City Manager's Status and Information Update

August 15, 2025

Check out our Website!

City of Watertown, New York – City Manager (watertown-ny.gov)



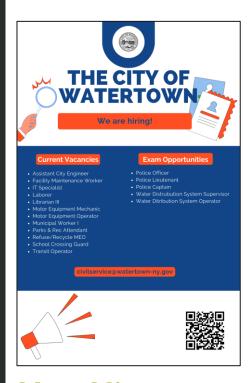
Opportunities with Watertown

There are several exciting job opportunities open with the City of Watertown, including:

✓	Assistant City Engineer	✓ F	Refuse/Recycle MEO
✓	Transit Operator	✓ I	Motor Equip Operator
✓	Laborer I	√ [Municipal Worker I
✓	Facilities Maintenance	√	nformation Technology
	Worker	9	Specialist

For a complete list of all the opportunities available, visit our website: https://watertown-portal.mycivilservice.com/jobopps

Civil Service



New Hires

We are pleased to welcome the newest City of Watertown team members and are excited to have them on board!!

Gregory Lafex – Facilities Maintenance Worker

- Michael Simpson Firefighter
- Aidan Brown Firefighter
- Olivia Simpson Firefighter
- Brandon Prusinowski Firefighter
- Joseph Orvis Firefighter

Boards and Commissions

YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

Board and Commission members provide input on a variety of issues affecting the City. Appointments to the Boards and Commissions are made by the Council, the Mayor, or the City Manager. Residents are encouraged to participate in this important process. Anyone interested in volunteering for one of the City's Boards and Commissions should send an email to afay@watertown-ny.gov with a letter of interest, including their background and experience.

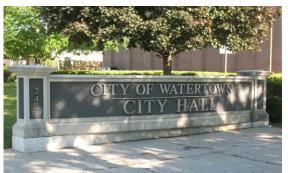
Presently, the City of Watertown has vacancies on these Boards:

- Board of Assessment Review
- Transportation Commission

Further information on any of the Boards and Commissions can be found on the City's website at the following link: https://www.watertown-ny.gov/BoardsCommissionsInfo

Use the links on the side menu to visit the webpage of each Board and Commission for a description, meeting schedule, and list of the members.

City Council Meetings



Stay updated with the meeting minutes from the August 4, 2025, City Council Meeting:

<u>08-04-2025 Meeting Minutes</u>

Reminder:

The City Council meets on the 1st

and 3rd Monday of each month at 7 PM in the Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, 245 Washington St, Watertown, NY. The 2nd Monday of each month is held for Work Sessions, which are open discussions on topics requested by the Mayor and City Council. If there is a holiday on Monday, the Council Meeting or Work Session will take place on the following day, Tuesday. The public is welcome to attend all meetings. City Council Minutes & Agendas are available

online, and the Meetings and Work Sessions are captured on video by Steve Weed Productions.

The City Council Meetings for August are **Monday, August 4,** and **Monday, August 18, 2025**. The August City Council Work Session was held on **Monday, August 11**.

Assessment Department

The assessment office will be conducting fieldwork throughout the City on Tuesdays or Wednesdays (weather permitting) each week until further notice.

Our office has officially started taking exemptions for the 2026 roll year.

Just a reminder, tax bills are due three times a year. City tax bills were mailed in July, school tax bills will be mailed in October and county bills are mailed in January.

Fire Department

Structure Fire - 465 Flower Ave:



On Sunday, August 10, 2025, at approximately 10:07 am, the City of Watertown Fire Department was dispatched to a structure fire at 465 Flower Ave. West-Ives Hill Country Club. Upon arrival, Fire Companies found smoke coming from the clubhouse restaurant, operating as Bad Apple Social. Fire was found in a one-story section adjacent to the

kitchen, which contains their walk-in cooler and freezer units. Fire was quickly

contained in this section and did not extend into the kitchen, restaurant, or pro-shop. After the investigation, it was determined that the cause of the fire was due to carelessly discarded smoking materials, which ignited the siding low to the ground and then extended into the wall cavity. At



this time, the golf club remains open, and the restaurant will be temporarily closed until repairs are made. The Fire Department was assisted by Watertown Police, Guilfoyle Ambulance, Watertown Water Department, and Code Enforcement.

