



## REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2025 AT 6:00 PM

ROOM 2044, CITY HALL, 106 JONES STREET

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**Virtual Meeting Info:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/join> Meeting ID: 617 065 5357 Passcode: 53094 One tap mobile +16469313860 All public participants' phones will be muted during the meeting except during the public comment period.

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**3. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER**

**4. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES**

A. RDA minutes from January 15, 2025

**5. OPENING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT - *Each individual who would like to address the Committee will be permitted up to three minutes for their comments***

**6. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION WITH STEPHANIE JUHL, PROGRAMMING EVENT COORDINATOR FOR THE BENTZIN FAMILY TOWN SQUARE**

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Rock River District Vision

i. Update on branding concept

B. 111 S. Water St

i. Status update

C. Beltz Grants

i. Status update

D. Bentzin Family Town Square

i. Update on Historic Art Wall

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**9. STATUS REPORTS**

A. Housing Rehab Grants

B. Social media/messaging update (Famularo)

C. Council update (Board/Lampe)

D. Executive Director update

i. WEDA Governor's Conference recap

ii. Items for next agenda

iii. Next meeting: March 19, 2025 at 6pm

**10. FUTURE POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS**

**11. ADJOURN**

*Persons requiring other reasonable accommodations for any of the above meetings, may contact the office of the City Clerk at [cityclerk@watertownwi.gov](mailto:cityclerk@watertownwi.gov) phone 920-262-4000*

*A quorum of any City of Watertown Council, Committee, Board, Commission, or other body, may be present at this meeting for observing and gathering of information only*



**Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 6:00 pm**  
In-PERSON/VIRTUAL MEETING  
Room 2044, City Hall

**By Phone or Zoom Meeting:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join>

For the Public, Members of the media and the public may attend by calling: (US) +1 (646)931-3860  
Meeting ID: 617-065-5357  
Pass Code: 959083

All public participants' phones will be muted during the meeting except during the public comment period where applicable.

**RDA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

- 1) ~~100 W. Main St. block demolition, Town Square design etc., and publicizing town square project for possible funding from sources other than the City.~~
- 2) Facilitating quality development in downtown, and
- 3) Creating an approach and working to attract development projects downtown.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
  - A. Present: Mason Becker, Ald. Lampe, Ald. Board, Ryan Wagner, Jacob Maas, Dave Zimmermann, and Ryan Nowatka
  - B. Virtual: Karissa Hurtgen, RINKA representatives
  - C. Absent: None
  - D. Other attendees: 1 resident
3. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order at 6:02 pm
4. Approval of meeting minutes
  - A. Regular Board Minutes 12.18.24  
**Nowatka motioned to approve**  
**Board seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**
5. No public comment
6. Old Business:
  - A. **Downtown River Corridor Planning.**
    - a. Update on the branding concept. Steve Morales from RINKA shared a presentation from the last steering committee. He discussed the selected logo concept. The consensus of the board was to continue moving forward with the selected concept. Next steering committee meeting is being scheduled.
  - B. **Beltz Grants.**
    - a. Becker shared an update on the Rafah Bowls project.
    - b. Becker shared an update on 2025 funds that still need to be allocated.
  - C. **111 S. Water St.**
    - a. Becker discussed the Phase II ESA for the N First parking lot and continued conversations with the developer. The current pre-development agreement goes through March 1<sup>st</sup> with the opportunity for extensions.
  - D. **Bentzin Family Town Square: Historic Art Wall & plaques**

- a. Becker reached out to Barton Bentzin and is waiting to hear back from him. ZTI should be pouring concrete for this in the next week or two, weather permitting.

7. New Business:

A. Review and approve RDA chair and vice-chair for 2025.

- a. Becker called for nominations for chair.

**Wagner nominated Ryan Wagner for the board chair, seconded by Maas.**

**Nominations closed with no other nominations received. Wagner was unanimously elected chair for 2025**

- b. Wagner called for nominations for vice-chair.

**Wagner nominated Nowatka, seconded by Lampe.**

**Nominations closed with no other nominations received. Nowatka was unanimously elected vice-chair for 2025.**

- c. Members of the board thanked Hurtgen for her service as vice chair and her continued membership on the board.

8. Status Reports:

A. **Housing Rehab Grants:**

- a. A check is expected to be cut soon for a completed project.
- b. Becker mentioned that he will check in with Roxanne Witte from Thrive ED and plan for a PR push in the first quarter.
- c. Wagner expressed an interest in seeing quarterly press releases on this topic. Becker will work on follow-ups.

B. **Social media/messaging update:**

- a. There was discussion of a proposed social media messaging calendar for 2025.
- b. Becker will add some more points regarding the Home Rehab Grants. The board gave consensus to move forward as planned. Any other comments or suggestions can be emailed to Mason.

C. **Council update:**

- a. Board shared feedback from the last Downtown Business Meet-up at the library. Twenty-three questions were asked. Some of the questions included subjects like potential property assessments and lateral connections. Next meetup likely after the new Main St. Director is hired.
- b. Lampe discussed the upcoming elections, including the spring primary in February.

D. **Executive Director update:**

- a. Becker gave a general development update on the information that was presented in the memo in the agenda packet. He discussed the situation with some national brands closing locations across the country. Also noted, recent small business openings.
- b. Items for next agenda: members should email Becker with ideas. Mason also noted the possibility of a special RDA meeting to discuss Rock River District cost estimates from RINKA, if they are ready ahead of the next regular meeting.
- c. Next meeting is February 19, 2025, at 6 pm.

9. Adjournment at 6:55 pm

**Board motioned to adjourn.**

**Zimmermann seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.**







## BRAND VISION

By drawing on core aspects of the development; revitalization, community connections, and Watertown's unique identity, our goal is to establish a legacy development brand that celebrates the future of the Rock River District. Influenced by the natural landscape and the destinalional location along the Rock River, the brand vision evokes a sense of connection, growth, and renewal and paves the way for future generations to prosper.

**REVITALIZATION**

|

**CONNECTIVITY**

|

**FUTURE-FOCUSED**

PRIMARY LOGO

Abstract waves represent the river, renewal, and revitalization.

The foreground wave symbolizes progress and a future-forward vision.

Continuous lines evoke a feeling of connectivity.

Font intentionally relates to the Watertown logo lettering.

Varied lettering creates hierarchy and boldness.

"Deep" blue color from Watertown Branding Guide.



