

# Historic Preservation Plan

## City of River Falls



# *Historic Preservation Plan*

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CITY OF RIVER FALLS

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*RESOLUTION No. 4146*

*A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE  
CITY OF RIVER FALLS  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN*

*WHEREAS*, pursuant to Chapter 17.76 of the City of River Falls Municipal Code “it is declared a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, preparation, and use of improvements or sites of special character or special architectural, archeological, or historic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety, and welfare of the people;” and

*WHEREAS*, the City Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission have undertaken the necessary planning process to prepare the City of River Falls Historic Preservation Plan; and

*WHEREAS*, the City and the Historic Preservation Commission is committed to becoming a designated Certified Local Government by Wisconsin’s State Historic Preservation Office and in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and amended in 1980; and

*WHEREAS*, adoption of the City of River Falls Historic Preservation Plan will help meet the criteria for a Certified Local Government status; and

*WHEREAS*, on March 12, 2003 the Historic Preservation Commission held a public hearing for the Historic Preservation Plan; and

*WHEREAS*, through public meetings and public review, information was provided, analyzed, and considered for inclusion in the plan; and

*WHEREAS*, the plan provides a mission statement and vision, existing character and development, historic resources, design guidelines, and identifies policies and procedures for implementation and to make amendments.

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED* that the Mayor and Council of the City of River Falls, having considered the input provided by the Historic Preservation Commission, City staff, and comments heard at a public meeting, hereby adopt the *City of River Falls Historic Preservation Plan*.

*PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 8<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF APRIL 2003.*



# *INTRODUCTION*





## I INTRODUCTION

Historic preservation depends on the involvement and commitment of the local citizens, government and preservationists. The City of River Falls realizes that unless strong and active preservation programs are established, local historic and prehistoric cultural resources will be lost, either through neglect, poor planning, inappropriate remodeling, or demolition. *The City of River Falls Historic Preservation Plan* serves as the community statement of direction for future conservation and preservation of the City’s archaeological, cultural, and historic resources.

### *Scope and Purpose*

This comprehensive, long-term Historic Preservation Plan concerns the development, conservation, and preservation of historic resources in River Falls. It provides guidance for development proposals, capital improvements, and implementing policies to appropriately manage the City’s heritage resources and integrating them into urban design and development strategies. This plan will:

- Outline a vision, through the mission statement and themes that reflect the aspirations of the community;
- Establish a basis for judging whether development proposals and public projects are consistent with the plan;
- Provide information that will enhance the character of the community, preserve economic and critical historical resources, and minimize loss either through neglect, poor planning, inappropriate remodeling, or demolition;
- Provide the basis for establishing and setting priorities and for implementing programs and regulations;
- Provide the basis for education and nurturing a vital community and

reaching out to all segments of the population; and

- Provide a plan that meets the requirements of the Wisconsin State Statutes for Comprehensive Plan for historical and cultural resources.

This plan represents the goals and desires of the community and should be recognized as the community’s public statement about the future.

To ensure that community actions are consistent, regular ongoing use of the plan is essential. Because this plan is both general and long-term, there will be circumstances and instances when detailed studies are necessary to implement it.

### *Plan Boundaries*

The boundary of the River Falls Historic Preservation Plan is the municipal boundary of the City of River Falls. Figure 1 depicts the regional location and Figure 2 depicts the Future Land Use Area (Sewer Service Area Boundary) and the City of River Falls boundary. Information may be gathered within the Future Land Use Area and provided for development proposals and capital improvement projects.



Figure 1: Downtown River Falls is just 30 miles east of St Paul, MN.

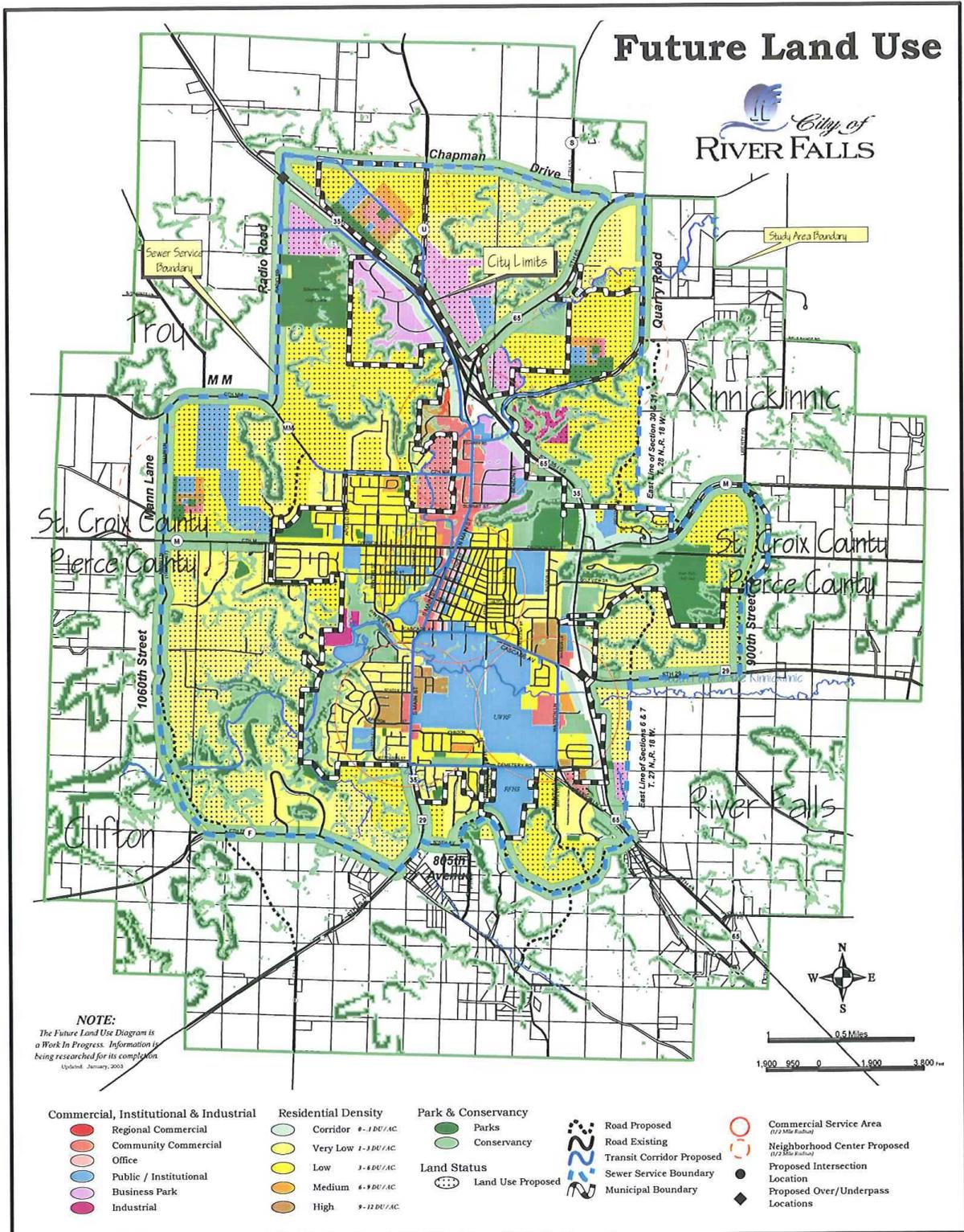




Photo 1: South Hall located on the University of Wisconsin River Falls campus was constructed in 1898 and listed on the National Register of Historic places in 1976.

### *Planning Process*

The planning process included development of the Historic Preservation Plan and an implementation program. This plan also outlines the need for more detailed planning for historic properties, design guidelines, streets, land use designations, and other special plans.

**Annual Report.** An annual report will provide an overview of the status of this Historic Preservation Plan and its implementation programs. The annual report shall be prepared jointly by the City of River Falls staff and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and submitted to City Council. The report shall include a summary of all completed projects and amendments adopted during the proceeding years, an outline of upcoming projects and preservation issues to be addressed in the coming years, along with a work program and budgets.

**Amendments.** This plan is intended to be a living plan and, as such, will be subject to more site-specific and comprehensive amendments over time. Amendments also may be needed to conform to state and federal laws passed since adoption, and to eliminate and modify policies that may have become obsolete or unrealistic because of changed conditions (such as completion of a task or project, development on a site, or

adoption of an ordinance). This plan may also incorporate by reference other detailed studies and plans that may be prepared. To be kept current this plan should be flexible enough to respond to changing conditions and can be amended as needed to be kept current. Amendments to this plan should be limited to once a year, although each amendment may include more than one change.

**Five-Year Review.** The City will undertake a comprehensive review of this plan every five years after adoption. The five-year review will include:

- Comprehensive evaluation of the plan policies;
- Analysis of the effectiveness of the implementation programs and the strategies initiated to carry out the plan; and
- Systematic assessment of the historic resource, design guidelines and standards and resource management programs.

The focus of the five-year review will be to determine how well this plan has performed and whether policies related to conservation and preservation have been effective. A report summarizing staff's findings will be presented to the HPC and then circulated for public comment. The HPC at a regularly scheduled public hearing will hear public review and comment on the five-year review. The HPC will study the five-year review and make recommendations to the City Council.

**Background Studies.** A comprehensive analysis of existing conditions and major planning options was performed prior to the preparation of this plan. Major documents that have been reviewed are included in Appendix A.



**Public Participation.** Throughout the preparation of this plan, there has been an ongoing commitment to active public outreach and participation. The plan policies *are being* shaped by comments made in public meetings and adopted plans. The initial draft of the plan was developed by the HPC by identifying key issues from past public meetings and integrating those ideas with commission goals.



Photo 2: City of River Falls Central Business District in the 1886.

### *Mission Statement*

The mission of the City of River Falls Historic Preservation Commission is to promote and protect the historic resources within the City of River Falls and to educate the community about its cultural heritage.

### *Vision*

The community will recognize that the preservation of historic sites and structures offers residents and visitors a special sense of place and a feeling of continuity and association with the past. As the community plans for growth, preserving historic places provides aesthetic, educational and economic benefits that will continue to define and improve our quality of life.

### *Plan Themes*

This plan reflects themes that track with the results of public participation and adopted plans and lays the foundation for guiding and implementing policies. Guiding policies

describe the ways or methods that the themes can be achieved. These themes are consistent with existing plans such as: Sewer Service Area Plan and Downtown Plan. The themes are followed by discussion in *italics*. For the purpose of this section, the themes are equally weighted. However, the themes may be prioritized and amended, either with specific cases or as a matter of general policy.

**1. Quality of Life.** Enhance the quality of life of the community and ensure provision of community services for residents.

*This plan seeks to promote the interests of the community-at-large over private interests. Tools are provided for the public to be meaningfully involved in ongoing planning and decision-making.*

**2. Character.** Maintain and respect the City of River Falls’ unique personality, sense of place and character.

*Residents have unequivocally stated that new growth should not erode the qualities that contributed to the community’s unique characteristics. This plan provides for conservation and preservation of the City’s historic resources.*

**3. Urban Form.** Promote a compact urban form that encourages sensitive/compatible infill development.

*The physical layout of older and established neighborhoods was viewed as critical elements in planning for future growth and sustainable development. Implementing policies should be established to provide a means to manage and maintain critical elements and historic resources within these neighborhoods for future generations.*



Photo 3: Residence of Oliver S. Powell, 204 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street built 1869.

#### **4. Community-Oriented Development.**

Orient new development to the community; foster public life, vitality and community spirit.