Structure Fire - 1133 State Street:

On Saturday, August 9, 2025, at approximately 11:33 a.m., the City of Watertown Fire Department was dispatched to a reported stove/oven fire at 1133 State Street. Upon arrival, crews observed smoke coming from a second-floor apartment. All residents had evacuated the affected area, and no injuries were reported.

The fire was already extinguished when units arrived, and no damage was sustained to the building. The resident responsible for the incident was on scene. She had attempted to heat wax in a pot on the stove to create a fragrance in her apartment. The wax overheated and ignited. A neighbor used a fire blanket to smother the flames, containing the fire to the pot, which was then removed from the building.

Truck 1 provided ventilation for the apartment. Engine 1 checked for fire extension and confirmed there was none; the building, cabinets, and oven were undamaged. Once the smoke was cleared, all companies returned to service.

Outdoor Fire:

On August 10, 2025, Engine 1 was dispatched to a reported outdoor fire. Upon arrival, crews found an unattended shopping cart with its contents fully involved in fire.

Engine 1 extinguished the fire using two water cans. Working with Watertown Police Department (WPD) units, they searched the area for the owner of the materials but were unable to locate them or determine the cause of the ignition. One WPD officer noted having seen the cart unattended in the same location earlier in the day.

WPD assumed control of the scene and requested the Department of Public Works (DPW) to remove the materials. Engine 1 then cleared the scene and returned to service.

Hazardous Materials Response:

On August 5, 2025, the Watertown Fire Department responded with two Haz-Mat technicians to 26771 Simpson Road in the Town of Theresa for a reported odor inside a residence, where occupants were experiencing illness.

Air monitoring was conducted throughout the structure, and the source of the odor was traced to a basket of smoldering laundry. The laundry was removed from the residence, and the air was reevaluated. Once the structure was confirmed safe, the occupants were allowed to return.

<u>Public Safety Advisory – Outdoor Fire Caution:</u>

The recent dry weather conditions have led to an increase in mulch and outdoor fires, with several incidents causing minor damage to nearby structures.

It takes very little to ignite dry vegetation. Please use extreme caution when having recreational or cooking fires. Always have water or another extinguishing source readily available, use only approved fire pits, and dispose of smoking materials in a proper container.

Training:

Watertown Fire Department members participated in NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control Concrete Breaching and Heavy Rigging class. This class is part of the Urban Search and Rescue curriculum and is needed for our department to become accredited with NYS. This was a weeklong class and took place on-site at Jefferson Concrete. We would like to thank Jefferson Concrete for their hospitality and cooperation with this training. Without them this wouldn't have been possible.









Police Department

Retirement:

Officer Elizabeth M. Lewis retired on July 26, 2025, after 17 years of service to the citizens of the City of Watertown. She was given a warm sendoff at City Council Chambers on her last day of work on July 25, 2025.

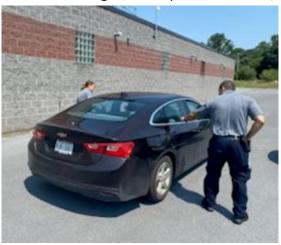


Police Academy:



they have been training in topics such as physical fitness and wellness, discretionary powers, vehicle stops & traffic enforcement, decision making, arrest processing, case law, intoxication, animal abuse cases, missing and abducted

The Black River/St. Lawrence Valley Police Academy Class of 2025-2026 is in its eighth week of training. For the past two weeks,



children/missing adult cases, and narcotics & dangerous drugs.

Therapy Dog:



Luna can put a smile on anyone's face!



Whether it's a child...or a grizzled old police lieutenant!

Recruiting:

The City of Watertown is hosting the "Police Officer" exam on Saturday, September 20, 2025. ***The deadline for applications is Sunday, August 17, 2025. Applications may be made online at https://watertown-portal.mycivilservice.com/jobopps. Scroll down to the "Scheduled Exams" section and select "Police Officer" for the application and instructions. The exam fee is \$25.00. Good luck!

Police Lateral Transfers:

The Watertown Police Department is continuing to look for **police officer transfers**. NY State-certified police officers may apply by visiting the City of Watertown Civil Service website at:

https://watertown-portal.mycivilservice.com/jobopps

Code Enforcement

160 Main Avenue Apartment Project:



The Main Avenue Apartment project has made progress! Interior work has begun (left), and the building's shell is complete (below). Code Enforcement continues to conduct weekly construction inspections.



