



City of River Falls News Release

For Immediate Release:

August 22, 2016

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RIVER FALLS, WI, EARNS *TRAVEL GREEN WISCONSIN* CERTIFICATION FOR BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

River Falls, WI – The City of River Falls recently received [Travel Green Wisconsin](#) certification from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. The City was recognized for its [Blue Bike Program](#) introduced on Earth Day, April 22, 2016.

“Wisconsin has a longstanding tradition of conservation and Travel Green Wisconsin is an opportunity for cities, businesses, and organizations to further distinguish themselves for their sustainable practices,” said Stephani Klett, cabinet secretary, Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

“We applaud River Falls’ commitment to making sustainability a priority; knowing the importance of doing their part preserves our natural resources for future generations.”

River Falls’ Blue Bike program is a free bike-share program with about 20 bikes at five racks strategically placed around the City; each is equipped with a fix-it station.

“This is not the same type of program you see in large cities like Milwaukee or Minneapolis,” said Mike Noreen, the City’s conservation and efficiency coordinator. “With the Blue Bike program there is no credit card to swipe, no liability waiver to sign or lock to unlock – just a free bike to ride and return.”

The bikes were provided at no cost from charitable organizations and individuals. The racks and fix-it stations were purchased with a biking grant from New Belgium Brewing, and prepped and painted by the River Falls High School National Honor Society. River Falls Municipal Utilities provided a \$1,500 maintenance contract to local bike shop, Crank Worx.

According to representatives with Travel Green Wisconsin, more and more travelers are looking to stay, eat, and visit places where ‘going green’ is truly important.

“We are proud River Falls continues to grow as a green destination,” said Judy Berg, tourism sales marketing manager for the River Falls Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau. “And the Blue Bike Program is just another way visitors can enjoy our environmentally-friendly community.”

Berg said the program is also great for residents. “It allows folks who want to be portable to pick up a quick snack, run errands, and more.”

River Falls has also been recognized as a bronze-level biking community by the League of American Bicyclists’ [Bicycle Friendly America](#) program, and is known as a premier destination for [mountain biking in the Midwest](#).

The Wisconsin Department initiated Travel Green Wisconsin in 2006 to promote smart, environmentally-friendly business practices. The program is the first-of-its-kind, state-sponsored sustainable travel green certification program in the nation and has become a model for sustainable travel efforts both nationally and internationally.