

FROM THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

The City has been especially busy this summer. Every Department is working toward bigger strategic goals while also providing high-quality services every day! The Engineering Department has been spearheading a major goal: implementing first-phase lakefront park projects and developing a plan to complete the vision by 2030. This goal is one that takes combined effort among many Departments and consultants, but the completed amenity will provide a high quality of life experience for residents and visitors.

In a recent management team meeting, Assistant Administrator/Engineer Matt Sullivan gave Department leaders a tour of the progress at the lakefront. Matt gave a brief history of the lakefront dating back to 1893 when industrial development began in the area. We were then able to walk the pathway at the bluff base (or “toe”) and see the revetment work being done to prevent the bluff from eroding into the lake (literally, caving in!).

Previous industrial development and lack of public access to Lake Michigan was detrimental for our community, and the environment, for decades. Building demolition and environmental remediation began in the early 2000s (the City tore down the last building, part of the Peter Cooper Glue Factory, last fall). Lake Vista Park opened to the public in 2017, and the Lakeshore Commons neighborhood began in 2022. These projects were all multi-year efforts involving talented staff from many Departments. It’s remarkable.

Today, the Engineering Department is engaged in an on-going project to stabilize the North Bluff, which is expected to finish in summer 2025. We will then shape the first phase of the public park. The vision is for our lakefront to be a continuous, accessible, park experience connecting the North Bluff and Lake Vista Park through a paved waterfront pedestrian path, along with many other park features. A huge thank you to the Engineering staff leading our lakefront projects. It’s a grand vision and complex project. The July 25 “walking tour” really put how BIG this project is into perspective.

Sincerely,
Andrew J. Vickers, City Administrator

ACTIONS TAKEN (p. 2)



NEXUSACO IMPLEMENTATION

At the July 16 Council meeting, Deputy City Administrator/Finance Officer Max Gagin presented a cost containment strategy for the City's Health Insurance Fund, NexusACO. Operating under the same provider network, the UMR product offers minimal disruption for employees and savings benefits for the City. Council authorized the City Administrator to implement the program by January 1, 2025. More information for all employees will be given during fall open enrollment.

View staff presentation here: [27:15](#)

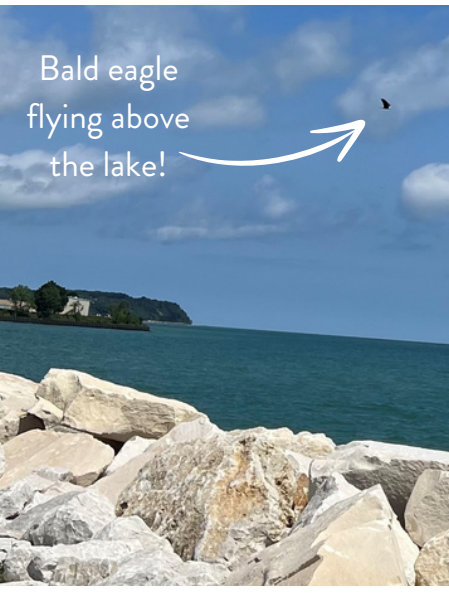
TOURISM COMMISSION SERVICES AGREEMENT

With the creation of the Marketing and Public Relations Department, the City has met one of its central strategic goals to further build capacity and resilience in our organization. On August 20, Council approved a Tourism Commission Services Agreement that aims to maximize resources and align strategic goals of both the City and Tourism Commission for how rooms tax dollars are used in the community.

Read the agreement here: [Council packet \(p. 25\)](#)



IT Director, Tom Kramer, taking a picture of wildlife.



Bald eagle flying above the lake!

FINANCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Since our first strategic action plan in 2017, Common Council discussed goals to align City and Utility Department functions. In doing so, the City seeks to improve customer service, align human resources, reduce overlapping processes, and promote business continuity staff cross-training. A first phase to implement this goal is centralizing all accounting and finance activities under the City Finance Department. On August 26, three utility accounting and support staff members will relocate to the Finance Department at City Hall. City staff will handle utility bill paying and general Utility customer service at City Hall and the Utility office at 170 W Drexel Avenue will no longer handle these transactions. Thank you to our Utility staff for working through this transition, being open to new roles, and accepting this new challenge- it is much appreciated. Welcome to City Hall!

View staff presentation here: [22:26](#)

WHOLESALE WATER AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF FRANKLIN

The City of Franklin has purchased its water from Oak Creek dating back to 1994. The current water deal between the communities expires at the end of 2024. For many years, negotiations at times stalled, and there was no Agreement for Franklin to purchase OC water past 2024. The past two years, the cities began negotiations again, which has led to a new water agreement. On August 20, the Common Council approved a new Agreement to sell water to Franklin for many decades to come. The Agreement is a huge win for our community and customer base. It also allows the City to move forward with major water quality improvement projects. Thank you, Mike Sullivan, Utility Manager, for leading this significant effort!

COUNCIL AWARDS CARBON REDUCTION STREET LIGHTING UPGRADE PROJECT

Council awarded the Carbon Reduction Street Lighting Upgrade Project to GraybaR at an estimated cost of \$350,145.50. Due to federal funding from the Carbon Reduction Program, the City will only be contributing 20% of the cost for the project, saving a total of \$327,720! The Engineering Department is working with WisDot to gain various approvals before implementing this project.

Read more here: [Council packet \(p. 145\)](#)

COUNCIL AWARDS FIRE STATION #3 PARKING LOT REHAB CONTRACT

Council awarded the Fire Station #3 Parking Lot Rehabilitation contract to LaLonde Contractors, Inc. at the estimated cost of \$145,416.76. Beginning in September, the project will replace the asphalt lot with pavement. The project is estimated to be complete in October.

COUNCIL ADOPTS RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT AFG FUNDING

The Fire Department was awarded an [Assistance to Firefighter's Grant](#), allowing the Department to purchase 27 units of essential self-contained breathing apparatuses (SCBA). The Department will be purchasing an additional 9 replacement SCBA.



Top of the bluff facing south.