*New development shall be guided by established neighborhoods, to form urban contexts for pedestrians, and to promote active street and outdoor life. Plans shall call for detailed urban design guidelines that shall preserve existing neighborhoods and prevent neighborhoods from being isolated from each other and maintain a continuum of urban fabric, particularly regarding public access, vehicular/pedestrian circulation and historic structures. Parks, conservation areas, open space, and neighborhood services shall be located within neighborhoods.*

**5. Regional Perspective.** Maintain a regional growth management and historic preservation perspective, and work with other private and governmental entities toward that goal.

*The future of the City and the surrounding areas are intertwined. This plan encourages the City and other local Towns and Counties as well as state and federal agencies to work together on policies that are mutually supportive and to maintain consistent standards in the areas surrounding the City.*

**6. Review Process.** Streamline the planning and development review process.

*Greater certainty in the planning process will benefit residents and project proponents and permit long-range capital improvement planning. This plan calls for preparation of thresholds and procedures for detailed analyses. Neighborhood participation is essential at all planning levels, and the planning process outlined in this plan calls for the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) database to be used in conducting project level analysis and design.*

**7. Implementation.** Ensure consistency between this plan and implementing ordinances (including zoning) and a Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

*To help implement this plan detailed studies, plans, and ordinances will need to be prepared, reviewed and approved. With this plan, the community is committing itself to consistency between existing plans, implementation programs, and regulations including zoning, subdivision regulations, and the CIP.*



Photo 4: Residence of Andrew W. Lund, 127 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street built 1908.



*"We make our buildings and  
our buildings make us"  
-Winston Churchill*



//  
*CHARACTER &  
DEVELOPMENT*



## II CHARACTER AND DEVELOPMENT

The City of River Falls is a picturesque community located in southern St. Croix and northern Pierce counties in west-central Wisconsin. There are many features to be protected, enhanced, and enjoyed. Surrounding the City are many scenic vistas of bluffs, coulees, and valleys, and the Kinnickinnic River (a Class 1 Trout Stream). There are commercial, residential and institutional buildings constructed before 1940 that have historic significance and an architectural style in need of restoration and preservation.

Four Towns border the City, Troy to the north, Kinnickinnic to the east, River Falls to the south, and Clifton to the west. The City and adjacent towns are undergoing rapid growth and development. The population trends of River Falls and the surrounding towns and counties have taken a consistent upward turn. Over fifty percent of the City's residents commute to the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. The growth of the area's population and employment can be attributed to several factors: proximity to the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area, an aggressive economic development program, a high quality of life, the location of a university and a technical college, proximity to transportation infrastructure, natural and historic resources.

This chapter provides a context for the existing historic character and development conditions of the City of River Falls.

### *Evolution of the Land Use Pattern*

Prior to the early settlement of River Falls and the surrounding region, Chippewa and Sioux Native Americans occupied the area. In 1837, the Chippewa ceded to the United States all of the land east of the Mississippi

River extending north to the source of the Mississippi River. Despite the opening of the territory, settlement was rather slow until the mid-nineteenth century. St. Croix County was created in 1840, and in 1853, the State of Wisconsin divided it into three separate counties, each with its own seat. The southern section became Pierce County, the northern third was named Polk County, and the mid part remained St. Croix County. The plat of River Falls straddles the boundary between St. Croix County and Pierce County. The city is situated along the Kinnickinnic River, which flows west into Lake St. Croix. The Kinnickinnic River and its branch, the South Fork, played a significant role in the settlement and growth of the community.

At the time of initial settlement, approximately three-fourths of the Town of Greenwood (later River Falls Town) in which River Falls is located was covered by prairie with black sandy loam soil. The remaining land was covered with timber. Some 2000 acres of land were under cultivation by 1856, and the prospects for agriculture were considered to be "first-rate." To the north, the Town of Troy was organized in 1851 and was first called Malone by the Perrine brothers who were settlers from New York.



Figure 3: Bird's-eye view of River Falls, Wisconsin looking northeast, 1880.



Arriving in the fall of 1848, Joel Foster was the first white settler in what would soon be officially known as River Falls. Duncan McGregor and his wife, and Nathaniel and Oliver Powell followed him. The Powell brothers built a sawmill in 1852, constructed the first frame dwelling, which later became a store, and in 1854, laid out a 60-acre plat on the east side of the river for the Village of Kinnickinnic.

Early development was focused along the river. The Powell's built their sawmill on the east bank, south of where the first flourmill would be constructed in 1854. The population increased from 312 in 1860 to 1,191 in 1870, and by the late 1870's four more flourmills had been constructed, which collectively produced 150,000 barrels of flour annually.

Although the original plat of River Falls is tilted so that Main Street and other streets are oriented to the Kinnickinnic River, the plat conforms to a common midwestern form consisting of square blocks set on a grid of streets intersecting at right angles. Later plats followed survey lines and compass points thereby creating the familiar rectilinear grid.



Photo 5: State Normal School Building 1874.

Contributing to the growth and development of the village was the construction of the fourth State Normal School built in 1874, and the arrival of the Hudson and River

Falls Railroad, which opened in 1878. The railroad significantly impacted development and growth in the River Falls area.



Photo 6: The railroad started service in River Falls in October 1878.

By the late 1870s, River Falls had emerged as a local, if not regional, trade center. In spite of these developments, the City's early period of rapid growth ended, and the population expanded only 26% from 1870 to 1880 (1,191 to 1,499). Over the next decade, however, the number of residents increased by 975 (65%).

River Falls was incorporated in April of 1885 as a City by action of the State Legislature. Its charter outlined the City boundaries, governmental structure, election procedure, City officers and duties, and Common Council powers. In January 1922, on the basis of the Charter, the City of River Falls was declared a 4<sup>th</sup> Class City by the State of Wisconsin.



Photo 7: Southwest side of Main Street approximately 1872.

Over the past one hundred years the strongest growth has occurred after 1940. With a present population of approximately 13,000 in 2003, growth has been fairly compact in form.



## Architectural Styles

### Main Street Commercial Architecture

Between 1875 and 1878, six fires destroyed a major portion (approximately 30 buildings) of the central business district now known as Main Street, and forced owners to rebuild, often with limestone, brick, or a combination of both. In May of 1886, the City Council passed the Fire Limits Ordinance, which required that any new construction within the downtown be of fireproof brick or stone.

Like many other small midwestern towns, the early commercial buildings in the City of River Falls were constructed of wood that was produced by local sawmills. The one and two-story buildings consisted of sheathing with clapboards that dominated Main Street from the 1850's through the 1860's. The first two masonry (limestone) structures were not constructed until 1868. This was the Burhyte Brothers Dry Goods and the Sanderson Building located at 101 and 103 N. Main Street.



Photo 8: This represents an example of Vernacular commercial architecture. The building, at 109-111 N. Main Street, had been stuccoed over by 1962.

**Vernacular** commercial style architecture can be seen throughout the Main Street. Vernacular commercial architecture applies to simply designed one and two-story

commercial buildings of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Unaltered ground floors have large retail windows. The second story is characterized by simple window openings and are used for residential or business purposes. Doors to provide access to ground story shops or upper floors are simple and typically have a single window above. Decoration is usually sparse and may consist of a cornice with decorative treatments such as a brick corbelling, wood moldings, or metal friezes with finials or corbels at the end. A simple cornice or I-beam often divides the storefront and upper floors.



Photo 9: Vernacular commercial buildings with decorative brick, 100 block of S. Main Street.

Examples of simple vernacular brick buildings are the Davis Drug Building, built in 1878 at 104 S. Main Street, and the A. Drake Building erected in 1891 at 128 N. Main Street. Here, corbel brick cornices, paneled friezes, and unadorned lintels above the windows are the only decorations.

More elaborate decorative brickwork is displayed in the six late 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular commercial buildings in the south Main commercial district. These buildings constructed between 1872 and 1882 are one and two-story buildings with paneled friezes, corbelling at the cornices, and large storefronts with transoms. Subtle and Italianate influences include extravagant



exaggerated brick cornices, segmental arch windows, and paneled friezes.

The oldest commercial building in the City of River Falls, Burhyte Brothers Dry Goods located at 101 N. Main Street, was constructed in 1868. It displays on its south side an attractive, course limestone wall pierced by round arched windows with hood moldings. The façade has undergone several changes over the years.

**Italianate** commercial style architecture was common throughout Wisconsin between 1850 and 1880. This style of architecture is characterized on the shop front by broad, expanses of plate-glass windows, framed by columns with capitals and cornices. Upper-store windows are generally long and narrow and may be headed by round arches and projected keystones and richly profiled molding. The eave is crowned by a projecting cornice, most often made of metal with medallions or brackets. Building corners may have quoins or pilaster in brick or stone. A majority of the commercial architecture in the City of River Falls from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century reflected the Italianate style, but because of the alterations (particularly stucco applications) most stylistic buildings are completely obscured from these building facades.

The best example of Italianate commercial architecture is the three-story Gladstone Hotel built in 1886, located at 121-123 S. Main Street. It features corner pilasters, segmental arched windows with keystone, stone built cornices, and an ornate bracketed metal cornice. Other examples are the J.H. Lord Building, built in 1881 and located at 101 S. Main Street, and the Tremont Hotel, built in 1878 and located at 102 N. Main Street.

### *Residential Architecture*

The 1991 intensive survey of the City of River Falls identified approximately 500 residential buildings constructed before 1940. While many of the major architectural styles common during the mid 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were represented, nearly three-fourths (70 percent) of the properties can be classified as vernacular, and include the following ubiquitous forms: front gable, side gable, gable ell, two-story cube, one-story cube, and cross gable. Generally, the larger and more elaborate dwellings were built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, located east of the Main Street business district around 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Other fashionable houses were constructed on the west side of the Kinnickinnic River, although they are few in number and scattered on several streets.



Photo 10: Past representation of the Hotel Gladstone built in 1886 at 123 S. Main Street represents the Italianate style.



Photo 11: One of several brick houses built by G.T. Smith, 210 N. Fremont Street.



The survey indicated that there were only eleven residences in the City of River Falls built using brick, either as a veneer or in a solid brick wall. Four of these are located at the northeast corner of Fremont and Maple Streets. Among the other brick dwellings is one of the oldest known residences in the City, the Oliver Powell house, located at 204 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, built in 1869. Another is the Thomas Walker house located at 403 E. Division Street, a gabled ell eave building constructed in 1880.

The following is a brief summary of the variety of architectural style homes in the City of River Falls.



Photo 12: A Greek Revival style dwelling, 107 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

**Greek Revival** - The Greek Revival was the first national style to have a wide-ranging impact on architecture in the State of Wisconsin from 1830 to 1870. The style is symmetrical, formal, and orderly, and characterized by porticos and pilasters that reflect the three Grecian orders: Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. Gable roofs are low pitched, and cornices are emphasized with wide moldings. One of the approximately eleven Greek Revival style dwellings in the City of River Falls is the Luke Pomeroy House, built in 1873.

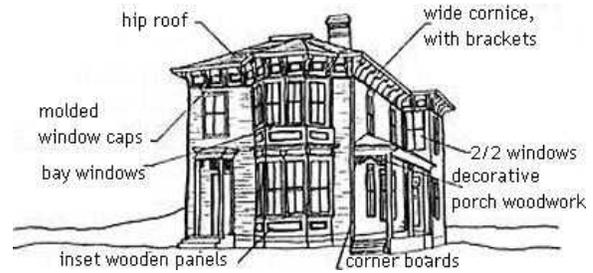


Figure 4: Illustration of Italianate Architecture.