PRIMARY LOGO | COLOR & WHITE

With Watertown Logo

Consistency in Color

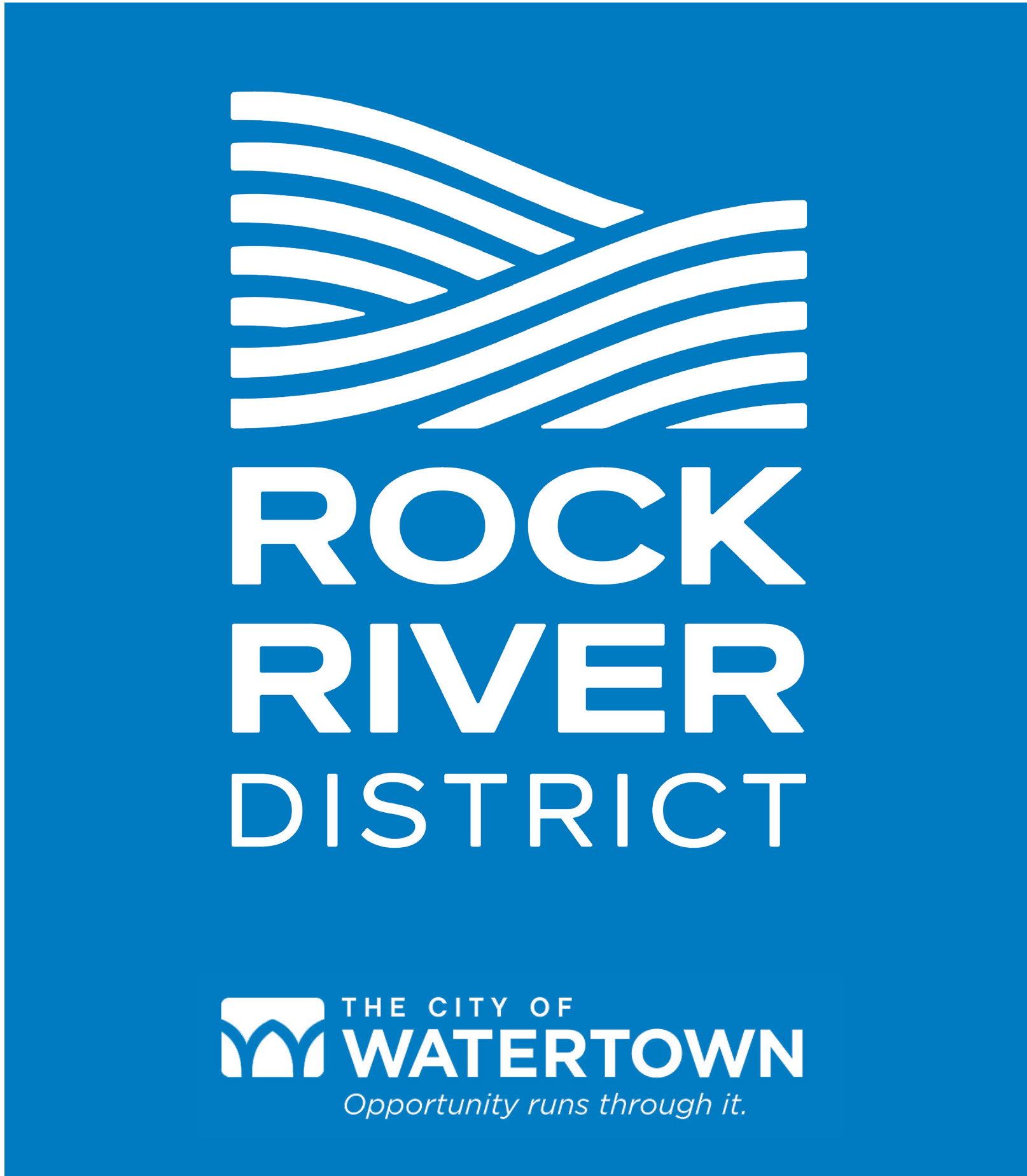
- If the Rock River District logo appears in full color, the Watertown logo must also be in full color.
- If the Rock River District logo appears in white (on a dark background), the Watertown logo must also be in white.

Hierarchy & Placement

- If the Rock River District logo is intended to be more prominent, the Watertown logo should be placed directly below the Rock River District logo.
- The Watertown logo’s width should match the width of the Rock River District logo for balanced visual alignment.

General Alignment & Spacing

- Maintain clear space around both logos to ensure readability and avoid visual clutter.
- The logos should not overlap or be too close; leave at least the height of the word “District” as spacing between them.





LOGO USAGE



Do not remove any logo accents



Do not change text format



Do not stretch logo



Do not transform in anyway



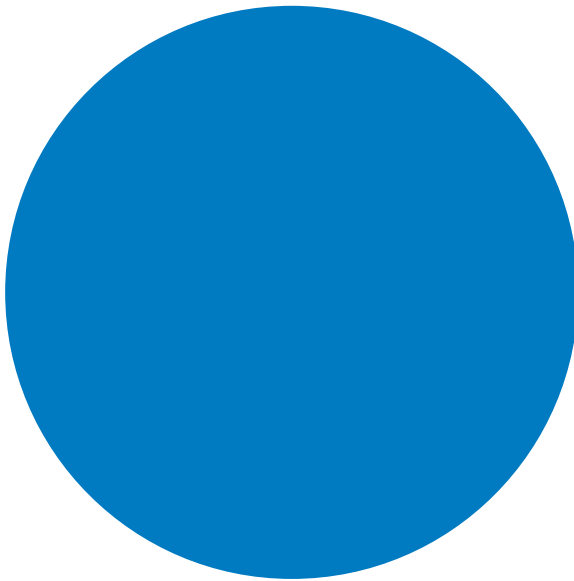
Do not alter colors



Do not use drop shadow

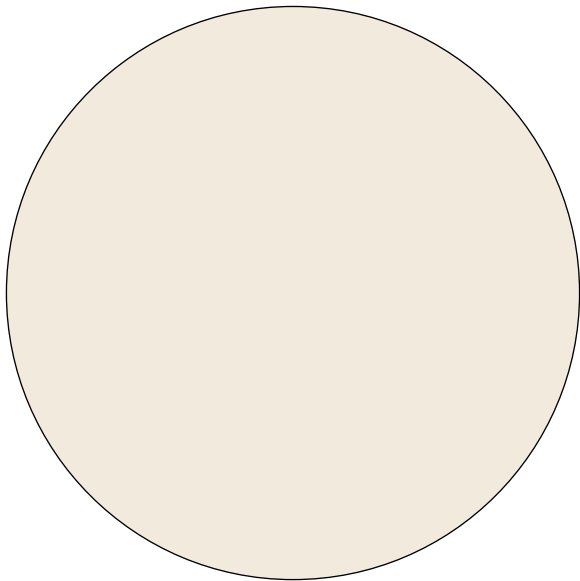
COLORS

The Rock River color palette reflects revitalization, connectivity, and a future-focused vision, inspired by the river and its lush surroundings. The bold Rock River Blue conveys strength and progress, embodying the vibrant essence of the river. Light Almond celebrates the community’s heritage, adding warmth and a sense of grounding. Watertown Blue, derived from Deep—one of Watertown’s branding colors—symbolizes the river’s prominence while connecting the region’s rural landscapes with the dynamic vitality of its waterways.



