

CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Community Room  
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI

February 16, 2026  
7:00 PM

OR

Zoom Teleconferencing

**1. Roll Call.**

**Present:**

Ald. Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda, Lang, Buse, Morrow.

**Excused:**

Ald. Guthrie.

**2. Salute to the Flag and Mayor's opening remarks.**

**3. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council on specific agenda items other than a "Public Hearing" must register their request at this time. Those who wish to address the Common Council during a "Public Hearing" are not required to identify themselves until the "Public Hearing" is declared open by the Mayor.**

**4. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council for up to three (3) minutes regarding a non-agenda item.**

Sal Cuomo, 5657 LaSalle Avenue, spoke about their candidacy running for Alderperson District 6.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke about their candidacy running for Alderperson District 4.

David Crueger, 440 Walker Street, spoke about their candidacy running for Alderperson District 4.

**5. Presentation to the Mayor and Council: Carley Prochaska Lee - Dementia Care Specialist, Portage Co. ADRC: Presentation on Dementia Resources.**

Dementia Care Specialist with the Portage County ADRC, Carley Prochaska, gave a brief overview of the programs offered, resources, and advocated for those diagnosed. The PowerPoint presentation has been included in the minutes.

**Consideration and Possible Action on the Following:**

**6. Consent Agenda:**

**a. Minutes of the Common Council Meeting of January 20, 2026.**

**b. Actions of the Police and Fire Commission meeting of February 5, 2026:**

**3. Approval of Minutes.**

**4. Confirmation of Bills.**

**7. Discussion, with possible action, on moving forward with the employment of**

- new Probationary Firefighter/Paramedic candidate, Cooper Peloquin.
8. Discussion, with possible action, on moving forward with the Portage County Fire Service Agreement with the City and Stevens Point Fire Department.
  9. Discussion, with possible action, on moving forward with the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Agreement with the City and Stevens Point Fire Department.
- c. Minutes and Actions of the Plan Commission meeting of February 2, 2026:
    2. Report of the December 15, 2025 and January 5, 2026 meetings of the City Plan Commission.
    11. December 2025 Monthly Report.
    12. Director's Report.
  - d. Minutes of the Joint Plan Commission and Historic Preservation / Design Review Commission meeting of February 2, 2026.
  - e. Actions of the Board of Water and Sewerage Commissioners meeting of February 9, 2026:
    2. Approval of minutes.
    3. Approval of department claims.
    4. Capital Operations and Maintenance Plan.
  - f. Actions of the Airport Commission meeting of February 9, 2026:
    2. Approval of minutes.
    3. Capital Operations and Maintenance.
    4. Approval of department claims.
  - g. Minutes and Actions of the Personnel Committee meeting of February 9, 2026:
    2. Request for Leave of Absence.
  - h. Minutes of the Board of Public Works meeting of February 9, 2026.
  - i. Minutes and Actions of the Public Policy and General Government meeting of February 9, 2026:
    2. License List.
    3. Request to Hold Event/street closing.
  - j. Minutes and Actions of the Finance Committee meeting of February 9, 2026:
    3. Approval of Funding for a screener for the Department of Public Works to screen sand.
    4. Approval of Claims Paid.
  - k. Statutory Monthly Financial Report by Comptroller/Treasurer.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Shuda seconded, to approve the consent agenda.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer, Christianson.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

7. Move into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(g) (conferring with legal counsel who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved) on the following:
  - A. A request from Trent Kastenschmidt, representing Kwik Trip, Inc., for a conditional use permit to operate a gas station on the properties located at 3383 Hoover Road

**(Parcel ID 281230802301117) and 5278 County Road HH (Parcel ID 281230802301118), consistent with Ch. 23.02(4)(e)(4)(c)(4)(e).**

Ald. Morrow moved, Ald. Buse seconded, to enter into close session at 7:29 p.m.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda  
Lang, Buse, Morrow.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

**8. Reconvene for Possible Action on the above-reference closed session.**

Ald. Morrow moved, Ald. Buse seconded, to reconvene to open session at 8:06 p.m.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer,  
Christianson.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

**9. Resolution - A request from Trent Kastenschmidt, representing Kwik Trip, Inc., for a conditional use permit to operate a gas station on the properties located at 3383 Hoover Road (Parcel ID 281230802301117) and 5278 County Road HH (Parcel ID 281230802301118), consistent with Ch. 23.02(4)(e)(4)(c)(4)(e).**

Wisconsin State Representative for the 71st Assembly District, Vincent Miresse, spoke against the resolution.

Mayor Wiza spoke about a letter from City Assessor's Office. This document has been added to the minutes.

Email submissions speaking against the resolution from Trevor Roark and Nichole Good have been added to the minutes.

President of the Village of Whiting, Bill Taugner, 2209 Mainland Court, spoke against the resolution.

Christine Mechenich, 4416 Second Street, spoke against the resolution.

Danny Wanta, 5271 Forest Circle South, spoke against the resolution.

Pete Arntsen, 1016 Bukolt Avenue, spoke against the resolution.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke against the resolution as well as handed out documents. These documents have been added to the minutes.

Alecia Skrenes, 5316 Forest Circle, spoke against the resolution.

Joe Donahue, 3395 Howard Avenue, spoke against the resolution.

Ray Reser, 1501 Cty Road ZZ Village of Amherst, spoke against the resolution.

Elizabeth Trebiatowski, 3262 Sunflower Road, spoke against the resolution.

