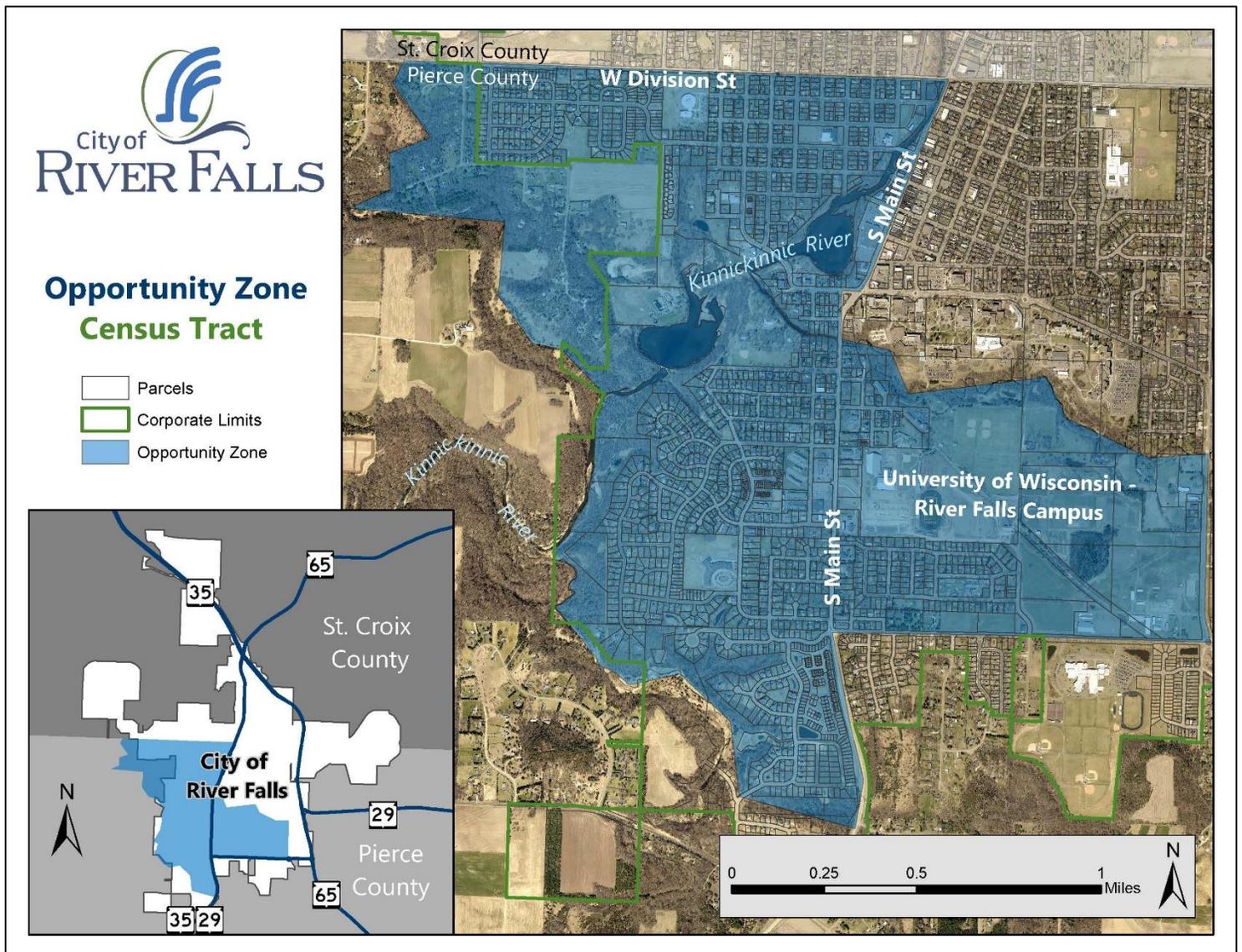
In 2017, the City hired Maxfield Research and Consulting to complete a [comprehensive housing needs analysis](#). The data that Maxfield covered includes demographics, employment, housing characteristics, affordability, and for sale, rental, senior, and special needs markets. The study projects out to 2030 with housing needs detailed by product type. According to the study, there is demand for 292 for-sale multifamily units, 542 for-sale single-family units, and 274 market rate rental units by 2030 in River Falls.

As of February 2020, 268 for-sale multi-family units, 434 for-sale single-family units, and 176 market rate rental units are still needed in River Falls.



River Falls Opportunity Zone

The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act created Opportunity Zones as a new federal tax incentive program to spur private investment in distressed communities throughout the United States. A portion of the City of River Falls in Pierce County was one of 120 Opportunity Zone recommendations for Wisconsin. Below is the map for the City's designated Opportunity Zone Census Tract. The following sites are located within the City's Opportunity Zone.