**Italianate** – Usually cubic or rectangular in plan with boxy proportions, the Italianate style house has distinctive wide eaves supported by brackets, long and narrow windows with hoodmolds or pediments, and a lot pitched hipped roof often surmounted by a cupola. In Wisconsin, these picturesque residences were built in the late 1850's until around 1880. About eight examples of the Italianate style exist in the City of River Falls, and several of these have additions and alterations. Although missing its front porch and brackets, the Charles D. Parker House, built in 1870 and located at 315 E. Maple Street, exhibits the basic characteristics of Italianate architecture.



Figure 5: Illustration of Queen Anne Architecture.

**Queen Anne** - The Queen Anne style was introduced by British architects in the 1870's and brought to Wisconsin by the 1880's. In America, Queen Anne houses are executed primarily in balloon frame and characterized by an asymmetrical, irregular plan, a variety of surface textures, roofs, and



wall projections. Patterns of shingles, millwork, and carved or turned ornamentation enhance wall and roof surfaces. Other features included steep roofs, bay windows, round or polygonal turrets, and porches. In the City of River Falls, Queen Anne houses are the most common of the picturesque residences that can be clearly identified with a style. A representation of the Queen Anne style is the P.W. Ramer House, located at 104 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.



Photo 13: A Colonial Revival style dwelling, 106 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Colonial Revival** – Developed at the turn of the century and common throughout Wisconsin from about 1895 to 1940, the Colonial Revival style was promoted by architects and builders who were influenced by the revived interest in American traditions. They incorporated elements from Georgian and Federal styles to create a simple, symmetrical design featuring an accentuated front door usually centered in the façade and flanked by double hung sash windows with multi-pane glazing. Numerous examples of the Colonial Revival style are scattered throughout the City of River Falls. Constructed in 1931, the Gilbertson House located at 106 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street is a rather simple interpretation of the style.



Photo 14: A Craftsman style dwelling, 521 E. Maple Street.

**Craftsman** – The American Craftsman style was derived from the 19th century English Arts and Crafts movement, and became popular in America from about 1900 to 1930. Appearing like an oversized bungalow, Wisconsin Craftsman houses are usually two-and-one-half stories and built of stucco, brick, or stone, with contrasting bands of wood. They characteristically have broad gable or hipped roofs, usually with one or two large front dormers, decorative rafters, and prominent chimneys. About six Craftsman houses appear in the City of River Falls, with the style nicely represented by the Leonard Johnson House located at 521 E. Maple Street.



Photo 15: American Foursquare style dwelling, 215 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street.



**American Foursquare** – Popularized during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by mail-order catalogues and speculative builders, proponents of the American Foursquare style sought to simplify domestic architecture by creating a box-like building usually without overt stylistic references. Typically two stories high, the Foursquare has a hipped roof, widely overhanging eaves, central dormers, and a one-story porch spanning the full length of the façade. About twelve examples of American Foursquare dwellings are in the City of River Falls. Among these is the Sarah Tozer House at 215 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street.



Photo 16: A Bungalow style dwelling, 222 N. 7<sup>th</sup> the Nicholsen House.

**Bungalow** – The term “bungalow” is derived from the East Asian word “bangla” which, in Bengal, refers to a low house with porches surrounding it. Constructed between about 1910 and 1940, Bungalows are usually small, modest houses with simple horizontal lines, wide projecting gable roofs and at least one large porch. They were most often sheathed in wood siding, but sometimes had stucco or some other material as a veneer. In the City of River Falls there are approximately eighteen Bungalows. The Nicholsen House at 222 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, which has wood single siding, wide projecting gables with bracketed eaves, and an enclosed entry porch is a good representation of a Bungalow.

**Vernacular Forms** - Because they lack particular stylistic details and are relatively plain, vernacular houses are grouped based on exterior massing, roof shape, and number of stories. While the City of River Falls has a number of dwellings designed according to national stylistic trends, a majority of houses are best described as vernacular. These vernacular forms include the front gable, side gable, gabled ell, two-story cube, one-story cube, and cross gable (see Photos 8 and 9 for examples of styles).



Photo 17: A Front Gable style dwelling, 423 E. Pine Hermann Mueller House.

**Front Gable** – The Front Gable form may be linked to the Greek Revival style. It is characterized by a rectangular plan and gable roof with the façade in the gable end of the building. The main entrance is either centered or offset and located in the gable, usually toward the street. The entry is often sheltered by a small entry porch or a full-length porch that is usually hipped. Approximately 69 houses (14%) in the City of River Falls are identified with this Front Gable form. One example is the Herman Mueller House at 420 E. Pine Street.



Photo 18: A Side Gable style dwelling, 408 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Side Gable** – Slightly more common than the Front Gable houses, approximately eighty Side Gable dwellings exist in the City of River Falls. The Side Gable is one of the earliest and most common house forms, being built in Wisconsin between 1840 and 1940. It is identified by a rectangular plan, gable roof, and gables oriented perpendicular to the street with the façade in the long wall parallel with the street. Varying from one to three stories in height, the one-and-one-half story is one of the most common. Like the other vernacular forms, the Side Gable house has little or no ornamentation except perhaps on the ubiquitous front porch. A good example of the Side Gable form is the Ensign House at 408 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street.



Photo 19: A Gabled Ell style dwelling, 321 Lewis Street.

**Gabled Ell** – Nearly one-quarter (117) of the form of houses existing in the City are the Gable Ell form. In plan, these dwellings appear most often as an “L” or “T” and frequently have wings attached to the rear. Entry to the Gabled Ell form is always through the porch at the ell, although the door may be located in either or both walls. Either shed or hipped roof porches are attached at the ell created by the junction of the two wings, sometimes broken by a pediment. Brackets, turned posts, and a balustrade may decorate the porch, which is often the most visually interesting feature on an otherwise unadorned building. A good example is the Alice Hardy House at 321 Lewis Street.



Photo 20: A One-Story Cube style dwelling, 122 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

**One-Story and Two-Story Cube** – Approximately fourteen One-Story and seven Two-Story Cube vernacular houses exist in the City. A distinguishing feature of these house forms is their box-like massing and hipped roof. Fenestration is typically symmetrical, usually with a central door flanked by windows.

**Cross Gable** – The Cross Gable form is usually square in plan, two stories high, with a Cross Gable or gambrel roof. Appearing late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continuing until about 1930, the Cross Gable house form has two intersecting roofs whose ridges form a cruciform. About seven examples of this form exist in the City of River Falls.



Photo 21: Poorly maintained limestone creates restoration problems.



Photo 22: Sand blasted brick creates restoration problems for some downtown commercial buildings.

### *Building Conditions*

The City of River Falls is in a unique position regarding the condition of its historic buildings. Generally, the commercial buildings are in fair or poor condition. The residential buildings are in good condition. Located at the edge of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, a shortage of housing, a four-lane highway and small town character all make River Falls a highly desirable place to live. This trend has resulted in reinvestment in many aging, historic homes.

The historic commercial buildings face many challenges in River Falls. Lack of investments, façade coverings, and invasive restoration techniques have altered many of the historic buildings in the City's original business district. Aluminum siding along with windows being closed up with bricks are some of the façade alterations that have occurred over the years. When restoration activities were pursued, sandblasting removed the glazing resulting in bricks that are now soft and pitted. A number of buildings have potential to be restored close to their original character. Façade restoration is possible throughout downtown, but challenges exist to some extent on all buildings.

In 1989, the Main Street Project formed, with help from the State Main Street Project, 1991 Architectural and Historical Inventory, Planting and Managing Program, and the Urban Forest Program. The Main Street Project is a volunteer board emphasizing physical improvements such as restorations of downtown historic buildings. The Main Street Project coordinates events like music in the park and Thanksgiving River Dazzle along with matching grants for façade rehabilitation and signage. The Main Street Project has and will continue to play an important role in the City of River Falls downtown and restorations of its' historic buildings.



Figure 6: Illustration from the City of River Falls Downtown Design Plan for the redevelopment of Elm and Main – looking west.



### *Designated Historic Buildings and Sites*

The Junction Mill smokestack (see photo 29) located at 401 S. Winter Street was designated a local historic structure on June 7, 2001 by the City of River Falls upon recommendation of the Historic Preservation Commission. The smokestack is one of the last remaining structures tied to the milling industry that was key in the development of the City. Built in 1879, the Junction Mill smokestack stands prominently on the banks of the Kinnickinnic River and as a symbol of the City’s former industry.



*Photo 23: Hathorn Cottage was designated a local historic structure in 1996, once located on the UW-RF campus at the south end of 4<sup>th</sup> Street.*

The Hathorn Cottage originally located on the campus of the University of Wisconsin – River Falls was designated on April 11, 1996. A certificate of appropriateness was issued to allow its removal off the university campus and onto a parcel in Kinnickinnic Township. Moving the house provided an opportunity for the house to be restored and kept in the local area. In May of 2002 the HPC designated the Freeman House, built in 1903 and located at 220 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.



*Photo 24: The State Normal School Building now the present South Hall is the oldest building on the UW-RF Campus. Built 1897-98 by the renowned Wisconsin architect William Waters, the cupola and smoke stacks were removed over the years.*

Two other buildings have historic designation. North and South Halls, located on the University of Wisconsin River Falls campus, are on the National Register of Historic Places. South Hall was the original Normal School building constructed in 1898 on the site of an earlier building that was destroyed by fire. North Hall was constructed in 1914 with an addition in 1927. South Hall was put on the National Register in 1976 and North Hall in 1986. The national list recognizes the Romanesque Revival architecture of South Hall and the important role the University has played in the development of the City of River Falls.



*Photo 25: North Hall on the UW-RF campus was constructed in 1914 with an addition in 1927.*

*"A community with a past  
is a community with a future"*



*III  
HISTORIC  
RESOURCE*



### III HISTORIC RESOURCE

Throughout the public meeting and comment period for the development of the existing City Comprehensive Plan, the Sewer Service Area Plan, the Downtown Plan, and the preparation of this document, the City of River Falls' historic resources were cited as some of the planning area's major assets. These resources reflect River Falls archeological, historic, and cultural heritage. The physical layout of older, established neighborhoods and Main Street are critical elements in planning for sustainable development. The preservation of River Falls' visual character was identified as essential.

This chapter provides a context for River Falls' historic resources by presenting an overview of the current efforts at identifying and managing historic assets and providing a plan for conservation and preservation of these assets. Guiding and implementing policies establish a means by which the City intends to further its efforts of appropriately managing its historic resources and integrating them into urban design and development strategies. The following guiding policies apply to this chapter:

#### GUIDING POLICIES

**3-G-1** Foster municipal and community awareness, positive appreciation, and support for River Falls' archeological, cultural, agricultural, and historic resources.

**3-G-2** Identify and assess archeological and historic resources (manmade) for the aesthetic, educational, economic, and scientific contributions they make to River Falls' quality of life.

**3-G-3** Respect and sensitively manage archeological, cultural and historic patterns, resource, and symbols, preserving the

contributions they make to understanding River Falls' characteristic, cultural tradition.

**3-G-4** Preserve the heterogeneous cultural, historic, and visual qualities of River Falls.

**3-G-5** Recognize that policies of promoting affordable housing and preserving the cultural, historic, and visual qualities of River Falls may require close coordination.

