



# CITY OF JANESVILLE

*Wisconsin's Park Place:*

*Discover the community of choice  
to realize life's opportunities*

## CITY OF JANESVILLE

### City Assessor

*The citizens of Janesville choose this community, not just as a place to live, but as a place to realize life's opportunities. We strive to sustain a community culture where differences are recognized, understood, and appreciated. As such, the City of Janesville recognizes the importance of developing an environment where diversity is not merely accepted but embraced and celebrated. As public servants, we believe everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. To this end, we will diligently recruit and retain the most talented employees in an environment that fosters maximizing one's potential. Therefore, we encourage individuals from all backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences to consider employment with the City of Janesville and serve the residents of "Wisconsin's Park Place."*

The City of Janesville, Wisconsin is pleased to announce the recruitment and selection process for our City Assessor vacancy. This brochure provides background information on the City of Janesville and the municipal organization. Candidates interested in applying for the position should submit their online application, résumé, cover letter, and contact information for five professional references through the City's website at [www.ci.janesville.wi.us/jobs](http://www.ci.janesville.wi.us/jobs). Only properly completed applications submitted on Janesville's HR jobs webpage will be considered. The position is open until filled, with a first review of applications expected on August 7, 2015. Additional information about the City can be found on its website at [www.ci.janesville.wi.us](http://www.ci.janesville.wi.us).

#### **JOB ANNOUNCEMENT City Assessor**

Janesville, WI, (63,575), a well-regarded Council-Manager community in scenic south central Wisconsin seeks experienced, creative, team-focused, and service-oriented professional to lead the City Assessor's Office in the work functions and tasks required to complete the Assessment Roll including fulfilling all requisite reporting to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue and City Administration. Responsible for six FTEs and a \$493,400 operating budget.

Strong work ethic, integrity, proved and developed leadership, management, analytical & communication skills, adaptability and creativity essential; collaborator with problem solving skills & team building orientation; planning & organizational skills; proven ability to initiate & implement. Duties include: planning and directing the work activities and operations of the City Assessor's Office as set forth by the City Council and City Administration, City

policy, and applicable state and federal regulations. A Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in Public Administration, Business Administration, Finance, Economics, Geography, Real Estate, City Planning, or a closely related field; Wisconsin Certified Assessor II certification. Professional Appraiser or Assessor's designation is desired. Minimum of 5 years of progressively responsible real and personal property appraisal experience with a minimum of three years experience supervising direct reports.

Starting Salary: \$85,000 firm with opportunity to earn up to 5% after 6 months based on good job performance. Excellent fringe benefits. The job description and additional information may be found at: [www.ci.janesville.wi.us/jobs](http://www.ci.janesville.wi.us/jobs). Only properly completed applications submitted on Janesville's HR jobs webpage will be considered. Position open until filled. August 7, 2015 first review of applications.

Qualified persons should submit a cover letter, résumé of experience and qualifications, and five professional references through the link provided above. EOE

#### **COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS**

The City of Janesville (population 63,575) is a historic, full-service community located on the Rock River amidst the rolling hills of scenic south central Wisconsin. Known as Wisconsin's "Park Place," Janesville has an abundance of beautiful parks and recreation areas. Following the Black Hawk War of 1832, the first settlers arrived in Janesville in 1835. In 1836, the territorial legislature established Janesville as the county seat on the claim of Henry Janes -- a small tract of land that is marked today by the intersection of Main and Milwaukee Streets. Janesville grew steadily as new settlers arrived to farm the fertile land along the Rock River. The Rock River was also an important element in the City's early and continued economic success. The River was used for water power, and in the 1840s, dams, bridges, lumber, grist, and woolen mills were built along the River. Agriculture was a critical economic engine contributing to the development of three railroad lines which furthered the growth of Janesville prior to the Civil War. Janesville was incorporated as a city in 1853. By 1900, Janesville had grown to 13,000 people and by 1925, there were 22,000 residents. The largest groups of immigrants were natives of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Janesville, in the early 1900s, was a modern city with concrete curbs and gutters, electric lighting, and electric street rail cars

