



EAU CLAIRE COUNTY, WISCONSIN
5750 Old Town Hall Road ♦ Eau Claire WI 54701
(715)834-3257 ♦ Fax (715)834-3325 ♦ townofwashington.wi.gov

TOWN OF WASHINGTON NEWSLETTER

Vol. 46 No. 2 ~ August 2024

A Note from the Town Chair

Thank you to the over 200 residents who attended our June 18th special listening session and the many others who have provided feedback or comment cards to weigh in on the possibility of incorporating the Town of Washington as a village. As you probably know, resident feedback has been overwhelmingly in support of incorporation, and on June 20th the Board of Supervisors voted to move forward with the incorporation process. With expert input and counsel, we have determined that our petition to incorporate part of the Town as a village is strong and feasible. Last night at a special board meeting, the Board of Supervisors voted to submit the petition to the Circuit Court and start the legal process.

Why Incorporate

Why incorporate? So that we can control our own land use, establish fixed borders that other jurisdictions can't cross, and prevent ongoing annexations from eroding the Town's jurisdictional boundaries. While the Town of Washington has a well-deserved reputation as a strong neighbor with successful long-running collaborations with our neighboring cities and town, we believe that seeking incorporation is the only way we can ensure that the community we have built and contribute to can maintain the strong community spirit and character our residents appreciate.

Today, due to the town form of government, our residents can't elect the officials who decide how a significant portion of the Town's land is used. The City of Eau Claire controls land use within three (3) miles of its border. That means that many of the Town's land use decisions are made by elected officials, elected by residents of Eau Claire, who may have little or no understanding of the needs and interests of our community. The City of Altoona controls the Town's land use within 1.5 miles of its borders.

Village and New Town "Separate, But Together"

Unfortunately, the Wisconsin Department of Administration's requirements don't allow us to petition to incorporate the whole town. If successful, we will have a Village of Washington, mostly in the territory directly south of Eau Claire, and a new Town of Washington, mostly in the territory southeast of Altoona.

The proposed village would have an estimated population of 5,240, more than double the minimum standard required, and would be approximately 19.5 square miles, almost five times the minimum area required for incorporation within a metropolitan area within 5 miles of a 2nd class city (Eau Claire). The new Town of Washington would cover more than 34.5 square miles of predominantly agricultural land with an estimated population of 2,526.

The new village and town would each have their own governing bodies, ordinances, budgets, and elections. The village and town would move forward "separate but together," sharing resources and staff, much like the Village of Lake Hallie and the Town of Hallie do so well now, 20 years after their successful incorporation process in 2004.

It's important to note that residents in the new Town territory have voiced as much support for the incorporation as residents in the village territory.

I am also pleased to share that we have received strong letters of support for the petition from the Towns of Brunswick, Pleasant Valley, Seymour and Union and the Village of Lake Hallie.

Petition Next Steps

The notice to circulate the petition will be published, August 27, 2024. I and Jackie Vold are the petitioner and alternate petitioner.

The petition will be circulated among qualified electors in the proposed village territory after at least 10 days as required by the Wisconsin municipal incorporation process. Petition signers must be US citizens, residents in the proposed village territory, 18 years or older, and landowners.

Administrator Henning will hold two (2) information sessions for residents:

Tuesday, September 10th, 6pm at the Town Municipal Building
Thursday, September 12th, 1pm at the Town Municipal Building

Sign the Petition

The petition will be at the Town Municipal Building office by September 6th, and residents can add their signatures during business hours 8am to 4pm Monday through Thursday or 8am to 3pm on Fridays until we have enough signatures to submit. Residents in the new town territory are also welcome to sign the register of support for the incorporation at the Town office.

We've provided further information in the following pages. You can find more information on the website at <https://townofwashington.wi.gov/government/incorporation/> The Town will update the website regularly throughout the process to keep resident informed.

Please contact Administrator Henning with any questions you have about this topic at henning@townofwashington.wi.gov or 715-834-3257.

Q&A

How long will the process take?

Our consultant estimates the process will take between 18 and 24 months.

Are we guaranteed to be successful?