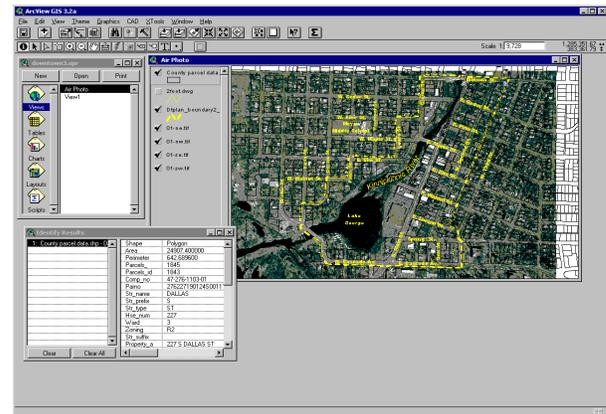


Figure 7: Architectural and Historic Inventory (AHI).

#### Architectural and Historic Inventory

The Architectural and Historic Inventory (AHI) is a database that records historic structures compiled by the Wisconsin Historical Society. The River Falls Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has obtained a copy of that database and will use it with discretion along with geographic information systems (GIS) data to document the characteristics of the historic resources within the City. The database currently contains data documenting construction dates, demolition dates, architectural styles, AHI identification numbers, builder names, property addresses, historic building names, historic designations and dates. Maintaining and updating the local AHI database is a HPC priority.

A top priority for the AHI project is to continue to update the local database with historic photos and historical biographies. The final product will be a customized, user-



friendly program. The information will be distributed to the schools, libraries, businesses and residences as an educational resource documenting the history of the City.

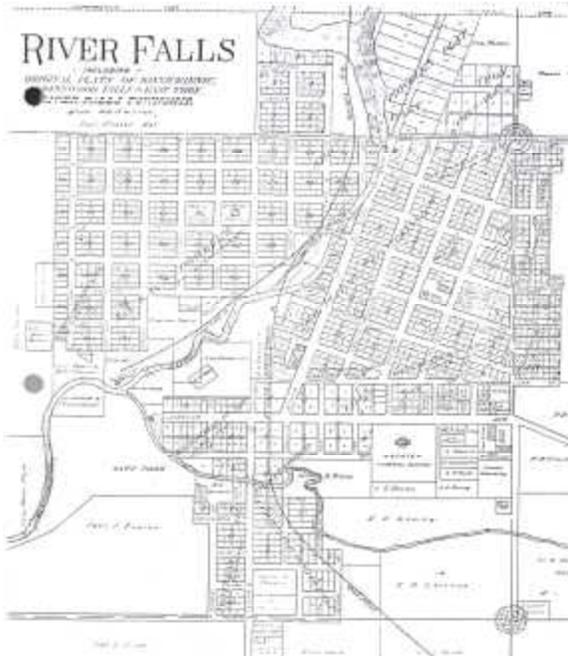


Figure 8: The City of River Falls platted in approximately 1907-08, including original plats of Kinnickinnic, Greenwood and Malone Towns.

### *Designating Historic Properties*

Historic properties can be listed as historic on National Register of Historic Places the state register or designated by local ordinance. The City of River Falls historic preservation ordinance allows for three different designation categories:

1. historic structure or building,
2. historic district, and
3. historic site.

Local designations must have approval of homeowner or business/structure owner, and depend on the type of property under consideration and its location to other historic buildings.

For example, cemeteries would fall under the historic site designation. However, buildings could be designated either as a

historic structure or as part of a historic district if enough historic buildings were clustered together. The type designation will be determined by its historic importance at either the local, state or federal level.

The process in which the River Falls HPC will proceed in determining what properties should be designated is to survey properties that have one or more of the following criteria:

1. A quality of significance in the history of the City of River Falls;
2. The structure or site possesses integrity in architecture, archeology, design, setting, materials, and workmanship;
3. The structure is more than 50 years old;
4. The structure is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; and
5. Yields information important in prehistory or history

Determining which properties meet these criteria requires research. Utilizing the existing AHI and updating records through historical research, updates will be made to the list of “Important Historical Properties.” The HPC will review original plats (see Figure 7 and Appendix C 1965 corporate limits) to identify historic properties. Where individual buildings meet the criteria for local designation, the “historic structure” designation will be used. If or when a cluster of historic structures is recognized, then the “historic district” designation will be used. It is HPC policy to designate property only with the owners’ approval.

*“It is HPC policy to designate property only with the owners’ approval”*



Photo 26: Birthplace of Wisconsin Governor Warren P. Knowles, 127 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street. He was born August 19, 1908. He was governor from 1965-1971. He died on April 1, 1993.

*Important Historic Buildings and Sites*

An intensive survey was conducted from August 1990 through September 1991 to research and evaluate the historical and architectural properties, including buildings, structures, sites, and districts within the corporate limits of the City of River Falls. During this project each property included in the reconnaissance level survey was evaluated for National Register of Historic Places eligibility according to the criteria adopted by the National Parks Service, United States Department of the Interior.

This survey updated an earlier windshield survey undertaken by the Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society in 1978. A professional architectural historian employed by the City gathered the intensive survey information. The finding for the survey was made available to the city through a grant program of the Wisconsin Historical Society. It identified approximately 585 individual properties in the city, of which 24 were identified as historically or architecturally significant. These 24 properties are likely to be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. During the intensive survey phase of the project, detailed research on the

community's history helped form the basis of information necessary for the evaluation of historic properties. For each property identified as historically or architecturally

WEST SIDE RESIDENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

All Buildings Contributing

- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
26/16 MAP CODE #
313 STREET ADDRESS

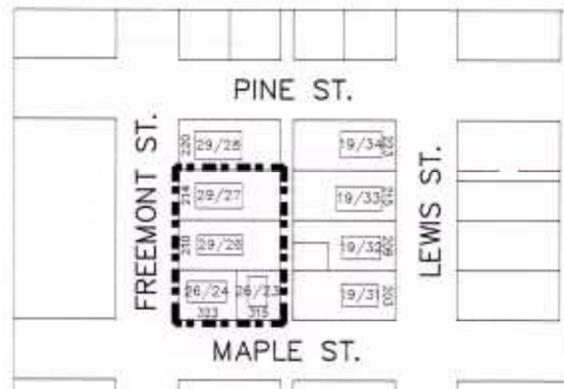


Figure 9: The 1991 Intensive Survey delineated a historic West Side Residential District.

significant in the reconnaissance survey and in the intensive survey, a four-page intensive survey form was completed with photographs, architectural descriptions, and historical information. Survey findings lead to the delineation of two residential historic districts and one commercial historic district. The report included a brief history of the City's survey, methodology, results, and a description of significant properties and historic districts.

Survey results were placed in the files of the Historic Preservation Division of the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, and a copy was provided to the City of River Falls. A copy of the intensive survey report also was placed in the public library at River Falls, as well as the Area Research Center located in Davee Library at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.



Figure 10: The Intensive Survey delineated a potential historic Residential District along 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

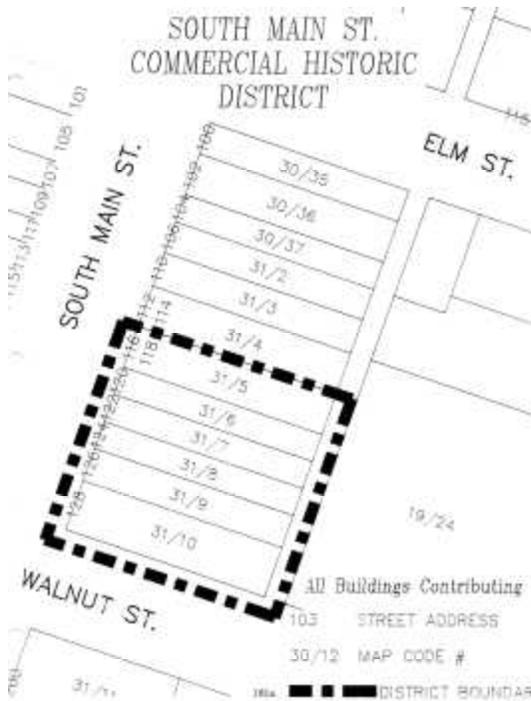


Figure 11: The Intensive Survey delineated a potential historic Commercial District, Walnut and S. Main Street.

The list below contains some of the many important buildings and sites worthy of preservation. The Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey Report identified some of these important buildings. Supplementary research has identified additions to that list. These properties are worthy of recognition in some manner, either through historic designation or by erecting educational plaques and historic markers.

1. Swinging Bridge, Glen Park
2. Glen Park Swimming Pool, Glen Park
3. Prairie Mill Building, 421 N. Main St.
4. Masonic Hall, 122 E. Walnut St.
5. Junction Mill Smokestack, 401 S. Winter St.
6. Gladstone Hotel, 121-123 S. Main St
7. Lord Livery Building, 101 S. Main St.
8. Brackett Building, 128 S. Main Street
9. Johnson & Ellertson Hardware Store, 126 S. Main St.
10. White Front Bakery, 124 S. Main St.
11. Rosenberg Building, 122 S. Main St.
12. Unnamed Building, 120 S. Main St.
13. Unnamed Building, 118 S. Main St.
14. S.D. Dodge Building, 114 S. Main St.
15. AP. Roberts Building, 100 S. Main St.



Photo 27: The southernmost of two 19<sup>th</sup>-century lime kilns that stand on the left bank of the Kinnickinnic River below the lower dam.

16. Lime Kilns, Lower Kinnickinnic



17. Foster Cemetery, Lower Kinnickinnic
18. South Fork School 817 S. Main St.
19. George Farnsworth House, 722 W. Cedar St.
20. Ole Ostness House, 521 W. Cedar St.
21. Thomas Walker House, 403 E. Division St.
22. Kimble House, 211 E. Elm St.
23. William Alton House, 603 W. Elm St.
24. Andrew Lund House, 127 S. Fourth St.
25. R.W. Freeman House, 220 S. 4<sup>th</sup> St.
26. R.N. Jenson House, 121 Fremont St.
27. F. Hardy House, 321 Fremont St.
28. Charles Parker House, 315 E. Maple St.
29. Unnamed House, 431 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.
30. Stella Deneen House, 120 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St.
31. John Reed House, 127 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.
32. Hocking House, 127 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.
33. R.S. Freeman House, 220 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.
34. Ferris White House, 518 W. Walnut St.
35. The Academy, 211 N. Fremont St., former Junior High School and High School, longest continuing school site in this area.
36. Ole H. Olsen House, 210 N. Fremont St.
37. Jens Larson House, 214 N. Fremont St.
38. Olive G. Davis House, 315 W. Maple St.
39. G.T. Smith House, 323 W. Maple St.
40. W.P. Knowles House, 127 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St.
41. North and South Hall, 410 E. S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 320 E. Cascade Ave., UW-RF campus
42. Silas Symes House, 309 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.
43. P.W. Ramer House, 104 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.
44. Thomas Tubbs House, 302 E. Walnut St.
45. Tremont Hotel, 102 N. Main St.



Photo 28: Tremont Hotel at 102 N. Main Street, 1944.



Photo 29: The Junction Mill Smokestack, 401 S. Winter Street, erected in 1879, designated a Historic Structure, June 7, 2001, is a symbol of the community's flour milling heritage.

### *S.O.S. – Save Our Smokestack Project*

On June 7, 2001, the Junction Mill Smokestack was designated a historic structure by the River Falls Historic Preservation Commission. The smokestack is arguably the most visible landmark tied to the milling industry that was so prominent for almost 100 years, starting in 1854. The structure is in need of major repair. Continued neglect would more than likely result in destruction. The condition of the smokestack requires that the rehabilitation should be completed very soon.