in its commercial district. In the decades to follow, Janesville continued to prosper, with General Motors and Parker Pen serving as the area's principal employers. Janesville residents are proud of their history and are dedicated to its preservation. Twenty percent of Wisconsin's buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places can be found in Janesville. Throughout the downtown, restored buildings house commercial businesses and offices. Janesville has six historic districts, and residents take great care to ensure that private and public buildings are carefully maintained and restored. Janesville residents are particularly proud of the Tallman House, an 1857 26-room Italianate villa style mansion which is the only private home still in existence in Wisconsin that can boast Abraham Lincoln as an overnight guest. Thousands of visitors come to Janesville each year to tour the Tallman House.

#### Janesville Quick Facts

- Population: 63,575
- County: Rock (Janesville is the County Seat)
- Median Home Sale Price (2015): \$120,100
- Park Land: 2,590 acres
- Square Miles: 33.86 square miles
- Housing Units: 27,996 (71% owner occupied)
- Median Household Income (2012): \$49,020
- Bike Trails: 25+ miles

## COMMUNITY LIFE

Janesville residents often say that they grew up in Janesville and never wanted to leave, or moved to Janesville and decided Janesville was where they wanted to put down roots and raise their families. Excellent schools, affordable and high-quality housing, beautiful parks, outstanding recreational opportunities, low crime rate, and numerous cultural opportunities all contribute to Janesville's appeal.

## Cultural Amenities

In 2004, the Janesville Performing Arts Center opened, presenting more than 90 events annually, drawing 100,000 visitors from the region. The City of Janesville invested \$1 million in the Center, which hosts artists in dance, music, and ballet. The Helen Jeffris Wood Museum is the latest addition to the Rock County Historical Society's facilities. The Museum Center is housed in the 1912 Prairie-style residence of Stanley Dexter Tallman and includes a changing exhibit gallery, children's interactive area, and a gift shop. In addition, Janesville is home to the Gray's Brewing Company, a 5th generation family business that began in 1856. With 159 years of operation, Gray's Brewing Company is proud to be the nation's oldest family-owned beverage company. The microbrewery also prides itself on its flavorful line of beers, root beer, and cream soda. The Janesville Jets Hockey Team, a recent addition to the North American Hockey League, is based out of the Janesville Ice Arena. The Janesville Convention and Visitor's Bureau has a complete listing of cultural amenities and attractions on its website at [www.janesvillecvb.com](http://www.janesvillecvb.com).

## Educational System

Janesville's educational system is outstanding, with 88% of its students graduating high school. Janesville has 12 elementary schools, three middle schools, two high schools, charter schools, and numerous private school opportunities. The Janesville Academy for International Studies, a charter high school that focuses on teaching global perspectives, is located on the University of Wisconsin-Rock County campus, and the Guide Language Center, which offers over 10 foreign languages, is located downtown. There are several higher educational opportunities, as well, including the two-year associate degree University of Wisconsin-Rock County located in Janesville with over 1,300 students. The University of Wisconsin-Rock County has collaborative programs with several UW Universities that allow students to earn Bachelor degrees while attending classes on the UW-Rock County campus or online. The UW-Rock County Campus recently added a new four year engineering degree program. The University of Wisconsin-Madison is located one hour north of Janesville and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is located one half hour northeast of Janesville. In 1911, Wisconsin pioneered the development of vocational, technical, and adult education with the founding of Wisconsin's technical college system. Blackhawk Technical College, located three miles south of Janesville, provides technical training for Janesville area workers and designs customized training for area employers.