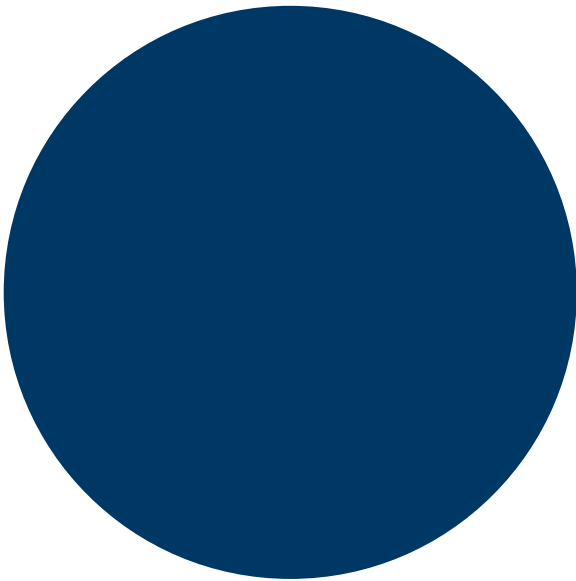
Rock River Blue  
Main Brand Color

HEX: 007BC2  
R: 0, G: 123, B: 194  
C: 88, M: 42, Y: 0, K: 0  
H: 201, S: 100, B: 76  
PANTONE: Process Blue C



Light Almond  
Large Field Brand Color

HEX: F4EBDD  
R: 244, G: 235, B: 221  
C: 3, M: 6, Y: 13, K: 0  
H: 35, S: 9, B: 95  
PAINT MATCH: Behr™ HDC-CT-18G Cotton Ball



Watertown Blue  
Deep  
Accent Brand Color

HEX: 0D3E71  
R: 0, G: 56, B: 101  
C: 100, M: 60, Y: 10, K: 53  
H: 86, S: 83, B: 74  
PANTONE: 2955 C

TYPE

LARGE  
HEADLINE

PROXIMA NOVA WIDE BOLD  
UPPER CASE

Small Headline

PROXIMA NOVA REGULAR  
Title Case

Body Copy:

By drawing on core aspects of the development; revitalization, community connections, and Watertown's unique identity, our goal is to establish a legacy development brand that celebrates the future of the Rock River District. Influenced by the natural landscape and the destinational location along the Rock River, the brand vision evokes a sense of connection, growth, and renewal and paves the way for future generations to prosper.

MONTSERRAT REGULAR  
Title Case



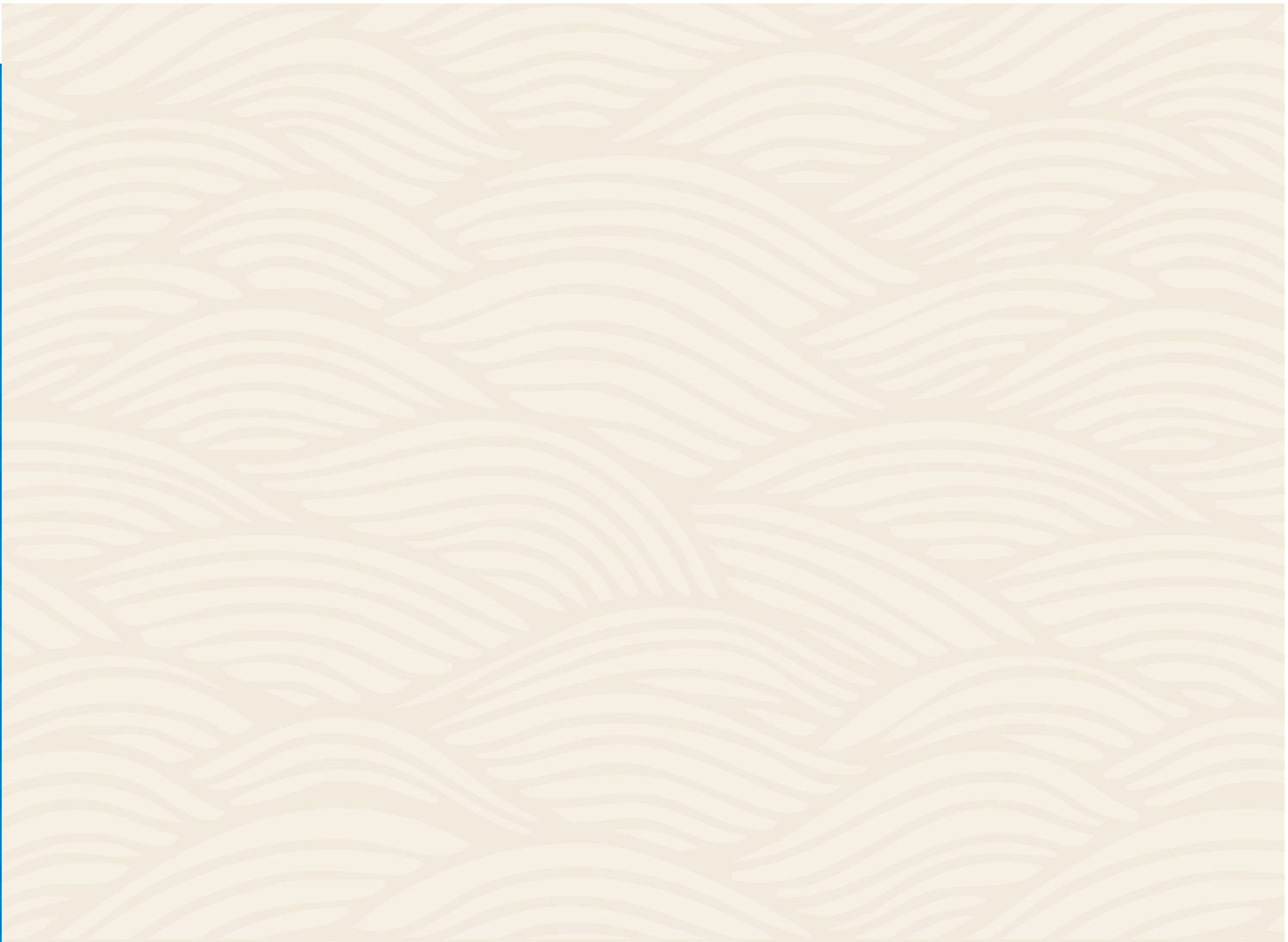
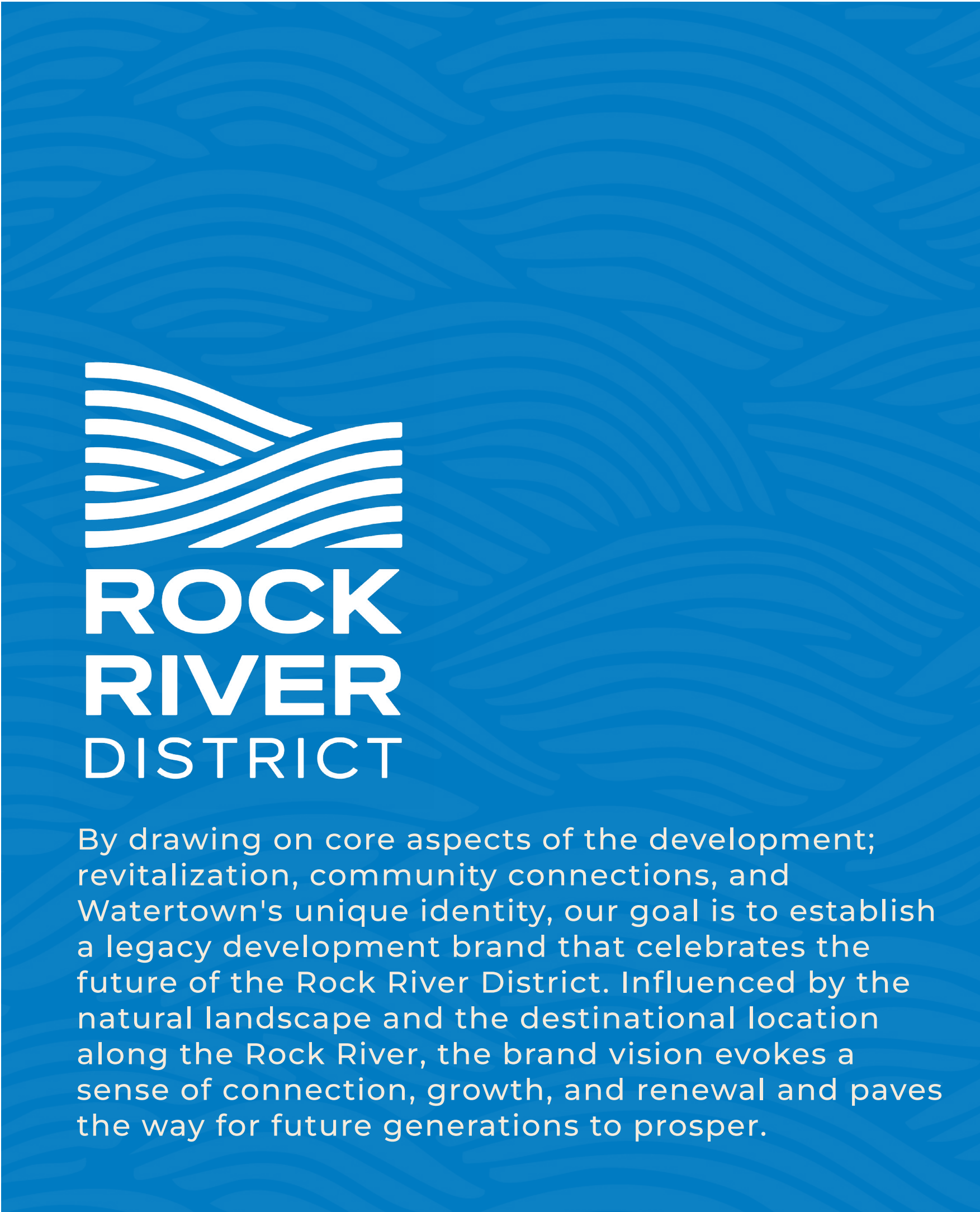
PATTERN