A general analysis of the work needed to restore the smokestack was done recently by an area building restoration company. The cost was approximately \$60,000 for brick and stone replacement, tuck pointing, and the removal and replacement of bricks and stones. Increases of approximately 10% each year are likely because of labor and material cost increases and the continued decay of the structure. The sooner the structure is repaired the lower the cost.



Because of the immediate need for repair, the HPC is moving forward with developing a plan to acquire the funds necessary to repair the Junction Mill Smokestack. The consensus of the commission is that public support is needed to rally behind the project. Private fund raising and cooperation from other community organizations is paramount in developing that support. Local schools have expressed interest in fund raising for the project. Westside School has funded a plaque for the Junction Mill Smokestack recognizing its historic significance. The school has also done history and art projects focused on the milling industry in River Falls. Support from the public, community organizations and local businesses are vital.



Photo 30: The HPC will raise funds by selling engraved bricks to help restore the Junction Mill Smokestack.

Raising all of the money for the rehabilitation project is not the objective of the HPC. With a portion of the money raised, it is the hope of the HPC that the City of River Falls and the River Falls Municipal Utility will assist in funding the remaining balance. At the August 8, 2001 HPC meeting, a motion was passed unanimously to attempt to raise \$15,000 to go toward the project. The River Falls Historic Preservation Commission is coordinating the fund raising and is selling engraved bricks to help restore the Junction Mill Smokestack.

### *Certified Local Government Status*

The City of River Falls is committed to the appropriate management and sensitive treatment of archeological, cultural, and historic resources. The City will strive to become a designated, Certified Local Government by Wisconsin's State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and amended in 1980. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City is responsible for integrating historic preservation activities into its function as a local government. Avenues for achieving this goal, that will be undertaken by the City, include the maintenance of a system for identifying historic resources, the establishment and administration of qualified preservation commissions, provisions for public participation in a local historic preservation program, and the enforcement of local laws for the designation and sensitive management of such resources. The CLG program, administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society, Historic Preservation Division, will be a major source of support and guidance for the City by providing technical and financial assistance for program development. It is through this assistance that the City will be able to undertake its historic building resurvey and other archeological, historic, and cultural heritage resource projects.

The HPC will work toward meeting the criteria for CLG status and make it a high priority project. The City of River Falls and HPC has or will complete the following projects prior to applying for CLG status:

1. Create and adopt a preservation plan,
2. Create and adopt a preservation ordinance,
3. Designate landmarks or historic district, and
4. Create a Historic Preservation Commission.



## IMPLEMENTATION

For the City of River Falls Historic Preservation Program to develop, it will have to look well beyond the preservation of isolated buildings. In order that the City’s sense of history and sense of place be cared for, River Falls will need to take steps to sensitively manage its identified historic resources. These resources include archeological sites, architecturally and historically significant buildings and structures, its waterways, historic neighborhoods, and other cultural landscape features. The City will need to build on its existing Historic Preservation Ordinance, adopt Historic Design Guidelines, become a Certified Local Government (CLG), and designate historic structures, neighborhoods districts, and other cultural landscaped features.

Through cooperative management strategies with the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior and the Wisconsin Historical Society, private preservation-oriented groups and the general public, the City of River Falls can successfully ensure that archeological, cultural and historic resources are sensitively managed and integrated for the benefit of the community. These benefits include those that are educational in nature and instill pride in River Falls’ citizens about the City’s heritage. Planning decisions and resulting ordinances should take into consideration possible impact on the historic character, historic resources, and the traditional cultural life of the City. Planning efforts should bear in mind the importance of appropriately managing the unique qualities of River Falls. The following implementing policies speak to these goals.

### IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**3-I-1** Educate the community about the value of historic resources through a

citywide historic resource management document and a strong historic resource component of the City Comprehensive Plan, and by organizing workshop and training for municipal representatives, residents, and special interest groups including River Falls youth, design and development community, business people, and the media.

**3-I-2** Lead by example through the integration of sensitive treatment of historic resources in City sponsored public works and park and recreation maintenance and construction projects.

**3-I-3** Strengthen and encourage partnerships with non-City historic preservation entities, including those at the federal, state, local, and private levels through participation and special projects, offering and receiving technical assistance, accepting grant funds, programming, and disseminating information about such entities to the public through educational opportunities.

**3-I-4** Strive to become a Certified Local Government (CLG) by meeting the criteria for status and make it a high priority project.

**3-I-5** Determine the appropriateness of developing management objectives and standards for historic resources located in the City’s extraterritorial zone.

*The City’s-Towns extraterritorial zone has and will likely continue to experience a high rate of development. The high rate of annexation requests that come to the City from this area is an indicator that there is a likelihood that these historic resources will become a future management responsibility of the City. Management of these resources under the City ordinances will ensure the consistent treatment of them. Through a cooperative approach, the City could aide in assuring appropriate treatment of them and*



*review options for the City management of these resources. As well, the City and Towns should amend the existing Historic Preservation Ordinance to include a review of all property annexed into the City for historic resources.*

**3-I-6** Investigate and determine options for providing local level tax or other incentives for the preservation and maintenance of archaeological and historic resources.

*While such incentives exist at the State and Federal level, the City should take a leadership role in this need.*

**3-I-7** Encourage early consultations with representatives of proposed development to ensure that potential development is consistent with River Falls' historic patterns of land use and construction.

*Early consultation typically results in a project that can meet the needs of the code and the developer. Therefore, ensure the preservation of the City's characteristic qualities. Much energy on the part of City staff and a developer's representatives can go into negotiating an already designed project which does not comply with the City's land use code.*

**3-I-8** Encourage and participate in the preparation of the State Register of Historic Properties and the National Register of Historic Places nominations for resources which qualify for such listings.

*Listings of archeological, cultural, and historic resources provide a means by which the City can raise people's consciousness about River Falls' resources. Incentives for tax relief and occasional grant monies are available to owners for maintenance and preservation of these resources.*

**3-I-9** Investigate and determine options for acquiring real historic properties and interpreting it for the community's benefit.

*In 2001, the City, through a matching grant, purchased the Foster Cemetery and zoned the land conservancy.*

**3-I-10** Support the adjacent Towns' and Counties' efforts to further develop and implement a historic preservation program and ensure consistency between the City's preservation philosophy and programs.

*An opportunity exists to provide technical assistance to assure that regional resources are managed consistently.*

**3-I-11** Continue existing efforts to survey and resurvey resources.

*The last intensive survey report was conducted in 1991. The survey needs to be updated and corrected for its accuracy. Resurveys will benefit the public as well as the private sector in designating future structures or historic districts.*

**3-I-12** Expand existing resource survey efforts to include recording characteristics or unique physical features and historic development patterns.

*The character of River Falls' historic areas is defined by more than just buildings. Many other features are recognized as making a collective contribution to the City's distinctive landscape. Such features should be identified and recorded locally and include street forms and physical attributes, bridges, yard walls and fences, and other manmade cultural landscape elements.*

**3-I-13** Identify unrecorded historic resources and consider them for management objectives.



*River Falls experienced a great deal of growth during the years immediately following World War II. Neighborhoods established during this time may be considered historic. As well, there are known historic neighborhoods which have not been assessed for the contribution they make to River Falls' overall character. These areas should be identified through analysis of plats and surveyed for significance, a process that could include the training of interested neighborhood residents to undertake survey and historic research.*

**3-I-14** Preserve structures in neighborhoods that exhibit individual architectural merit and that collectively exhibit the sense of place that River Falls possesses through the review and consideration of amendments to the existing land use law.

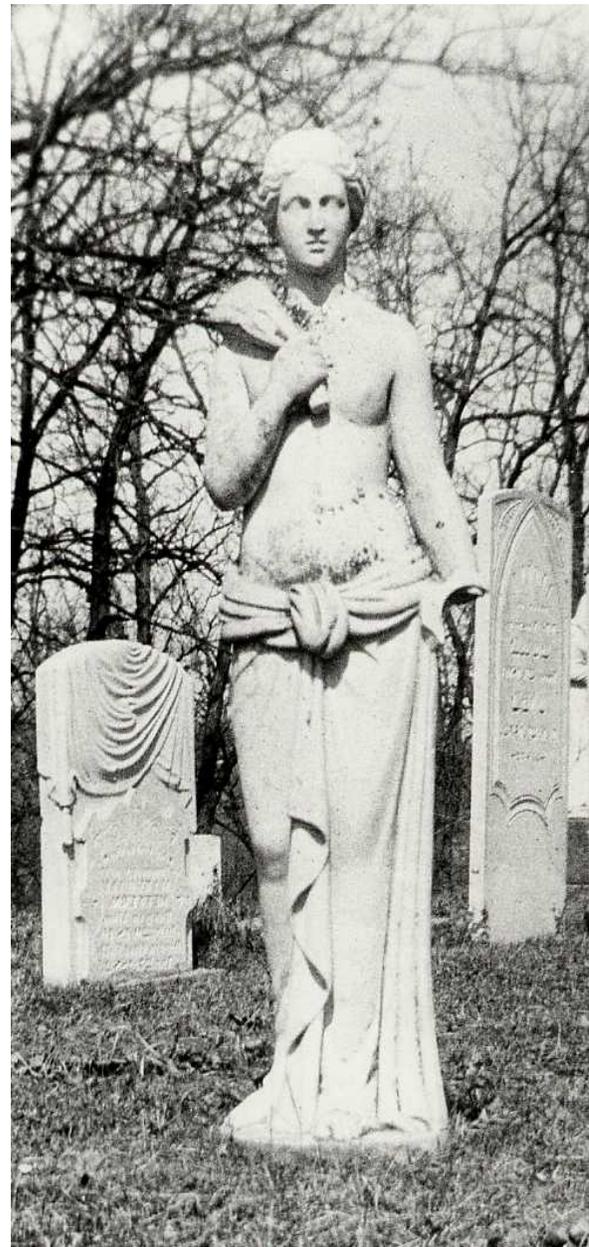
*The City should review its ordinance standards for preservation of structures to ensure their effectiveness. This review should include the consideration that these standards are more specific to individual buildings and less specific to the preservation of overall district character. Standards could be created and considered for adoption that strengthens the preservation of the overall district character.*

**3-I-15** Examine and determine the appropriateness of altering existing zoning designations to ensure compatibility of density, use, and physical character within established neighborhoods and historic areas.

*There is tremendous development pressure within historic areas. The development pressure encourages the sale, alteration and expansion, and change in use of historic structures with a resultant possible loss in historic integrity and possible loss of overall*

*character. There is a need to revisit and review zoning designation in historic areas.*

**3-I-16** Continue to identify, pursue, and capture state, federal and other funds to support historic preservation.



*Photo 31: One of the four figures that stood in the Foster Cemetery that represented spring, summer, fall and winter. The cemetery property was donated to the city and zoned conservancy in 2001.*

*"A sense of place  
is reflected in the architecture."*



*IV  
DESIGN  
GUIDELINES*





## IV HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The visual character and historic resources in the City of River Falls residential buildings have key characteristics to preserve and enhance. The manner in which private development is carried out can have substantial impact on this visual and historic character. Many of these impacts are related not to the type of use but to its design, and the way that design responds to the context of buildings, streets and open space.

While the previous sections focused on architectural styles and architectural and historic inventory in the City of River Falls, this section proposes a Historic Residential Design Guidelines for private development: how the individual building or building façade, structure, front and rear entrance, porch and overall exterior appearance could be developed, remodeled or otherwise improved and retain the historic qualities of the building.