Potential Site for Redevelopment

Site A– 700 S Main St.

Site A consists of 2.1 acres on South Main Street and is zoned R3 – Multiple Family High Density. This property is located less than a mile from downtown River Falls and the University of Wisconsin – River Falls campus. Site A could be larger depending on the interest of the owner from 706 Sycamore St. Site A is included in the [City's Campus Corridor Plan](#) and is listed as a future site for student housing.

700 S Main Street was recently purchased by local businesspersons, Jerry Morrow and Doug Cudd. 706 Sycamore Street would require purchase from Douglas Ahmann.



Potential Site for Redevelopment

Site B– Cascade Ct & S Main St.

Site B consists of 1.5 acres off S Main Street and is zoned R1 – Single Family Low Density. This site is located half a mile from the newly renovated Glen Park, is adjacent to the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River and located two blocks from the UW-River Falls campus. Site B is included in the [City's Campus Corridor Plan](#) and is listed as a future site for multi-family housing.

Currently this site has been optioned. The site would require purchase from James and Teri Renslow.



Potential Site for Redevelopment

Site C – 902 Sycamore St.

Site C is approximately 0.9 acres and is adjacent to the University of Wisconsin – River Falls Falcon Center and Sports and Recreation Center. There is a future connection planned to this site from S Main Street. Site C is included in the [City's Campus Corridor Plan](#) and is listed as a future site for an office building.

This site is not currently listed for sale but likely available and would require purchase from Darlene A. Myers Revocable Trust.



Potential Site for Redevelopment

Site D – S Main St.

Site D is approximately 0.4 acres on S Main Street, located approximately three blocks from the newly renovated Glen Park, half a mile from downtown River Falls, and approximately three blocks from the UW-RF campus. Site D is zoned R3 – Multi-Family High Density and is identified as the future site of an office building in the [City's Campus Corridor Plan](#).

This lot combination would require negotiation with two owners for its purchase and are not currently listed for sale but likely available. These sites would require purchase from Gregory and Denise Snow and Craig Pechacek.