No. However, we believe that we have a very strong petition and that we exceed all of the minimum standards set by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. You can find links to the whole process on our website. <https://townofwashington.wi.gov/government/incorporation/>

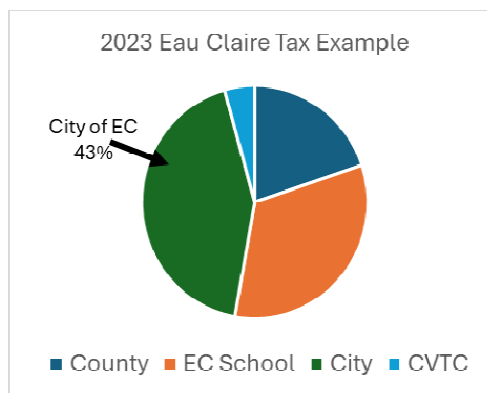
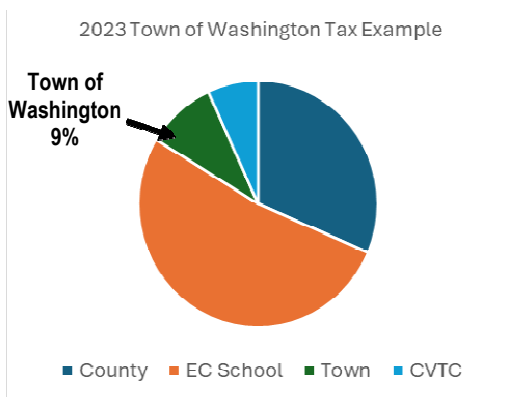
What are the tax implications of incorporation for the Village and New Town? How do these rates compare with the City of Eau Claire?

In 2023 the town tax rate per \$1,000 assessed value is \$1.09, the City of Eau Claire's tax rate is \$7.85. The Town's net tax rate is \$11.57, while the City's net tax rate is \$18.33.

You can see how taxes compare today between the Town and the City, as well as the percentage of the total tax that the Town of Washington receives, and the City of Eau Claire receives accordingly below.

The calculations on these charts and tables are based on your current 2023 tax bill.

Portion of 2023 Tax Bill That Goes to Town of Washington or City of Eau Claire



Tax Comparison 2023 Town of Washington to City of Eau Claire

2023 Town Home Assessment	2023 Town of Washington Total Tax Bill	2023 Total Tax Bill Eau Claire	Total Difference	2023 Town of Washington Tax Portion (9%)	2023 City of Eau Claire Portion (43%)
	<i>Total Net Tax Rate \$11.57 per \$1,000</i>	<i>Total Net Tax Rate \$18.33 per \$1,000</i>	Difference	<i>\$1.09 per \$1,000 assessed value</i>	<i>\$7.85 per \$1,000 assessed value</i>
\$170,000	\$1,960	\$3,110	+\$1,150	\$185	\$1,334
\$350,000	\$4,050	\$6,420	+\$2,370	\$382	\$2,748
\$500,000	\$5,780	\$9,160	+\$3,380	\$545	\$3,925
\$750,000	\$8,680	\$13,750	+\$5,070	\$818	\$5,888
\$900,000	\$10,400	\$16,500	+\$6,100	\$981	\$7,065

Tax Example with Incorporation

The calculations on these charts and tables utilize the 2023 tax figures. The new Village and Town tax rates are based on budget estimates for 2025. The new Village's tax rate is estimated to be \$1.90, and the new Town's tax rate is estimated to be \$1.22.

2023 Town Home Assessment	2023 Town of Washington	2024 New Village of Washington	2024 New Town of Washington	2023 Total Tax Bill EC
	<i>\$1.09 per \$1,000 assessed value</i>	<i>\$1.90 per \$1,000 assessed value</i>	<i>\$1.22 per \$1,000 assessed value</i>	<i>\$7.85 per \$1,000 assessed value</i>
\$170,000	\$1,960	\$2,100	\$1,990	\$3,110
\$350,000	\$4,050	\$4,330	\$4,090	\$6,420
\$500,000	\$5,780	\$6,190	\$5,850	\$9,160
\$750,000	\$8,680	\$9,280	\$8,770	\$13,750
\$900,000	\$10,400	\$11,140	\$10,530	\$16,500

Note: Additionally, The City of Eau Claire charges sewer and water user fees and assesses special charges to landowners for road construction, reconstruction, associated improvements, and utility extensions affronting landowner's property based on linear feet of frontage. The City has also imposed a wheel tax on city residents to supplement funds for road projects.



5750 Old Town Hall Road
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TOWN STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS

Administrator/ Clerk/Treasurer:	Janelle L. Henning	715-834-3257
Deputy Clerk:	Jackie Vold	715-834-3257
Deputy Treasurer:	Aleta Kauffman	715-834-3257
Chairperson:	Robert Solberg	715-829-3138
Supervisors:	Jane Mueller	715-878-4058
	James Rolbiecki	715-379-0087
	Karen Tomesh	715-835-4742
	Jeff White	715-379-0699

Town Board Meetings
3rd Thursday each month at 5:00 PM

Office Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Close at 3 PM on Fridays from May - Oct.