The guidelines have two primary functions:

- To guide developers or residential owners wishing to propose expansions, renovations or new construction of buildings that have been designated;
- To assist City officials and the public in reviewing development proposals.

The following is the Historic Residential Design Guideline Ordinance. On August 12, 2003, the City Council adopted this Ordinance. These guidelines will only apply to residences that have been designated.

### 17.77 HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

(1) **PURPOSE AND INTENT.** In order to promote the economic, cultural and general welfare of the people of the City and to ensure the harmonious, orderly and efficient growth and development of the City, it is deemed essential by the governing body that the qualities relating to the residential history of River Falls, and a harmonious outward appearance, that preserve property values and attracts tourists and residents alike, be preserved, some of these qualities being:

- (a) The continued existence and preservation of historical areas and buildings; and
- (b) The continued construction of buildings in the historic styles; and
- (c) A general harmony as to style, form, height, proportion, texture and material between buildings of historic design and those of more modern design.

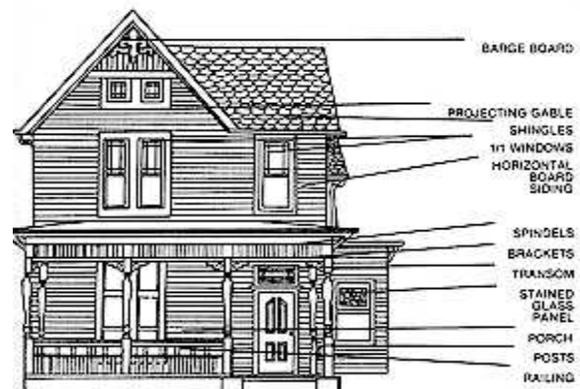


Figure 12: Illustration of the architectural features of a home (provided by the City of

(2) **DEFINITIONS.**

*Alteration* means any change of the exterior architectural features of a structure, including, but not limited to, the erection, construction, reconstruction or removal of the structure or any of its parts. Additions are considered alterations.



*Façade* means one whole exterior face or elevation of a structure, from grade up to and including the top of the parapet. An individual façade is at least an eight-foot (8') width that is offset from an adjacent plane by at least four feet (4').

*Height* means the vertical distance measured between the highest part of a structure and the existing grade or finished grade, whichever is more restrictive, at the midpoint of the street adjacent to the structure.

*Porch* means a roofed space outside the main walls of a structure at street or first floor level, which has a depth of not less than four feet (4') from the outside face.

*Remodeling* means a change, including a reconstruction, in an architectural feature of a structure. It does not include additions.

*Significant structure* means a structure that is approximately fifty (50) years old or older, and relatively unchanged, and with architectural or historical merit, the demolition of or inappropriate alterations to which would be a loss to the historic fabric, quality, and character of River Falls, and which has been declared to be significant in a municipal, state or federal historic structure survey, (whether or not limited to a single structure) or is listed in or suitable for or is eligible to be listed in a municipal register, the State Register of Historic Properties or National Register of Historic Places.

*Structure* means anything that is constructed or erected with a fixed location on the ground or attached to something having a fixed location on the ground. Structures include but are not limited to walls, buildings, fences, signs, swimming pools, spas, microwave satellite receiving dishes,

TV antennas, communication devices and tennis courts.

(3) **BOUNDARIES.** The boundaries for the historic residential district within the City and historic structures shall be identified, designated and protected because of their special character of historic interest and significance.

The boundaries and legal description for the historic residential districts as well as the location of historic structures shall be shown on the official zoning map and be located in the City Planning Department and on file in the City Clerk's Office.

(4) **POWER AND DUTIES.** The power and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) shall be consistent with the historic preservation zoning section 17.76 of the River Falls Municipal Code. The HPC shall administer the design guidelines and, with respect to any exterior alterations brought to its attention, may require that those alterations adhere to the original architectural style and the design guidelines set forth in subsection 17.77.050.

(5) **DESIGN GUIDELINES.** The design guidelines have the following functions:

(a) To guide builders and homeowners wishing to propose expansions, renovations, exterior alterations, and replacement of designated residential structures.

(b) To assist City officials and the public in reviewing development proposals.

(c) If there is a conflict between design ordinances, the provisions of this ordinance shall apply.



Photo 32: A front porch on an American Foursquare style house. Sarah Tozer House, 215 North Fourth Street.

1. Porches. Preservation and renovation of the existing porch and original dimensions is encouraged especially if the porch faces the street. If necessary, replace in-kind an entire porch or section of porch that it too deteriorated to repair. Replacement should match the original in appearance, shape, texture, detail and dimension. When replacing items such as handrails, balusters, columns, ceiling or flooring boards, every effort should be made to maintain and duplicate the original profiles of these items. Rebuild steps with materials matching the historic precedent as closely as possible. Avoid enclosing porches, especially those located in the front unless historically appropriate.

All wood on exterior porches, except flooring and stair treads, shall be painted or opaque stained.

2. Decks. Decks in the front and side yard shall be consistent with the historic character of the structure and neighborhood.

3. Windows. Repair the original structure before entire replacement. Most windows can be repaired or reinforced. If replacement is necessary, replace windows

so that they are compatible with the historic character of the structure. If any of the original windows that are compatible with the historic character of the structure has true divided lights, the replacement sash shall duplicate the original window appearance. If windows have been altered in the past, restoration to the original appearance is encouraged. Window openings should not be reduced in size. Vinyl windows or other synthetic materials are not appropriate because they lack the resemblance of historical wood windows.

On the sides and rear facades of the structure, new windows in locations where no window previously existed may be approved provided they retain a similar ratio or height to width as original windows on the structure, are the same type of window as others on the structure (e.g. double-hung or casement) and are trimmed and finished to match the appearance of other windows.

4. Entrance Doors. If the entrance door is original and compatible with the historic character of the structure, restoration of the original door and its surrounding (including leaded glass or stained glass decorations, or columns and transoms of windows) is encouraged.

If determined that the door and its surrounding is beyond repair, replace in-kind an entire entrance. All doors shall be painted, varnished or prefinished.

5. Patio Doors. Patio doors may be permitted provided they have frames similar to full view doors. Installation of raw aluminum or other metallic finishes are not permitted. Patio doors shall be painted or finished with a material that resembles a painted finish. Patio style doors on street facades shall be hinged doors, rather than sliding doors. If new sliding glass doors are



installed, they should be placed at the rear of the building, away from the principal façade.

6. Storm Windows and Doors. Aluminum or other metallic storm windows or doors shall be enameled, painted, or otherwise coated with a colored surface to resemble a painted surface and shall be compatible with the historic character of the structure. Painted or varnished storm doors of wood and glass to match the original design on the structure or on similar structures in the district are encouraged. Storm doors of simple design that do not contrast with the style of the house may be used. Full view storm doors will be permitted.

7. Skylights. Skylights on the roof slope over the main street façade are not permitted unless not visible from the street. Skylights may be permitted on rear roof slopes and on side roof slopes provided that the skylight is not obtrusive as to detract from the general appearance of the building. The design of new skylights shall be as simple as possible, of the flat (not bubble) type, and finished to blend with the color of the roof.

8. Roof Materials. Retain and preserve historic materials whenever possible. If replacement is necessary, use new materials to match the original in composition, size, shape, color, pattern and texture. Consider substitute material only if the original is not technically feasible. Vents shall be located as inconspicuously as possible and shall be similar in color to the color of the roof. Rolled roofing, tar-and-gravel, rubberized membranes and other similar roofing materials shall only be used on flat or slightly sloped roofs, which are not visible from the ground.

9. Dormers and Other Roof Alterations. Repair and retain existing dormers,

maintaining the original roof slope and windows. New dormers should be compatible with the architectural character of the structure and neighborhood. Retain the shape of the original roofline, especially when visible from a public way. Other roof alterations shall be compatible with the roof shape and other historic features of the structure, such as siding and trim details.

10. Chimneys. The exterior appearance of original chimneys visible from the street shall be maintained in good repair. New chimneys shall be constructed of material that maintains the historic integrity of the structure.



Photo 33: Only the damaged or deteriorated bricks are being replaced. The structure is also being repointed, which will preserve the brick, 103-107 E. Elm Street.

11. Structure Exterior. Restoration of original wood siding and original decorative details such as cornices, brackets, shutters, columns, and trim is encouraged. Soffits may be replaced provided the proposed material matches as closely as possible to the original appearance.

Original wood siding or siding that maintains the historic character of the structure shall be retained and restored as necessary. If original siding is beyond repair, it shall be replaced with wood,



composite wood or other materials that match the original appearance.

All architectural details including, but not limited to, window trim, frieze boards, cornices and other ornaments, must either remain uncovered or be duplicated in appearance and shall project beyond the siding the same dimensions as the original. Restoration of lost architectural trim is encouraged.

Original brick, stone and stucco siding should be retained. Replace or repair only the damaged portion. If any masonry feature is extensively deteriorated or missing, that feature should be replaced in-kind. Mortar, stucco and other exterior materials should match the original in strength, composition, color, and texture. Old mortar joints should also be matched in width and joint profile. Painting of unpainted brick is not permitted.

12. Foundations. All original foundation masonry, such as brick, stone or concrete block, shall be retained unless it is determined that significant repairs are required, in which case replacement with materials to duplicate the original appearance is encouraged. If duplicating the original appearance is not practical, other materials may be approved provided they maintain the historic character of the structure and the district.



Photo 34: An addition on the north (right) side of a home is setback from the street facade. Lillian Currier House, 223 North Fourth Street.

13. Additions. Construct a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features of the original structure are not obscured, damaged or destroyed. New additions should be located on an inconspicuous side or rear elevation so that the work does not radically change the character of the historic structure. Additions should be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color. A rooftop addition should be set back from the wall plane and be as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street.

Foundation material on new additions shall duplicate the original foundation material whenever practical. Other foundation materials may also be permitted provided they do not detract from the historic character of the structure.

14. Fire Escapes and Rescue Platforms. Fire escapes and rescue platforms shall be located such that they are as unobtrusive from the street as possible. No fire escapes or rescue platforms shall be permitted on the front façade of a structure unless it is determined that no other location is practical. The design of fire escapes and rescue platforms shall be painted to blend



with the colors of the house. Handicap access and appropriate compatible design shall be considered.



Photo 35: Shutters on a Colonial Revival style house. Dave Deiss House, 326 North Third Street.

15. Shutters. Shutters will be permitted provided that they are compatible with the historic character of the structure.



Photo 36: An accessory structure that is compatible with the main building. W. P. Knowles House, 127 North Fourth Street.

16. Accessory Structures. Retain and preserve all historic accessory structures and their features that are character-defining elements, which includes foundations, steps, roof form, windows, doors, architectural trim and lattices. Replace only the deteriorated item to match the original in size, scale, proportion, appearance, texture, and detail. Replace a historic accessory

structure that is completely missing with either a reconstruction based on accurate documentation or a new design compatible with the historic character of the main building or historic outbuildings in the district. Keep the proportion and the height of new garages and outbuildings compatible with the proportion and height of historic garages and outbuildings in the neighborhood. Locate new accessory structures in rear yards in a traditional relationship to the main building. Use traditional roof forms, materials, and details compatible with the main building or historic outbuilding in the district when constructing new garages, outbuildings, and decks.

17. Fences and Retaining Walls. Retain and preserve the original fence and wall material whenever possible. If replacement is necessary, use new materials that match the historic materials in composition, size, shape, color, pattern, and texture. Design new fences based on documentation of a historic fence, or create a new design compatible with the historic character of the structure and the neighborhood if a new fence or wall is to be constructed. New retaining walls in the front yard are not permitted unless determined for a health and safety need.