302 Court Street Project:



The interior & exterior of the project on Court Street are near completion!

The 1st floor will be classrooms for Jefferson-Lewis Boces and the 2nd floor will be apartments.





Code Enforcement continues to respond to complaints and conduct inspections related to Property Maintenance Issues, including trash accumulation, tall grass, overgrown weeds, and brush removal.

From January 1, 2025, to the present, the Code Enforcement Department has issued the following:

- 458 Permits
- 622 Trash & Debris violation letters
- 141 Property Maintenance violation letters
- 345 Tall Grass violation letters
- 132 Properties were referred to the City's 3rd party contractor for Tall Grass violations, 86 were removed by the City's 3rd-party contractor
- 130 Properties were referred to the City's 3rd party contractor for Trash & Debris violations, 62 were removed by the City's 3rd-party contractor

Ongoing Projects That Have Been Permitted/Project Cost:

- 302 Court Street Renovation for 11 New Apartments on the second floor. Project Cost: \$1,700,000.00
- 328 Walker Avenue/ Meadowbrook Apartments: New roofs on all buildings. Project Cost: \$1,875,000.00
- 981 Waterman Drive- Sackets Harbor Brewing Additions. Project Cost: \$650,000.00

- 160 Main Avenue 63 New Apartments. Project Cost: \$20,340,971.00
- 136 Court Street 5 new apartments, 2nd and 3rd floor.
 Project Cost: \$300,000.00
- 700 William T. Field new women's locker room and generator relocation. Project Cost: \$538,500.00
- 447 Flower Avenue West, new single-family home. Project Cost: \$500,000.00
- 231 Commerce Drive -DePaul Apartments 123 units 4-story building-Project Cost: \$37,800,000.00

This month, the Code Enforcement Department continued its partnership with the Neighbors of Watertown, performing inspections in support of the T-HIP Grant program.

The Department also assisted the Watertown Police Department and the Department of Public Works in addressing issues involving individuals congregating and leaving trash and debris in public spaces, including parks, trails, and walkways.

The Department has begun actively addressing properties through the Vacant and Blighted Homes Program. Multiple unsafe structure notices have been issued, and hearings have been held to bring these properties into compliance or to move forward with demolition where necessary. Additional notices and hearings will take place over the coming months.

We are currently working out the details of a partnership with Neighbors of Watertown to pursue grant opportunities aimed at rehabilitating vacant properties. This grant has the potential to bring in \$2.5 million, which would be used specifically to restore vacant homes and return them to the housing market. Our efforts remain focused on identifying and implementing opportunities to address vacant and blighted homes in a timely manner, while minimizing costs to the City.

Completed Projects:

- 403 Washington Street Repairs to the First Presbyterian Church Steeple. Project Cost: \$2,359,800.00
- 124 Franklin Street JCC offices. Project Cost: \$2,000,000.00
- 434 Eastern Blvd. 50x180 Storage Building. Project Cost: \$600,000.00
- 216 Washington Street interior renovations. Project Cost: \$330,000.00

Upcoming Project:

• 1316 Washington Street - Samaritan Medical Pharmacy to be located in the former Key Bank location.

Buildings & Grounds:

The Buildings and Grounds crew has completed the summer landscaping. New hostas have been planted at both City Hall and the Flower Memorial Library.

Additionally, the picnic tables have been refinished and placed in front of City Hall, on the lawn and under the canopy for the weekly Farm and Craft Market.





Engineering Department

Burlington Street Reconstruction:



Burlington Street is undergoing a full reconstruction, including new water and sanitary sewer mains, new sidewalks, retaining walls, gas main and utility poles. POWIS Contracting, Inc., has completed installing the new water main and services on Burlington Street with

testing and chlorination work scheduled prior to putting the new main in service. The sanitary sewer and services have also been

installed, tested and are in service at this time. Installation of the new storm drainage system is currently underway. National Grid Electric has begun installing the new utility poles on Burlington Street and once complete, they will install the new gas main and services. The project remains on schedule for substantial completion by late Fall.