## Parks & Recreation

Janesville is known, and is proud of its recognition, as "Wisconsin's Park Place," and the crown jewel of the Janesville park system is the Rotary Botanical Gardens, a 20-acre non-profit botanic garden that is home to numerous themed gardens including Japanese, Scottish, French, Formal, Italian, and English Cottage. There are also Shade, Prairie, and Woodland Gardens. On site are a visitor center, gift shop, and beautiful banquet/meeting facility that may be rented for special events. Each holiday season, the Rotary Botanical Gardens host a Holiday Lights Walk that is visited by thousands of residents and includes a decorated model train exhibit. Adjacent to Rotary Gardens is Lion's Beach, a 27-acre spring-fed lake open for public swimming. The City has developed an extensive 25+-mile bikeway system that connects parks, downtown, and residential areas. The system runs along the river and through natural valleys throughout the community, and is widely used.

There are 64 parks which comprise Janesville's impressive park system. Riverside Park includes a boat launch, splash

pad, 18-hole golf course, 87 acres with nature trails, sand court volleyball, and picnic pavilions. Rockport Park is Janesville's largest park at 246 acres and includes an outdoor Olympic swimming pool with diving well, the Peace Park Playground and six miles of hiking trails. Traxler Park is home to the 19-time national champion Rock Aqua Jays Water Ski Show Team, who perform throughout the summer. Traxler Park also hosts a boat launch and Veterans Memorial Plaza. Numerous other parks include tennis courts, basketball courts, baseball and softball diamonds, fishing opportunities, and children's play equipment. Palmer Park has a wading pool, C.A.M.D.E.N. Playground, sand court volleyball, nature trails, softball and tennis courts, a concession stand, picnic pavilions, sledding along Edge Hill Drive, tourist information, and a pet exercise and training area. The Recreation Division also operates a year round Senior Center serving approximately 800 members, a Public Ice Arena which is home to the Janesville Jets and eight user groups, and year-round recreation programming including youth and adult programs, sports, and special events. Seasonal facilities include Dawson Softball Complex, a four diamond league and tournament facility.



## ***Economic Development***

The City of Janesville has enjoyed steady growth and development since its establishment as the county seat in 1836. This long history of strong industry and economic success has helped turn the City into a major commercial and industrial sector for the state-line area. This success is due to a collaborative, action-oriented approach to economic development. The City has steadily recovered from the closure of the General Motors plant in 2008 with the addition of new and expanding businesses. The City's Economic Development Office is a one-stop source of information and assistance in the site location process and for other development needs. It focuses its efforts on business retention and expansion, industry attraction, downtown revitalization, and development support services. The goals of the City's economic development activities are the creation of new jobs, the expansion and diversification of the local tax base, and stimulation of the local economy. The Economic Development Office works closely with other state, regional, and local development organizations, including Forward Janesville and Rock County 5.0, to create a comprehensive approach to economic development efforts.

Janesville has nine open Tax Increment Financing Districts to stimulate the redevelopment of the downtown, to encourage existing industry expansions, and to create new, fully-improved industrial parks. The City works to identify those industries in-

terested in expanding and then assists in identifying sites, determining local costs, and addressing other issues that may arise. The Janesville Innovation Center (JIC) is a 22,000 square foot facility that offers office and manufacturing suites for businesses looking to start up and expand, and provides access to technical and business support to assist JIC tenants with their future growth. In 2014, the City worked closely with the business community and residents to develop the new Rock Renaissance Area Redevelopment and Implementation Strategy (ARISE).

Janesville's largest employer is the Mercy Health System headquartered in Janesville with over 3500 employees. Other major employers include the Janesville School District, Rock County, Grainger Industrial Supply, Wal-Mart/Sam's Club, Blains Supply, Blackhawk Technical College, the City of Janesville, J. P. Cullen & Sons, Lemans Corporation, Seneca Foods Corporation, and a recent merger of Dean Health System and St. Mary's Janesville under SSM Health Care.