18. Signage. Signs shall be designed in a style that is consistent with the historic building. No sign shall cover any historically significant features. Materials used shall be historically appropriate.





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*INSTITUTIONAL  
FRAMEWORK*



## V INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Plans are policy instruments that provide the basis for the implementation for development and land use regulations, that are contained within this plan and in the municipal code. Unlike Master Plans, regulations contained in the federal, state, extraterritorial and municipal code, such as zoning and subdivision regulations are not policy-making instruments, but rather tools to implement policies established in the plans and elsewhere.

The municipal code, which contains the regulations, will be a key tool in implementing the policies of this new plan.

### GUIDING POLICIES

**5-G-1** Ensure consistency between this plan and City regulations.

**5-G-2** Prepare an orderly procedure for review of projects.

**5-G-3** Ensure that this plan is maintained as a living plan reflecting the current community priorities.

**5-G-4** Ensure that the City, state and federal policies and procedures for historic preservation are followed.

### STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS

The Wisconsin Historical Society, Division of Historic Preservation provides preservation assistance and presentations to all 72 counties and funds six regional archeological programs, which are located in LaCrosse, Rhinelander, Stevens Point, Green Bay, Oshkosh, and Milwaukee. The Division's state and federally mandated

responsibilities are handled with the following programs: Architectural Services, Burial Site Preservation, Compliance, Local Assistance and Editorial, Office of the State Archeologist, and Survey and Registration. Through these programs, the Division maintains an inventory of Wisconsin's historic properties, archeological sites, and burial places. The Division also administers survey and inventory grants, conducts and supports archeological research. The Division will provide technical assistance to local government and owners of historical properties, administers the Certified Local Government program, nominates sites to the National and State Register of Historic Places, supports research on historic architecture, administers federal and state tax credit programs for the rehabilitation of historic properties, and catalogs burial sites, and reviews public projects for their effects on historic properties.

As stated above, the state and federal government provides recognition for historic places and financial incentives. The state and federal governments provide tax credit incentives for qualified properties to rehabilitate properties to objective standards. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation must be followed to receive tax credits. Currently the State of Wisconsin offers a 25% tax credit for the restoration of qualified residential properties.

Local government can have a regulatory component among many of its preservation activities. River Falls, along with many other municipalities, has passed zoning codes for altering properties designated historic. These rules, however, vary greatly from community to community. Some communities may wish to follow stronger standards as provided by the Secretary of Interior for rehabilitation, while others may be less restrictive and allow for modern materials.



The City, state and federal governments all promote historic preservation by coordinating education programs. Informational resources are created through conferences, publications, the Internet, and classes on preservation.



Photo 37: City of River Falls Main Street, 1891.

### CITY REGULATIONS

In November of 1995, the City of River Falls adopted to the Zoning Section of the Municipal Code Section 21.31 HISTORIC PRESERVATION. The purpose and intent was the City of River Falls hereby declared a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements or sites of special character or special architectural, archeological or historic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. (Appendix B contains a copy of the City of River Falls Historic Preservation ordinance.)

The ordinance outlines procedures for designating historic properties and the powers for preserving historic architecture. Properties can be designated as historic

sites, structures, or districts. The City Council must approve historic districts after a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). However, the HPC may designate a historic structure site or structure after holding a public hearing. The HPC policy is that no private property will be designated without the approval of the property owner.

### CONSISTENCY

The purpose of consistency is to ensure that this plan’s policies addressing topics such as land use, preservation and conservation are implemented. For this plan’s policies to be effective, they need to be translated into parcel-specific regulations in the land development laws and codes. Zoning is one of the most widely used land-use regulations and the best tool for implementing the policies of this plan. While the codes require that in case of a change in policy a plan shall first be “amended,” the requirement of consistency needs to be explicitly established in both the plan and the code.

Only full consistency between the plan and land development laws in the municipal code can ensure realization of the community's vision for its future. The protection of neighborhoods and historic structures and sites and the creation of new neighborhoods (Traditional Neighborhood Developments) that build on the community’s tradition and past are dependent on consistency between the plan and the code.

Upon adoption of this plan, the zoning and land development regulations in the municipal code shall be revised to be consistent with the plan. This may involve adding, removing, and/or modifying zoning, development standards and other regulations to implement the plan policies.



Photo 38: The “Swinging Bridge” in Glen Park built in 1925 and reconstructed in 1986.

### *SUPPORT FOR CONSISTENCY*

Plan and zoning consistency has been an issue for residents for a long time. At past meetings, concern has been expressed about the planning and code enforcement functions. It has been recognized that successful, long-range planning depends not only on the development of realistic, consistent, and achievable themes and policies, but also upon having ordinances implemented and enforced that are consistent with a plan. There has been complete agreement on ensuring consistency between the plan and land development laws of the existing codes.

Many citizens are adamant that the plan should be used, honored, and enforced and that it should include procedures for its amendment, review, and periodic update. Above all, regulations and ordinances should implement the plan. In response to these concerns, one of the plan’s themes is to ensure consistency between the plan and the municipal, state and federal codes.

### *PROCESS FOR AMENDMENTS*

This plan is intended to be a living plan that reflects changing conditions and community needs. As such, the plan will be subject to amendments over time. To maintain this plan as current, policies that become

obsolete or unrealistic due to changing conditions (such as the completion of a task or project or adoption of an ordinance) should be eliminated or modified. The plan amendment process is also the means through which the City, including the HPC, Planning Commissions, Boards and Council, private property owners, project proponents, community groups, neighborhood associations, and individual citizens can initiate changes to the plan.

Application for plan amendments initiated by the City, or general public will be submitted first to the City of River Falls’ Planning Department for staff review. Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Staff will prepare a summary report describing the requested changes and staff’s recommendations, including any necessary language and drawings, for review by the HPC.

### *ANNUAL REPORT*

A summary of the progress made in implementing the plan and any amendments adopted during the preceding year shall be included as part of the annual report to the HPC. This summary shall include a list of events, projects, and dates of adoptions of any ordinances or amendments and a brief description of the changes. The report shall include any new city, state and federal regulations that may impact the City.

### *IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES*

**5-I-1** Prepare annual and five-year reports on the Historic Preservation Plan.

**5-I-2** Consolidate in concise and easily understood written form and make available to the public in a single, central location all information regarding building and development codes, procedures, processes, standards, regulations, and ordinances related to Historic Preservation.



**5-I-3** Develop a handbook to serve as a “how to” guide for designating buildings and sites.

**5-I-4** Review and update the internal consistencies of all new and existing rules and regulations, ordinances, and policies to ensure they meet the guiding policies of this plan and amend the codes to reflect the policies.

*As part of these updates, a continuing educational program will be provided that includes a series of seminars—brown bag lunches—where staff would lead an explanation and discussion about the codes.*

**5-I-5** Update existing historic surveys, and develop standards for redevelopment and development of structures and historic districts

**5-I-6** HPC may consider limiting their approvals for no more than three years from the date of approval of the applicants plan. The HPC may consider an extension of their approval upon request by the applicant for up to two years for the plan.

*Progress towards implementing a plan means submitting for a building permit within the three-year approval. If there is no progress after three years the applicant may submit to the HPC for a two-year extension for the plan. If these deadlines are not met, the development plan approval would no longer be valid and the project will be required to conform to all new regulations.*

**5-I-7** Maintain a Historic Preservation Plan implementation program that reflects priorities for public action and is accessible to all residents.



Figure 13: The City of River Falls Main Street Sesquicentennial Logo.





*APPENDIXES*



## APPENDIX A

### PLANS, REPORTS, AND STUDIES

The following plans, reports, and studies assisted in drafting of the Historic Preservation Plan:  
(Most of these plans, reports, and studies are kept on file at the City of River Falls Planning Department)

Name of City of River Falls Plans, Studies, or Reports	Year
Municipal Code of the City of River Falls, Wisconsin	1885
City of River Falls Tax Records	1885-
City of River Falls Comprehensive/Master Plans	1930-1995
Outdoor Recreation Plan	1965
Downtown Trade Area Survey	1979
Main Street Streetscape Plan	1981
City of River Falls Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan	1989
Downtown Physical Plan	1990
River Falls Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey Report	1991
Consumer Survey	1992
Median Project	1993
City of River Falls Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan	1995
City of River Falls Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	1995
Consumer Survey	1996
City of River Falls Housing Needs Assessment	1999
Citizen Opinion Survey	1999
Kinnickinnic River Priority Watershed Management Project	1999
Sewer Service Area Water Quality Management Plan	2000
Downtown Design Plan	2002
<b>Other Resources</b>	
Wisconsin State Statutes	1848
Town of River Falls Tax Rolls	1858-
River Falls Journal	1857-1861, 1872-
Prescott Journal	1861-1871
River Falls Press	1874-1883
River Falls Times	1894-1933
Urbanization in St. Croix and Pierce Counties	1971
FIRM Flood Insurance Rate Maps	1982
Cultural Resource Management	1986
United States Census: Table DP-4, Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics.	1990
Planting and Managing the Urban Forest	1994
Labor Market Conditions in Pierce County	1996
United States Census: Table DP-4, Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics.	2000

### Other Publications

Beemans, W.L., *An Illustrated Souvenir of River Falls, Wis.*, River Falls: Hurlburt-Smith, June 1900  
 Easton, Augusts B., ed. *History of the Saint Croix Valley*, Vol. I & II, Chicago: H.C. Cooper Jr. & Co., 1909  
 Gottfried, Herbert and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design 1870-1940: An Illustrated Glossary*, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985.  
 Graham, H.L., *A Souvenir, River Falls, Wis.*, Red Wing, Minn.: Wall & Haines, February 1900.  
 Virginia Savage & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Knopf, 1984  
 Young and Gibbs, *First Annual Review of Pierce County, Wisconsin, January 1, 1856*, Prescott: Young and Gibbs, 1856.



APPENDIX B

City of River Falls Historic Preservation  
Ordinance Adopted 01/09/96.

**17.76 HISTORIC PRESERVATION.**

**(1) PURPOSE AND INTENT.** It is hereby declared a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements or sites of special character or special architectural, archeological or historic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. The purpose of this section is to:

- (a) Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement, and preservation of such improvements, sites, and districts which represent or reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history.
- (b) Safeguard the City's historic, prehistoric and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such historic structures, sites, and districts.
- (c) Stabilize and improve property values, and enhance the visual and aesthetic character of the City.
- (d) *Protect and enhance the City's attractions to residents, tourists and visitors, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.*

**(2) DEFINITIONS.** The definitions shall be as follows:

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:**  
The certificate issued by the commission approving alteration, rehabilitation, construction, reconstruction or demolition of a historic site or any improvement in a historic district.

**COMMISSION:** The Historic Preservation Committee created under this section.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** An area designated by the Common Council on recommendation of the commission that contains two or more historic improvements or sites.

**HISTORIC SITE:** Any parcel of land of historic significance due to a substantial value in tracing the history or prehistory of man, or upon which a historic event has occurred, and which has been designated as a historic site under this section, or an improvement parcel, or part thereof, on which is situated a historic structure and any abutting improvement parcel, or part thereof, used as and constituting part of the premises on which the historic structure is situated.

**HISTORIC STRUCTURE:** Any improvement which has a special character or special historic interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state or nation and which has been designated as a historic structure pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

**IMPROVEMENT:** Any building, structure, place, work of art or other object constituting a physical betterment of real property, or any part of such betterment, including streets, alleys, sidewalks, curbs, lighting fixtures, signs and the like.