<u>Marble Balustrade and Loading Dock Restoration Project - Flowers Memorial Library:</u>

The Flower Memorial Library Marble Balustrade & Loading Dock Restoration Project is currently in the Design Phase. Once designed, it will then be submitted to the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for grant approval. Flower Memorial Library is listed and under the protection of historic properties in New York State. Following is the scope of work for this project as shown in the Specifications, Drawing A-1, and bidding documents and as directed by the City Engineer:

- 1. Restoring the existing West Lawn Marble Balustrade exterior by removing, raking, repointing, repairing, patching, resetting, cleaning, and consolidating the complete Balustrade located at the Flower Memorial Library.
- 2. Removing and replacing the existing concrete sidewalk located at the Washington Street western side of the Flower Memorial Library Balustrade with a concrete sidewalk that will be approximately 170 feet long. We also plan on removing and replacing a 6'x8' entrance concrete sidewalk at the Washington Street Flower Memorial
- 3. Removing and replacing the existing 4-foot-wide entrance concrete sidewalk located at the southern and eastern sides of the Flower Memorial Library with a new concrete sidewalk that will be approximately 120 feet long.
- 4. Restoring the existing exterior northern side of the Flower Memorial Library Loading Dock by removing, repairing, patching, resetting, cleaning, and sealing.





Western Outfall Backwater Valve Pilot Program:

City staff are working with homeowners in the Western Outfall neighborhoods who have applied for the reimbursement program to offset a portion of the cost for the installation of a backwater valve on their sewer lateral. To date, two residents have completed the installations. We encourage anyone in the pilot area to reach out to City staff for information on the program.

The Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP):

This project involves improvements to the pedestrian crossings at 8 intersections in the city. The project is funded through programs administered by NYS DOT. The project is scheduled for a re-bid with a timeline for construction completion in 2026. The intersections involved in the project are:

- Mill Street at East/West Main Streets
- Washington St at Clinton /Sterling Streets
- Washington Street at Mullin/Academy Streets
- Washington Street at Brooke Drive
- Arsenal Street at Sherman Street
- Arsenal Street at Massey St South
- Coffeen Street at Vanduzee Street
- Coffeen Street at Howk Street

Traffic Signal Upgrade Project:

Engineering staff are working in concert with the Department of Public Works to oversee the design of improvements/upgrades to 4 signalized intersections in the city. The project will replace 40+ year old traffic signal components and address substandard pedestrian crossings at 2 of these locations. We anticipate a Spring/Summer 2026 construction season for completion of this project. Funding for this project will be from the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program, (CHIPS) administered by NYS DOT.

Sewer Lift Station Upgrades:

Staff have been working with the Wastewater Treatment Plant to develop plans for upgrades to the control system at three sanitary sewer pump stations. The improvements will improve pump cycle efficiency, provide for a backup power supply and improve the remote monitoring capability. The lift stations at Lachenaeur Drive and at Cedar Street will be separate projects involving a replacement of the primary pumping components as well as the control systems. A Summer/Fall 2026 construction is anticipated.

Planning Department

TREE CARE ADVISORY:

The City's Street Tree Advisory Board, Tree Watertown, is reminding residents and businesses in the City of Watertown and throughout the region to water their trees, especially newly planted younger trees, to keep them healthy this summer.

The lack of significant rainfall, coupled with extremely hot and sunny weather conditions over the past two months, is starting to stress trees throughout the community. Trees in front of our homes and in our backyards provide us all with many economic, environmental, and aesthetic benefits and it is important to keep them healthy. Adequate water is one of the most important things to keep your trees growing and strong.



Listed below are a few tips/ideas to guide your watering:

- Place a garden hose underneath the tree near the trunk. Set the hose to a slow trickle and water for 20 minutes. Move the hose several times during watering to distribute the water evenly.
- Place a sprinkler underneath the tree near the trunk and water for 20-30 minutes.
- Use a five-gallon bucket and dump 5-6 buckets around the trunk of the tree.
- Water every 7 to 10 days until there is adequate rain (at least 1 inch of rain).
- Watering larger established trees is important as well. Simply let your hose or sprinkler run a little longer to make sure your tree is adequately watered.
- Using shredded bark or woodchip mulch around your tree is important as it helps to reduce evaporation and improve water absorption.
- Water is relatively inexpensive. For approximately 50 cents per week, you can do a lot of good for your tree and keep it growing strong and healthy.

Public Works Department

Roads Crew:

Crews are out working on replacing ADA's throughout the city. Much safer now.