Janesville is home to numerous shopping and dining opportunities. The Janesville Mall is a large regional mall home to 70 stores, including the Boston Store, Kohl's, and Sears. The Pine Tree Plaza is an open air center with a movie theater, restaurants, Old Navy, Home Depot, Gander Mountain, and several other retail establishments. At least nine other retail centers provide shopping, dining, and personal service amenities for Janesville residents.

## **CITY GOVERNMENT**

The City of Janesville adopted the Council-Manager form of government in 1923. The Janesville Common Council has seven members who are elected at large on a nonpartisan basis. Council members serve two-year, overlapping terms, and are non-salaried. The Council President is elected from among the Common Council members and presides over Council meetings. The Common Council appoints the Manager, who serves as the City's Chief Executive Officer. City Manager Mark Freitag began his employment with the City in December 2013. The prior City Manager resigned for another opportunity after 4½ years. His predecessor was employed with the City for 21 years. There is no Mayor.

The City Manager administers the day-to-day operations of the City, providing leadership and direction to the City's management staff, which include the Police Chief, Fire Chief, Public Works Director, Neighborhood and Community Services Director; and indirectly to division heads. The City Manager appoints members of the Fire and Police Commission and Library Board, and recommends appointment of members to the Plan Commission and other City Committees. The Citizens Advisory Committee on Appointments also makes recommendations to the City Council.

The City employs 535 full-time equivalent employees, including the Library and JATV, and has a \$125.5 million city budget including operations and capital projects. The City Manager is responsible for the development of the City's budget, Capital Improvement Plan, and overall long-range financial management plan. Additional information regarding the City can be found at the City's website: [www.ci.janesville.wi.us](http://www.ci.janesville.wi.us).

## OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The next City Assessor is expected to bring solid leadership, excellent judgment, and well developed management skills to the City of Janesville. The City Assessor will likely encounter the following challenges and issues:

- ◆ The Assessor will be responsible for supporting the IT Division in software upgrades to a .net platform and advancing mobile technology initiatives to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the assessment process.
- ◆ The Assessor will have the opportunity to continually improve a highly configurable land management and mass appraisal software application.
- ◆ The Assessor will have the opportunity to mentor and develop a short tenured but highly engaged staff and also fill a vacant appraiser position.
- ◆ The Assessor will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the Department of Revenue electronic property sketching mandate by the June 2018 deadline.
- ◆ The Assessor will be expected to complete a Market Update Revaluation for the 1/1/2017 Assessment Roll. The last revaluation was completed for 1/1/2011.
- ◆ The Assessor will be expected to advocate for and establish a cyclical Market Update revaluation program.
- ◆ The Assessor will be responsible for all aspects of valuing Commercial Class parcels.
- ◆ The Assessor will be challenged with and must adequately manage the continually evolving private sector practice of using the Judicial system as a regular means of appealing Commercial Class assessments.
- ◆ The Assessor will be an integral member of the management team with duties expanded beyond tasks specific to the assessment process.



## CANDIDATE QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

The City Assessor is a division head position and reports to the Deputy City Manager. As a member of the City's management team, the City Assessor works with elected and appointed officials, Department and Division Heads, City and Office staff, Wisconsin Department of Revenue, County Register of Deeds, Real Property Lister, County Treasurer, business representatives, other outside governmental agencies, property owners, and general public to provide high quality service to the residents of the City.

The current and predictable issues, needs, and challenges confronting the City of Janesville call for particular experience, skills, style, values, and professional commitment on



## CITY ASSESSOR

The goal of the City Assessor's Office is to ensure a quality assessing program for which the community has confidence. Specifically, the Office will:

- ◆ Provide professional, accurate collection and analysis of property data to ensure a fair and equitable value setting outcome.
- ◆ Provide Janesville property owners with sufficient information so that they may understand the assessment process and also encourage their participation in the process.
- ◆ Ensure that Janesville property owners' participation in the process is handled with the highest level of professional courtesy and integrity.