**(3) HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE COMPOSITION.** A Historic Preservation Commission is hereby created, consisting of 7 members. Of the membership, if available in the community, one shall be a registered architect; one shall be a historian; one shall be a licensed real estate broker; one shall be an Alderperson, and 3 shall be citizen members. Each member shall have, to the highest extent practicable, a known interest in historic preservation. The Mayor shall appoint the commissioners subject to confirmation by the Common Council.

**(4) HISTORIC STRUCTURE, SITE AND DISTRICT DESIGNATION CRITERIA.**

(a) For purposes of this ordinance, a historic structure, historic site, or historic district designation may be placed on any site, natural or improved, including any building, improvement or structure located thereon, or any area of particular historic, architectural or cultural



significance to the City such as historic structures, sites, or districts which:

1. Exemplify or reflect the broad cultural, political, economic or social history or the nation, state or community; or
2. Are identified with historic personages or with important events in national, state or local history; or
3. Embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
4. Are representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer or architect who influenced his age; or
5. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.

(b) The commission shall adopt specific operating guidelines for historic structure, historic site and historic district designation providing such are in conformance with the provisions of this ordinance.

**(5) POWERS AND DUTIES.**

(a) Designation. The commission shall have the power, subject to Section 6, to designate historic structures and historic sites and to recommend designation of historic districts within the City limits. Such designations shall be made based on Section 4. Historic districts shall be approved by the Common Council. Once designated, such historic structures, sites and districts shall be subject to all the provisions of this ordinance.

(b) Regulation of Construction, Reconstruction, Alterations and Demolition. 1. No owner or person in charge of a historic structure, historic site or structure within a historic district shall reconstruct, alter or demolish all or any part of the exterior of such property or construct any improvement upon such designated property or properties or cause or permit any such work to be performed upon such property or demolish

such property unless a Certificate of Appropriateness has been granted by the Historic Preservation Commission. Also, unless such certificate has been granted by the commission, the Building Inspector shall not issue a permit for any such work.

2. Upon filing of any application for a Certificate of Appropriateness with the commission, the commission shall approve the application unless:

a. In the case of a designated historic structure or historic site, the proposed work would detrimentally change, destroy or adversely affect any exterior feature of the improvement or site upon which said work is to be done;

b. In the case of the construction of a new improvement upon a historic site, or within a historic district, the exterior of such improvement would adversely affect or not harmonize with the external appearance of other neighboring improvements on such site or within the district.

c. In the case of any property located in a historic district the proposed construction, reconstruction, exterior alteration or demolition does not conform to the purpose and intent of this section and to the objectives and design criteria of the historic preservation plan for said district;

d. The building or structure is of such architectural or historical significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and state.

e. In the case of a request for the demolition of a deteriorated building or structure, any economic hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner is self-created or is the result of any failure to maintain the property in good repair.

3. If the commission determines that the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness and proposed changes are consistent with the character and features of the property or district, it shall issue the Certificate of Appropriateness.

The commission shall make this decision within 45 days of the filing of the application.

4. The issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness shall not relieve the applicant from obtaining other permits and approvals required by the City. A building permit or other municipal permit shall be invalid if it is obtained without the presentation of the Certificate of Appropriateness required for the proposed work.

5. Ordinary maintenance and repairs may be undertaken without a Certificate of Appropriateness provided that the work involves repairs to existing features of a historic structure or site or the replacement of elements of a structure with pieces identical in appearance and provided that the work does not change the exterior appearance of the structure or site and does not require the issuance of a building permit.

(c) Appeals. Should the commission fail to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness due to the failure of the proposal to conform to the guidelines, the applicant may appeal such decision to the Common Council within 30 days. In addition, if the commission fails to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, the commission shall, within the cooperation of the applicant, work with the applicant in an attempt to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness within the guidelines of this ordinance.

(d) Recognition of Historic Structures, Sites and Districts. At such time as a historic structure, site, or district has been properly designated, the commission, in cooperation with the property owner, may cause to be prepared and erected on such property at City expense, a suitable plaque declaring that such property is a historic structure, site or district.

## **(6) PROCEDURES.**

(a) Designation of Historic Structures and Historic Sites.

1. The commission may, after notice and public hearing, designate historic structures and historic sites, or rescind such designation or recommendation, after application of the criteria

in Section 4, above. At least ten days prior to such hearing the commission shall notify the owners of record, as listed in the office of the City Assessor, who are owners of property in whole or in part situated within 200 feet of the boundaries of the property affected.

2. The commission shall then conduct such public hearing and, in addition to the notified persons, may hear expert witnesses and shall have the power to subpoena such witnesses and records, as it deems necessary. The commission may conduct an independent investigation into the proposed designation or rescission. Within ten days after the close of the public hearing, the commission may designate the property as either a historic structure, or a historic site, or rescind the designation. After the designation or rescission has been made, notification shall be sent to the property owner or owners. Notification shall also be given to the City Clerk, Building Inspection Division, Plan Commission, and the City Assessor. The commission shall cause the designation or rescission to be recorded, at City expense, in the County Register of Deeds office.

(b) Creation of Historic District.

1. Area Designated; Analysis. For preservation purposes, the Historic Preservation Commission shall select geographically defined areas within the City to be designated as Historic Districts and shall prepare a historic preservation plan for each area. A Historic District may be designated for any geographic area of particular historic, architectural or cultural significance to the City, after application of the criteria in Section 4 above. Each historic preservation plan prepared for or by the Historic Preservation Commission shall include a cultural and architectural analysis supporting the historic significance of the area, the specific guidelines for development, and a statement of preservation objectives.

2. Review and Adoption Procedure.

a. Historic Preservation Commission. The Historic Preservation Commission shall hold a public hearing when considering the plan for a historic district. Notice of the time, place and purpose of the public hearing shall be sent by the



City Clerk to the Alderperson of the Aldermanic District or Districts in which the Historic District is located, and the owners of record, as listed in the office of the City Assessor, who are owners of the property within the proposed Historic District or are situated in whole or in part within 200 feet of the boundaries of the proposed Historic District. Said notice is to be sent at least ten days prior to the date of the public hearing. Following the public hearing, the Historic Preservation Commission shall vote to recommend, reject or withhold action of the plan.

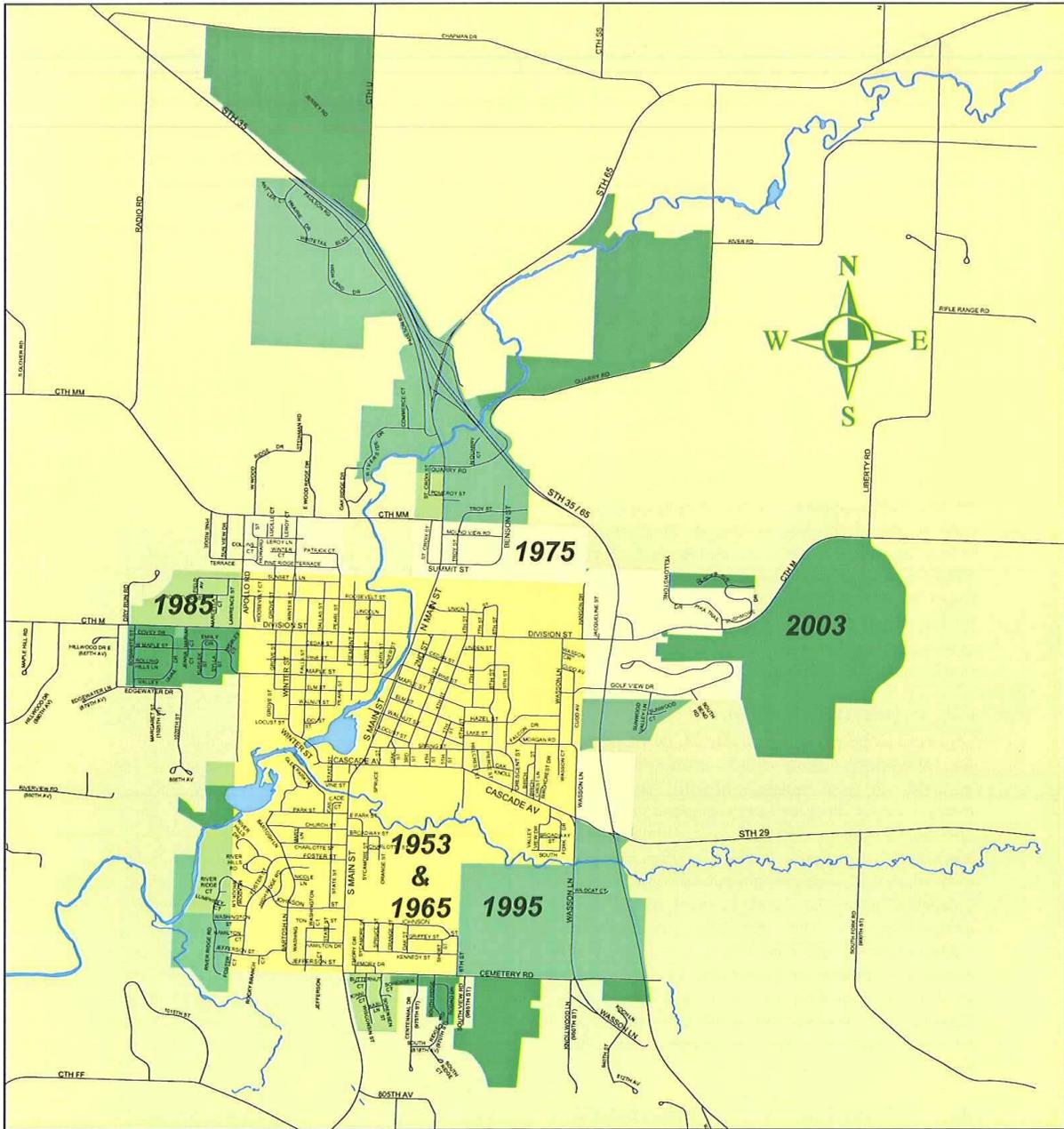
b. The Common Council. The Common Council, upon receipt of the recommendations from the Historic Preservation Commission shall hold a public hearing, notice to be given as noted in subparagraph a. above and shall, following the public hearing either designate or reject the Historic District. Designation of the Historic District shall constitute adoption of the plan prepared for that district and direct the implementation of said plan.

**(7) INTERIM CONTROL.** No building permit shall be issued by the Building Inspector for alteration, construction, demolition, or removal of a nominated historic structure, historic site, or any property or structure within a nominated historic district from the date of the meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission at which a nomination form is first presented until the final disposition of the nomination by the Historic Preservation Commission or the City Council unless such alteration, removal or demolition is authorized by formal resolution of the City Council as necessary for public health, welfare or safety. In no event shall the delay be for more than 180 days.

**(8) PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS.** Any person or persons violating any provision of this section shall be fined \$50.00 for each separate violation. Each and every day during which a violation continues shall be deemed to be a separate offense. Notice of violations shall be issued by the Building Inspector.

**(9) SEPARABILITY.** If any provision of this chapter or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this chapter and the application of such provisions to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.





- Corporate Limits 1953
- Corporate Limits 1965
- Corporate Limits 1975
- Corporate Limits 1985
- Corporate Limits 1995
- Corporate Limits 2003

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*APPENDIX C*  
*Historic Preservation Plan*