The Rock River District pattern reflects the soft, flowing movement of the river, creating a subtle connection to the logo and the area’s natural character. The intent of this pattern is to be understated, ensuring that all elements layered on top remain clear and legible.

The pattern should only exist on top of the Rock River District colors:

- Pattern over Rock River Blue at 5-10% transparency
- Pattern over Watertown Blue at 5-10% transparency
- Pattern over Almond at 25-35% transparency

Possible Uses:  
Social media posts  
Splash pages for marketing materials  
Background on wayfinding  
Large scale print backgrounds  
Envelope liners  
Email newsletter break section





IMAGERY

The imagery for the Rock River District radiates vibrant energy, showcasing the dynamic fusion of Watertown’s past and future. Inclusive and inviting, the visuals capture families, friends, and individuals enjoying public spaces, engaging in cultural events, and exploring local businesses. The imagery reflects Watertown’s rich heritage and forward-thinking vision, balancing the warmth of tradition with the excitement of progress, creating a vivid tapestry of connection, resilience, and growth.

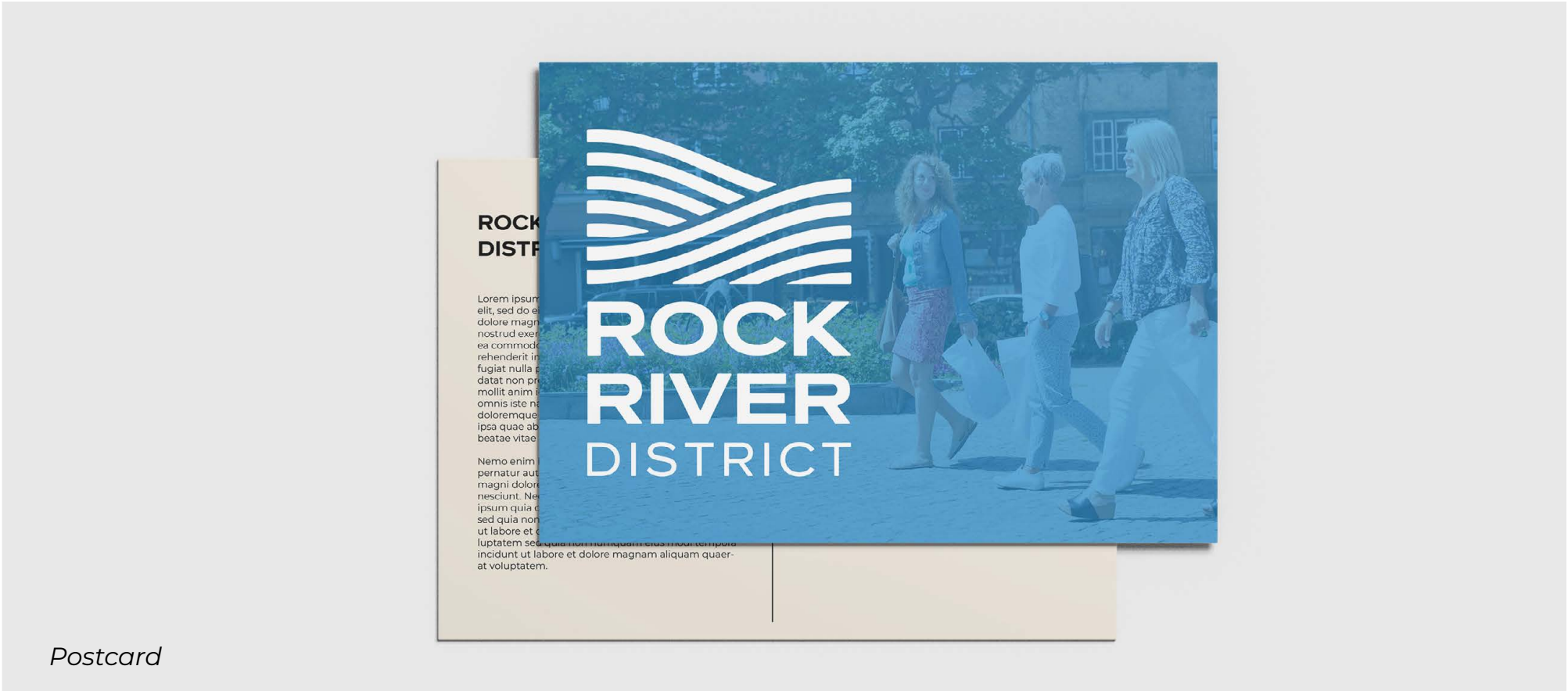




POTENTIAL MOCK UPS



Wayfinding



Postcard



Wayfinding



POTENTIAL MOCK UPS



Window Vinyl



Maintenance Vehicle



Billboard

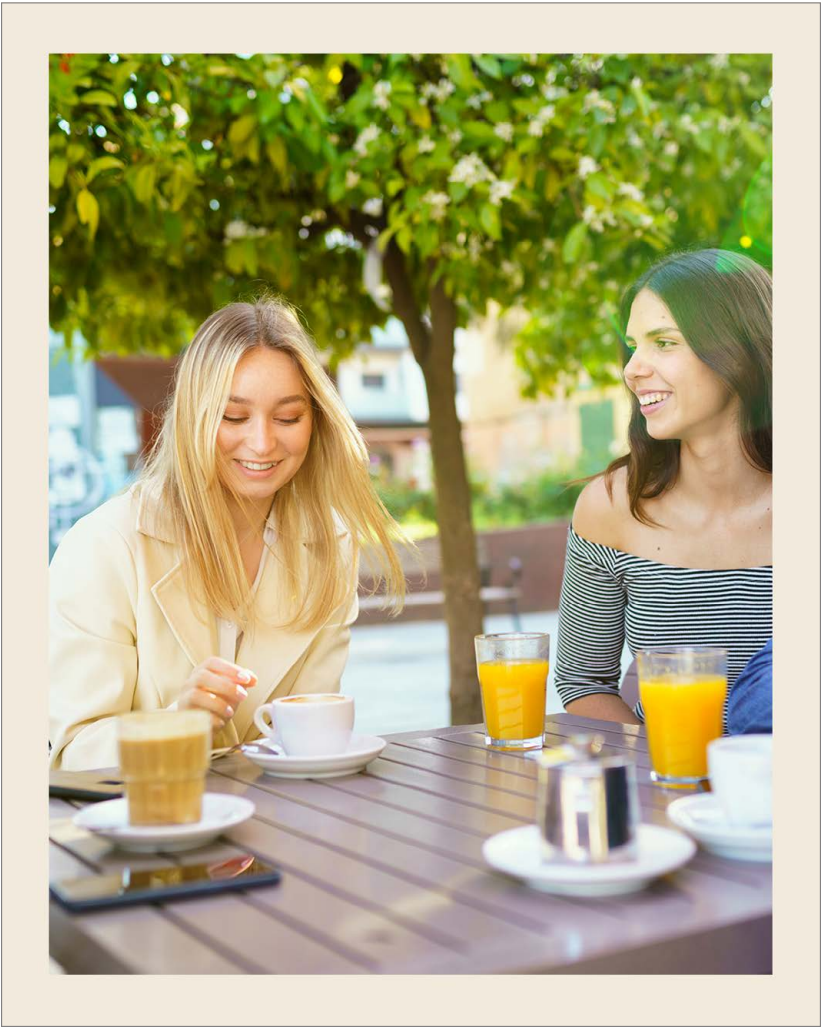


POTENTIAL SOCIAL MEDIA POST



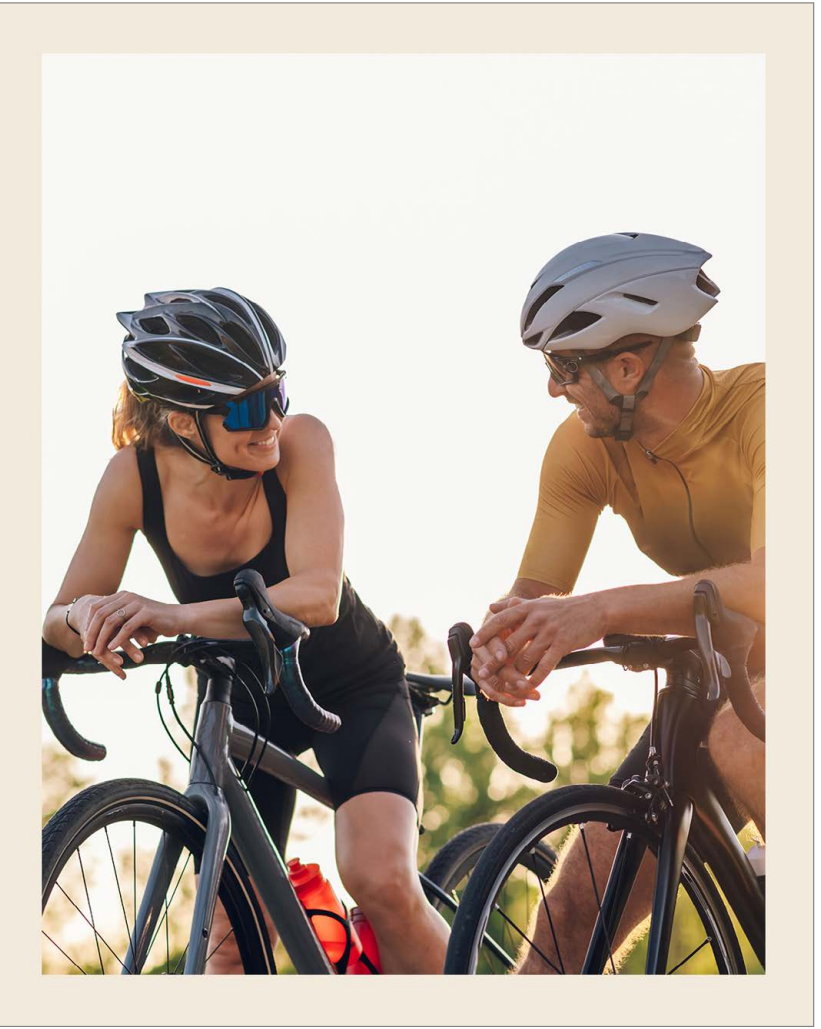


By drawing on core aspects of the development; revitalization, community connections, and Watertown's unique identity, our goal is to establish a legacy development brand that celebrates the future of the Rock River District.