Guiding Principles of the Office are:

- ◆ Each property owner is important and can expect courtesy and respect from staff.
- ◆ Property owners can be confident of the highly professional staff.
- ◆ The assessing process in Janesville treats property owners equitably.
- ◆ The better the public understands the staff's job, the better job they can do.
- ◆ The Assessment process is about setting value, not determining taxes.
- ◆ It is important for staff to "get it right" the first time.

Fundamental Tasks include:

Data Collection: The Office collects a massive amount of data to describe properties, including data sales and personal property.

Data Verification: The data is then verified to make sure it is accurate. The database is dynamic as property owners frequently modify the physical characteristics of their properties.

Setting of Values: This task uses the sales data and a complex computer assessment model to determine the values of all residential and commercial property.

Community Information: Citizens must be able to understand the process; have access to the information and have confidence in the quality of the assessments. The Assessor's Property Search Database contains information about individual property assessments and is open for all to view.

the part of Janesville's next City Assessor. The following factors of education, experience, management style, and personal traits have been identified by the City of Janesville as ideal attributes for the City Assessor to possess to function effectively in the position. The starting compensation for the position is \$85,000 firm with opportunity to earn up to 5% after 6 months based on good job performance.

1. Strong ethics base built upon integrity, honesty, and respect. Exceptional character and ability. Ability to maintain confidentiality.
2. Be a leader; have a strong record of team-building, including a reputation for dealing fairly and effectively with all people.
3. Bachelor's degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Finance, Economics, Geography, Real Estate, City Planning or related fields. International Association of Assessing Officers or Appraisal Institute Professional Appraiser or Assessor's designation is desired.
4. Wisconsin Certified Assessor II certification required and must maintain such certification during the course of employment.
5. Minimum of 5 years of progressively responsible real and personal property appraisal management experience, with a minimum of three years experience supervising direct reports.
6. Demonstrated knowledge of the principles and practices of modern property assessment and appraisal methods including Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) techniques and operation. Working knowledge of Microsoft Excel, Access and Crystal Reports.
7. Thorough knowledge of Wisconsin State Statutes and Department of Revenue promulgated rules governing completion of the municipal assessment process.
8. Knowledge of the modern principles of personnel, finance/budget and purchasing systems.
9. Have sufficient experience to monitor the operations of an active "high service level" City Assessor's Office, and to follow up on projects and assignments to achieve timely and effective completion.
10. Working knowledge of commercial and residential building construction and valuation, city and land use planning and regulation, economic principles and practices associated with land and building valuation and real estate sales.
11. Thorough knowledge of the functions and organization of municipal government.
12. Ability to efficiently lead, plan, and direct division employees and activities.
13. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with City elected and appointed officials, Department and Division heads and staff, division staff, business representatives, outside governmental agencies, third party providers of assessment services, property owners, local media, and general public.
14. Ability to accurately complete and maintain required records and reports.
15. Ability to communicate effectively in verbal and written form.

16. Ability to formulate and implement effective programs.
17. Excellent organizational, analytical, judgment, and problem solving skills.
18. Valid State of Wisconsin drivers license or the ability to obtain one within 30 days of employment start date.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. EOE

## EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The benefit package includes:

- ◆ Paid vacation
- ◆ Eleven holidays
- ◆ Sick leave, accrued at one day per month
- ◆ Various other time off privileges available
- ◆ Wisconsin Retirement System, 50% City-paid
- ◆ Optional deferred compensation plan for employee contributions
- ◆ Professional memberships

## THE SELECTION PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed to determine the extent to which the applicants possess the desired qualifications of the position. Applicants most closely meeting the desired criteria may be subject to further evaluation by a telephone interview. **The position is open until filled, with a first review of applications expected on August 7, 2015.**

Qualified candidates will be invited to participate in an interview process. The finalist candidate(s) will be subject to a background investigation and drug screen.