Buildings and Grounds:



Even during a drought, the vegetation still needs to be maintained. Crews are out cutting and trimming.



Electrical:

DPW crews have been working on replacing and updating street lighting. The old sodium lights are being removed and replaced with more efficient LEDS.





Sanitary:



DPW crews are repairing another sanitary service. Whether it is broken, clogged, or full of roots, the crew does their best to keep everything maintained. The crews have also been busy cleaning and monitoring CCTV as much as they can to keep up on maintenance.

Buildings and Grounds:



Crews completing a little fountain maintenance and its always a good time for some confined space training.

Water Department

Lead Service Replacements:





As of August 11, 2025 three Galvanized services have been replaced and two additional will occur in coming days.

Service Repair:



Multiple service repairs were completed, including ball valve replacements, curb box resets, and frozen meter replacements. One service on Massey Street required repairs both in the street and at the curb stop.

Additional Work:

Distribution Staff assist with street reconstruction by the contractor on Burlington Street. Service connections to the new main concluded on August 7, 2025. Final tie-ins are scheduled for August 14, 2025.

Annual hydrant painting has continued and to date 109 hydrants have been touched up.



Staff assisted with contracted work for a new hydrant install on Commerce Park Dr. and with repairs to the fire service at 740 Water Street.





The week of August 4, the elevated tank in the park was isolated and then drained on August 8th for contracted inspection and cathodic protection repair.

Parks and Recreation Department

Playground Maintenance:

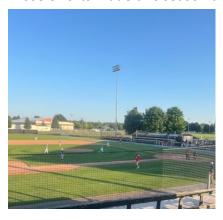


Parks & Recreation crews have been working to fill many of our playgrounds with fresh engineered wood fiber. There is still plenty of summer left to enjoy these.

2025 Youth Baseball All-Star Games:

The 10U and 13U All-Star baseball games took place on Monday, August 11th, marking the end of the season. Congratulations to all the players, and sincere thanks to the volunteers whose efforts made this season a success!





Skatepark Maintenance:

Crews have been performing annual maintenance, including repainting the skatepark elements and resealing the blacktop.





Pickle Ball Clinic:

We are hosting a pickleball clinic at Thompson Park, SEPTEMBER 9^{TH} & 10TH FROM 6:00 – 7:30 PM. Whether you are brand new to the game or looking to improve your skills, this clinic is a great opportunity to learn and grow. Our experienced instructors provide guidance tailored to all skill levels, so no matter where you're starting from, you'll get the support you need to improve. Come check it out and elevate your game!



2025 Harvest Festival – September 26-28th:

Mark your calendars! This year's Harvest Festival comes with a new look and a new location. Join us at the Fairgrounds for carnival rides, a Volksmarch, live entertainment, vendors, food, and drinks.



Harvest Festival Volksmarch:

VOLKSMARCH: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH! This free event, presented in partnership with the North Country German American Club, kicks off at the Fairgrounds. Enjoy a scenic fall family walk along the beautiful Black River and through the JCC walking trails before returning to the Fairgrounds. Bratwurst and beverages will be available upon your return. This walk is open to all ages—just register using the link below!



Adult Kickball League:

Register your team for the City of Watertown Parks and Recreation's annual fall Kickball League! A chance for players to channel their inner youth while competing against other teams!



Fall Baseball:

Sign up for the annual Fall Sandlot Baseball program! Enjoy weekly skill development sessions and pickup games—a great way to stay active and keep playing baseball.



Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library

We value your feedback! We would love to hear your thoughts on this year's Summer Reading Program.

Scan the QR code, visit the link below, or fill out a paper copy in the library to share your thoughts. We greatly appreciate the help!

https://forms.gle/9vNPgwX5wGz2NSi29



The Great Library Escape: Teen & Adult Escape Room



August 23rd
from 10:00am-3:00pm
in the Community Room
For ages 13 and up

Try your hand at our Library Themed Escape Room!

You and your friends have been locked in and need to find the key to escape! You'll have 45 minutes to solve puzzles and find clues to escape the library!

Registration preferred, walks-in welcome if a time slot is available! Limit of 5 per group.

Roswell P. Flower
Memorial Library
Questions? Contact Ashley M: 315.785.7714

Call 315-785-7714 to register!