Influenced by the natural landscape and the destinal location along the Rock River, the brand vision evokes a sense of connection, growth, and renewal and paves the way for future generations to prosper.



CONTACT

Anna Wainio  
awainio@rinka.com  
414.294.9366



# MEMO

## Administration

To: Finance Committee

From: Mason Becker, Manager of Economic Development and Strategic Initiatives

Date: February 10, 2025

Subject: Update on Pre-Development Agreement w/ Intrepid Investments

## Background

As committee members may recall, the City entered into a Pre-Development Agreement (PDA) with Intrepid Investments in late November 2024. This PDA allowed the developers to enter into an exclusivity window with the City of Watertown regarding two separate potential development sites, 111 S Water St (adjacent to the Bentzin Family Town Square) and the N First St parking lot, (adjacent to City Hall). This was approved at the November 25, 2024 Finance Committee meeting.

Both parties have been taking various steps to get these two sites ready for development. The developer has already completed a third-party market study of Watertown to determine the feasibility of the proposed housing developments. This was a positive first step.

At the developer's request, the City has solicited a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) from Hyde Environmental, the same firm that conducted the Phase I ESA on the N First St parking lot. Hyde has conducted soil borings and is currently analyzing results returned from a lab. This information will be informative to the developer in determining any further due diligence required on the site. Environmental concerns on the site relate to past uses that occurred decades ago.

The developer that previously had 111 S Water St under contract with the City completed several steps to gain DNR approvals for their previous development plan. Intrepid has been in contact with the DNR, and thus far, the DNR has been indicating that the previously completed steps "count" towards the development being proposed by Intrepid. As an aside, the developer shared that DNR staff have been very complimentary toward the City of Watertown and our past collaborations with them. Intrepid is working with Tetra Tech (an environmental engineering firm) to "re-tread" this environmental work for the site. Tetra Tech will also be conducting a required site walk of the property before signing off.

# MEMO

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It is likely that an extension to this PDA will be needed. In discussions with the developer, we feel that an extension of six weeks should be sufficient, with the goal of bringing a financial term sheet to the Finance Committee for consideration, on or before March 31, 2025.

## Budget Goal

Fosters community growth by assessing opportunities, stakeholder input, environmental needs, and modern code and policy priorities

## Financial Impact

None at this time. Development of these two sites will result in positive economic contributions to the City while also addressing an identified need for more housing.

## Recommendation

No action is being sought from the Finance Committee at this time, as the intent of this memo is to provide an informational update. Any request for a possible extension to the PDA will be brought at a future meeting.

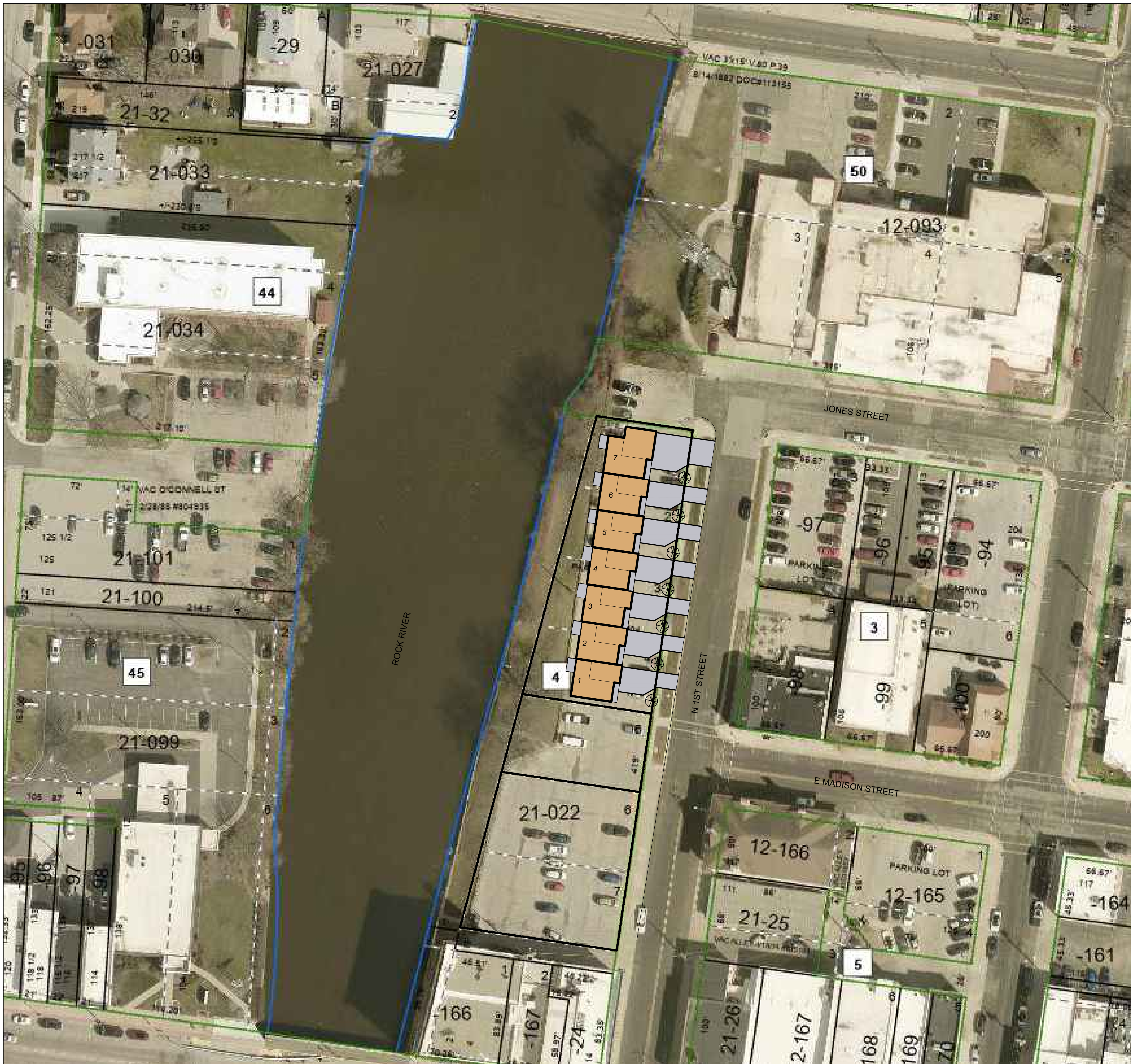




3350 SOUTH RIVER ROAD  
WEST BEND, WI 53095-7884  
(262) 334-3811 FAX: (262) 334-4990



3350 SOUTH RIVER ROAD  
WEST BEND, WI 53095-7884  
(262) 334-3811 FAX: (262) 334-4990



PROPOSED BUILDING

# Watertown Townhomes

1st Avenue  
City of Watertown, Jefferson County

Issue Date:  
10 / 03 / 2024  
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Revision:

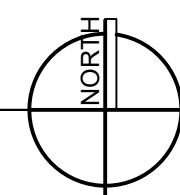
Project Number:  
24001

Sheet Title:  
CONCEPT SITE PLAN

Sheet Number:

# A-100

CONCEPT SITE PLAN



1" = 40.00'



## PROPOSED BUILDING

# Watertown Multi-Family

111 South Water Street  
City of Watertown, Jefferson County

Issue Date:  
10 / 03 / 2024

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Revision:

Project Number:  
24001

Sheet Title:  
CONCEPT SITE PLAN  
OPTION B AND  
PARKING GARAGE  
PLAN

Sheet Number:

# A-100



ARPA Monies Budgeted		Received					
FY 2024		City transferred money to RDA	100,000.00				
		RDA fee for administration of grant program (5%)	5,000.00				
		Remaining total available	95,000.00				
Property Address	Project Description	Requested	Approved Amount (Thrive ED)	Disbursed	Status	RDA Approve/Deny	CHK #
408 Baxter St	Replace windows, enclose screen porch structure	10,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	Agreement signed. Invoice and photos showing completion received 12-4-24	Approved March 26, 2024	Invoice received. Check #1682 mailed 12-5-24
313 N Montgomery St	Concrete replacement for steps	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	Still debating if will move forward. Haven't heard from in some time. Considering closed. 120524 Thrive getting more info from homeowner.		
513 S Seventh St	Siding/sealing, possible new roof	10,000.00	0.00	0.00			
206 N Eighth St	Replace front steps	3,000.00	0.00	0.00			
915 N Second St	Exterior pressure wash & paint, gutter replacement	13,350.00	9,345.00	9,345.00	Agreement signed. Paint job finished.	Approved June 19, 2024	#1665 (Heuel Painting), #1666 Midwest Repair Svcs
512 Pearl St	New windows, entry door, roof repair	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	Agreements have been signed 11-12-24. Signed agreement w/ MTB 11-27-24	Approved June 19, 2024	Paid C&D Construction \$7250 - #1696, Carew Heating \$2750 - #1697
702 S Tenth St	Porch and stairway repair, roof and railing repair.	10,000.00	10,000.00	8,500.00	Agreement signed. Roofing contractor (Kent Const.) said roof be finished first thing in spring. Eligible for 70% but doesn't have funds to cover rest, won't be moving forward.	Approved June 19, 2024	Complete Roofing (Jesus Garcia) finished roofing portion. Chk #1683 mailed 12-5-24
1415 Schuman	Bathroom floor repair/remediation	10,000.00	0.00	0.00		N/A	
218 S Montgomery St	Drainage upgrades, interior/exterior repairs	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	Approved. Agreement signed 10-11-24.	RDA approved 10-2-24	Mailed check #1686 12-23-24
410 Baxter St	Replace windows	10,000.00	5,460.18	0.00	Approved. Agreement signed 10-24-24.	RDA approved 10-2-24	Windows are done, waiting for pics/invoices. Some windows arrived damaged, need replacement.
208 S 8th St	AC replacement/chimney rehab	1,817.70	1,817.70	1,817.70	Approved. Agreement signed 10-8-24. Work completed, inspection done.	RDA approved 10-2-24	#1657 Daizy Sweeps
310 E Green St	New roof and possibly some windows	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	Received 10-3-24. Can't move forward due to lack of other funds		
209 College Ave	Porch/deck replacement, general restoration	6,000.00	0.00	0.00	Applicant getting bids as of 10-10-24		
is list does not include applications rejected or still under initial evaluation.							
Totals to date:		114,167.70	49,622.88	42,662.70			
		Remaining Available:	45,377.12				
		On-Hand Balance:	57,337.30				

is list does not include applications rejected or still under initial evaluation.

# MEMO

## Watertown Redevelopment Authority (RDA)

To: RDA Board

From: Mason Becker, RDA Executive Director

Date: February 19, 2025

Subject: WEDA 2025 Governor's Conference Recap

### Background

I was recently able to attend the WEDA 2025 Governor's Conference on Economic Development in downtown Milwaukee, which provided critical insights into workforce trends, redevelopment strategies, TIF policy updates, and funding opportunities. Below are key takeaways on some of the topics that were covered, which are relevant to the Redevelopment Authority:

#### Looming Labor Shortage & Workforce Trends

- **Historical Workforce Growth (1970s-1990s)**
  - Rapid workforce expansion due to Baby Boomers and increased female workforce participation. Since that time, workforce growth has slowed, but immigration and other factors have helped at times.
- **Current Workforce Challenges**
  - Early retirements, declining birthrates, and rising competition for workers.
  - Millennials are **late workforce bloomers**.
  - **Highly educated workforce**, but prime-age male participation rates are declining due to multiple factors...addiction (opioids) and incarceration rates were mentioned as contributing factors.
- **Future Workforce Projections**
  - Fewer people collecting unemployment than in 1970, despite a labor force **104% larger**.
  - By 2032, only **6.4 million additional workers nationwide**—net annual growth of just 90,000 workers.



# MEMO

- By **2027**, more people will be exiting the workforce than entering.
- Potential workforce solutions: Increased participation from **women, immigrants, or automation**. AI is still a long way off from being a total solution, though more companies are attempting to utilize it, largely to increase productivity of existing workers.
- **The Role of Immigration**
  - Without foreign-born workers, workforce shrinkage would have already occurred over the past five years.
  - Immigration has played a **critical role** in stabilizing the U.S. labor force.
- **Global Workforce Trends**
  - Declining birthrates are an issue in **other countries as well**, mirroring the U.S. challenge. Higher childcare costs, medical costs, etc may be contributing factors. Many people putting off starting families until later in life, family sizes also shrinking.
- **AI & Workforce Automation**
  - AI is **years away** from being a tangible solution in most sectors.
  - Customers are **skeptical of AI** replacing critical jobs (e.g., chatbots, automated phone trees).
  - **Japan's Lessons**: Offshoring, AI augmentation, delayed retirements, and urbanization have helped mitigate workforce shortages in professional jobs but **not in hands-on industries**.
  - More **job training and upskilling** will be essential for workforce sustainability.
  - **Healthcare & construction** are among the most critical sectors that **cannot** be offshored or replaced with AI.

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## TIF Policy & Redevelopment Strategies

- **TIF Law Overview**

# MEMO

- Established **circa 1976**.
- 10.8% of Wisconsin's current tax base was a result of TIF.
- **1,400 active TIDs** in the state today.
- Remains a powerful tool for redevelopment when applied correctly.
- **Wisconsin Legislature is considering increasing the TIF limit beyond 12%** of a community's equalized value, which could provide additional financing flexibility for municipalities. This will likely be discussed further during the state budget process this summer.
- **Workforce Housing Tax Credit Expansion** – Discussions are ongoing about expanding tax credits to encourage **affordable workforce housing development**.
  - Wisconsin needs an **"all of the above" approach** to housing solutions—local governments cannot simply say "we don't have housing, so we can't do anything." Communities that engage in this issue will succeed over those who stick to traditional approaches or take "wait and see" approach.