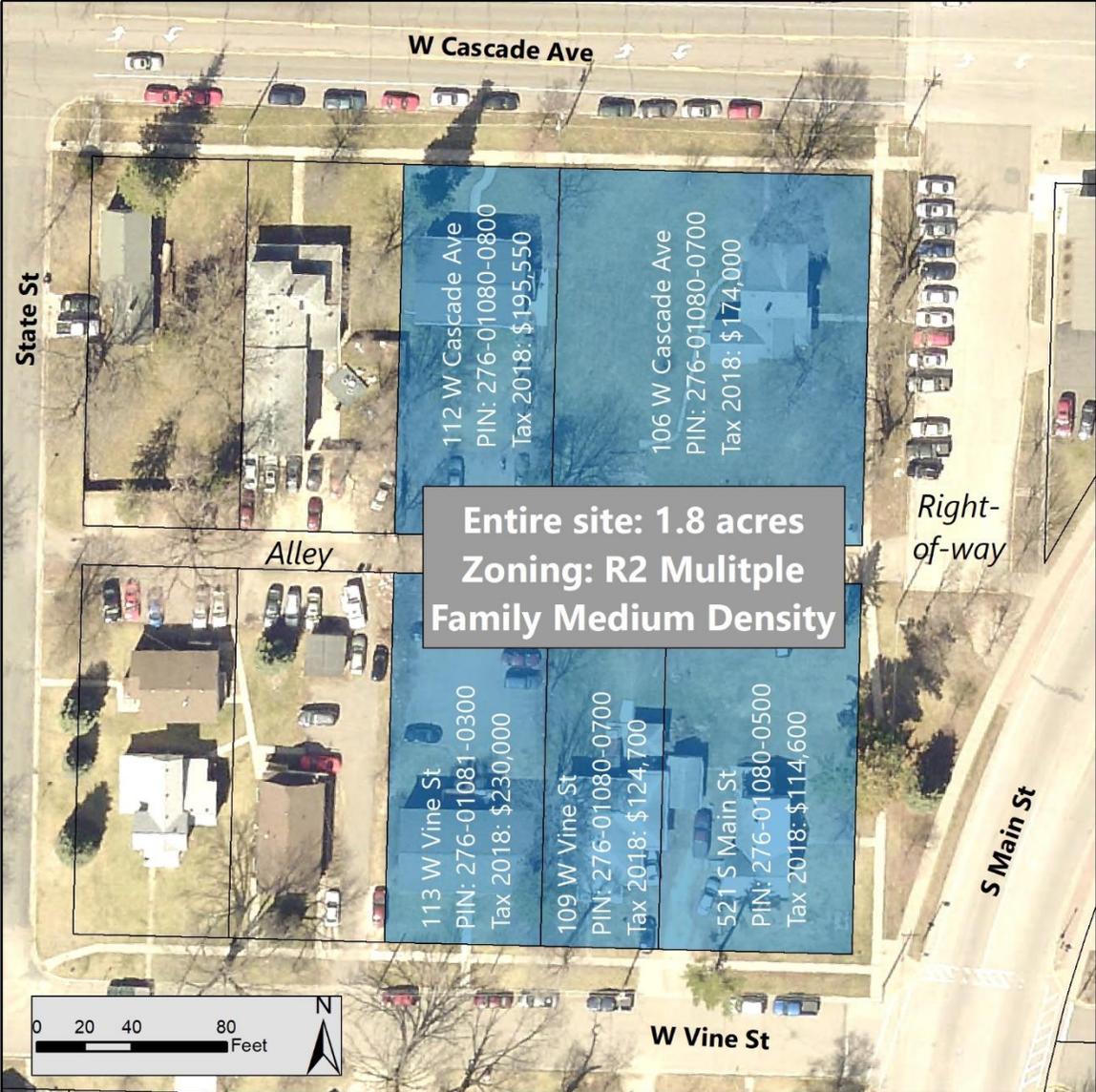


Potential Site for Redevelopment

Site E – W Cascade Ave & S. Main St.

Site E is approximately 1.8 acres on the corner of W Cascade Ave. and S. Main St. This site is located across the street from UW-River Falls and approximately half a mile from downtown River Falls. Site E is zoned R2 – Multi-Family Medium Density. The [City's Campus Corridor Plan](#) has this site identified as a future location for mixed use development and multi-family housing.

The site is not currently listed for sale, but likely available. This site would require purchase from Steve Fox Rolling Hills Development Inc.



Potential Site for Redevelopment

Site F – W Division St. & Clark St.

Site F consists of four parcels and is approximately 0.9 acres on the corner of W Division Street and Clark Street. This site is located one block from Main Street and one block from the Kinnickinnic River and paved trails. Site F is currently zoned B1 – General Commercial. This lot combination would require negotiation with two owners for its purchase and are not currently listed for sale but likely available. These sites would require purchase from Steve Trebus and Ronald Jensen.



Potential Site for Redevelopment

Sites G – 100 Block of Vine St.

Site G consists of six parcels and is approximately 1.9 acres on the 100 block of Vine Street. This site is across the street from Site E and is located one block from UW-River Falls and is adjacent to the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River. Site G is zoned R2 – Multi-Family Medium Density and has been identified in the [Campus Corridor Plan](#) as a future location for Multi-Family housing.

This lot combination would require negotiation with six owners for its purchase and are not currently listed for sale but likely available.



River Falls Municipal Utilities

Utility services are provided by [River Falls Municipal Utilities](#) (RFMU). Our locally-owned utility enables the City to provide a hands-on approach to providing reliable and cost-effective energy options. RFMU’s energy service representative works with businesses in the community to provide individualized assistance and a menu of energy options for a variety of business and economic development needs.

	<p>“River Falls does the best job when it comes to giving us incentives and giving us programs that we can use to better our business. I just didn’t get that anywhere else I was.”</p> <p><i>-Curt McCall, Minnesota Rubber & Plastics</i></p>
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River Falls Municipal Utilities prides itself on [providing businesses with energy efficient options](#). The [New Construction Economic Development Program](#) works with businesses to deliver high performance buildings that provide improved energy efficiency, peak load reduction, improved systems performance, and greater comfort.

Providing green energy is another priority for RFMU. Utility customers have opportunities to purchase [blocks of green energy](#) from the Utility. Currently, 12 percent of customers participate in the program and RFMU ranks third nationally and first in Wisconsin in green energy sales as a percentage of total retail electricity sales. RFMU staff is eager to collaborate with businesses in River Falls to provide energy tailored to their needs.

The City of River Falls is participating in community solar pilot program through WPPI Energy. Businesses can benefit by purchasing a share of the total energy production and receive a credit on their monthly electric bills. For frequently asked questions (FAQs) and the Community Solar Interest Form visit [RFMU Community Solar](#).

Another benefit of a locally-owned utility is the reliability of its services. RFMU conducts its own testing of the electric and water supply to ensure uninterrupted services. Power to the northern corporate parks is fed by the City’s newest substation and additional investments of \$350,000 will ensure continued reliability of the power supply in River Falls. The City is committed to providing the uninterrupted power supply that is critical to your operations.