## TIF Fine-Tuning & Evaluation Metrics (John Kovari)

- **Pittsburgh Mills Mall Case Study**
  - One of the last large indoor malls built.
  - **\$50 million in TIF assistance**, but the **TIF value declined significantly by 2015**.
- **ICMA TIF Handbook** – A "best practices" reference guide. Available for purchase with a 20% discount (code: TIF20). (I will likely be purchasing a copy of this).
- **Key TIF Evaluation Metrics**
  - **Net Present Value (NPV) Analysis** – Measures long-term benefits vs. upfront costs.
  - **Leverage Analysis** – Is the developer borrowing enough from private lenders?
  - **Internal Rate of Return (IRR) Evaluation** – Determines if a project provides reasonable investor returns.
  - **Cost Assessment** – Evaluates land costs, hard and soft costs.
- **TIF & Developer Accountability**

# MEMO

- Assess how much profit the developer is making—Is the rate of return reasonable?
- Real estate is a **mid-risk investment** (stocks are generally riskier, whereas savings accounts and bonds are generally low risk).
- Governments must be willing to walk away from deals when the developer demands excessive subsidies.
- Debt Service Considerations – Ensuring TIF revenues cover financing obligations.

## Transportation-Related Investment Program (TRIP)

- **TRIP funds** can be leveraged for infrastructure improvements supporting TIF projects.
  - **Note that this is a newer concept...**I will be discussing further with our city attorney in the near future. This may be a fit for limited situations where creating or expanding a TID is not feasible or desirable.

## Grant Funding Opportunities

- Funding opportunities can be found through different resources, including grants.gov, foundation directorie, the WEDA Handbook, and through local partnerships.
- Tips for crafting winning proposals:
  - Use funder language. Tailor each application.
  - State measurable outcomes and long-term value.
  - Ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.
  - Have clear matching funds and other leverages utilized.
  - Every grant is different and can change year-to-year.
- Key takeaways:
  - Align projects with funder priorities.
  - Build funder trust through storytelling and compliance.
  - Blend multiple revenue streams effectively.

## Sectors Driving Wisconsin's Economy

### Key Industries & Emerging Trends

- **Rockwell Automation** – Example of a leader in industrial automation and smart manufacturing solutions. Automation is only going to continue growing.

# MEMO

- **Biohealth, Water, and Energy Sectors** – Growth in biotechnology, water management, and renewable energy is shaping Wisconsin’s future economy.
- **Supply Chain Innovations** – Continued adaptation post-COVID to prevent future disruptions. Many companies are evaluating potential tariffs and looking at bringing their supply chains closer to home.

## Manufacturing & Economic Growth in Wisconsin

- **Wisconsin’s Manufacturing Sector**
  - **1986 Insight from Lee Iacocca** – There was concern that the U.S. would shift away from manufacturing in favor of service-based industries.
  - **COVID-19 exposed supply chain shortfalls**, reinforcing the importance of domestic manufacturing.
  - Despite shifts in the economy, **most R&D dollars still come from manufacturing** today.
- **Hiring & Workforce Challenges**
  - The idea that a "**college degree is the new high school diploma**" is gaining traction. Trades training/apprenticeships seen as growing alternative.
  - Two-thirds of manufacturers say automation is crucial for future growth.

## Housing & Construction Innovations

### Lange Brothers (Milwaukee) – Modular Homes

- LUSH Home – “Lange Urban Sustainable Homes” A new modular housing concept.
- Rubber Mallet Construction – Simplifies on-site assembly, reducing costs and construction time. Designed to be built by 1-2 people in a short time frame.
- City of Milwaukee is looking to partner directly with a modular home manufacturer to increase supply of attainable housing.

### Habitat for Humanity

- City of Waukesha development projects highlighted. Lots tend to be smaller, traditional neighborhood design including sidewalks, etc.

# MEMO

- Partnered with the City, their council approved contributing \$1 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money to project.
- Habitat families pay a mortgage and contribute 200 hours of “sweat equity” to project.
- Online interest survey is used for screening, home visit happens with families during vetting process.
- Note: Habitat is currently looking at developing six twin builds (12 units total) across from Madison College here in Watertown.

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## Data Centers & Utility Expansion

- **Major Tech Companies Expanding in Wisconsin:**
  - **Stargate, Microsoft, and others** are developing or evaluating large-scale data centers.
- **Power Demand Considerations:**
  - New data centers require **50-500 MW of power**.
  - **Utility Expansion** – Need to **evaluate the nearest substation** before approval.
  - **Public Service Commission (PSC) Regulations:**
    - Protects ratepayers from subsidizing unused production.
    - Requires a **6-12 month approval process** for new infrastructure.
    - Transformer and power line backlog due to demand spikes.
  - New customers enter a queue for feasibility studies, which can cost hundreds of thousands (paid by the prospective customer).
  - Clawback Provisions Exist – Developers may need to return incentives if projects fail to meet commitments.

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## Broadband Expansion & Economic Growth

- Broadband, economy, and workforce development are interconnected.
- Matt Kures (UW Extension) shared workforce trends:
  - Between 2010-2020, **only 10 Wisconsin counties** saw workforce growth.



# MEMO

- Most counties are expected to **lose** working-age population over the next decade.
- Broadband access is directly linked to higher entrepreneurship rates.

## Education & Tech Inclusion Programs

- I.C. Stars Program – A two-year program designed to create a more inclusive tech workforce.

## Key Takeaways for Watertown's Redevelopment & Workforce Strategy

1. **TIF reform and potential legislative changes** could provide more flexibility for redevelopment projects. Watertown has been a great example of responsible and successful use of TIF to sustain economic growth.
2. **Workforce housing must be prioritized**—an "all-of-the-above" approach is needed to address shortages. We are fortunately focused on this in Watertown and looking at growth of both owner-occupied and rental housing options.
3. **Emerging sectors (automation, biohealth, and data centers) present new opportunities for economic development:** We are currently evaluating marketing of City-owned land on Highway A for Biohealth or similar uses.
4. **Utility and broadband expansion** must align with economic development goals, but regulatory hurdles exist. We have to recognize what projects we can and can't support right now, but we will remain engaged with Thrive ED and other groups in lobbying for infrastructure expansion.
5. **Public-private partnerships remain essential**—leveraging TIF, TRIP funds, and workforce tax credits can maximize impact. Working with groups like the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation and others will remain critical to our success.



# MEMO

I once again appreciate the opportunity to attend conferences and events like this one. I found this year's conference to be both engaging and relevant to the work we are doing here in the City of Watertown. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mason T. Becker".

Mason T. Becker

RDA Executive Director