Savannah Hebior, 5272 Forest Circle South, spoke against the resolution.

Lynn Markham, 302 Georgia Street North, spoke against the resolution as well as handed out documents. These documents have been added to the minutes.

Jen Burton, 5718 Sandpiper Drive, spoke against the resolution.

Ald. Broderick moved, Ald. Steinmetz seconded, to approve the resolution.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Shuda  
Buse, Morrow.

Nays: Ald. Kneebone, Lang. Motion carried.

**10. Resolution - A request from Trent Kastenschmidt, representing Kwik Trip, Inc., for a conditional use permit to operate a car wash on the properties located at 3383 Hoover Road (Parcel ID 281230802301117) and 5278 County Road HH (Parcel ID 281230802301118), consistent with Ch. 23.02(2)(d)(3)(k).**

Elizabeth Trebiatowski, 3262 Sunflower Road, spoke against the resolution.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke against the resolution.

Mayor Wiza clarified that the car wash condition is that it is not in operation from 9pm-6am and that, due to the car wash pointing away from the residential area, the screening is not a condition.

Zoning Administrator Adam Kuhn clarified that 6am start time has been a historical condition for car wash operations and that blowers will be situated towards HH.

Director Lemke gave an overview of how run-off is collected and treated.

Ald. Morrow moved, Ald. Steinmetz seconded, to approve the resolution with staff recommendations.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Steinmetz, Broderick, Keymer,  
Christianson.

Nays: Ald. Kneebone, Birr. Motion carried.

**11. Resolution - A request from Trent Kastenschmidt, representing Kwik Trip, Inc., for a conditional use permit to construct off-premise signage on the property located at 3383 Hoover Road (Parcel ID 281230802301117), consistent with Ch. 23.02(2)(a)(3)(j).**

Elizabeth Trebiatowski, 3262 Sunflower Road, spoke against the resolution.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Steinmetz seconded, to approve the resolution.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Shuda,  
Buse, Morrow.

Nays: Ald. Kneebone, Lang. Motion carried.

**12. Discussion and Possible Action on a Grant to Partnering Together Portage County, or subsidiary entity, for the purchase of 2854 Church Street for the purpose of operating a**

## **Homeless Shelter/Resource Center.**

Jen Burton, 5718 Sandpiper Drive, spoke in favor of the resolution.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke in favor of the resolution but questioned why neighboring communities have not been approached for financial assistance.

Representing Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church, Pastor Ashley Hood, 5341 Clover Court, spoke in favor of the resolution.

Deb Knippel, 611 Soo Marie Avenue, spoke in favor of the resolution.

Alyssa Hughart, 3050 Lindbergh Avenue, spoke against the resolution.

Sherry Hughart, 3050 Lindbergh Avenue, spoke against the resolution.

Danny Mercer, 299 Bills Drive, spoke in favor of the resolution.

A letter of support from Incoming Chief of Police, Edward A. Orgon, Jr., has been added to the minutes.

A letter of support from Business Improvement District Board of Director, BJ Welling, has been added to the minutes.

Ald. Morrow moved, Ald. Birr seconded, to approve the request.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer, Christianson.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

### **13. Ordinance Amendment - Creation of 8.21 Camping on City Property Prohibited and creation of a portion of subsection 24.27 Exhibit A Schedule of Cash Deposits.**

Mayor Wiza clarified that clerical typos within the Ordinance Amendment are to be fixed upon approval. The following items to be corrected are the publishing and approval dates as well changing 4a and 4b to 5a and 5b.

Representing Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church, Pastor Ashley Hood, 5341 Clover Court, spoke against the resolution.

Samantha Varga, 291 Lucerne Court Village of Plover, spoke against the resolution.

Greg Hansel, 3524 Regent Street, spoke in favor of the resolution.

Police Officer Solis spoke about notifying the unhoused population prior to the implementation of the ordinance, being in favor of the ordinance amendment, and operating with leniency by utilizing warnings.

Ald. Lang moved, Ald. Morrow seconded, to approve the amendment.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda

Lang, Buse, Morrow.  
Nays: None. Motion carried.

**14. Amendment to Option to Purchase with Michael W and Jacqueline Hintz Joint Revocable Trust for Parcel Identification Number 281230801440001 in the City of Stevens Point**

Director Kivela gave a brief overview of the amendment.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke against the amendment.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Morrow seconded, to approve the amendment.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer, Christianson.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

**15. Ordinance Amendment - A request from the City of Stevens Point to amend the Official Street Map of the City of Stevens Point. Said request identifies Norton Way and Hall Avenue as public streets within the properties located at 3383 Hoover Road (Parcel ID 281230802301117) and 5278 County Road HH (Parcel ID 281230802301118).**

Victor Baeten, 5936 Seminole Centre Court, Fitchberg, spoke in favor of the ordinance amendment.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke against the ordinance amendment.

Ald. Morrow moved, Ald. Buse seconded, to approve the amendment.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Steinmetz, Buse, Morrow.

Nays: Ald. Birr, Kneebone, Shuda, Lange. Motion carried.

**16. Resolution - Acceptance of dedicated land for right-of-way purposes - Norton Way and Hall Avenue within the properties located at 3383 Hoover Road (Parcel ID 281230802301117) and 5278 County Road HH (Parcel ID 281230802301118).**

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke against the resolution.

Ald. Steinmetz moved, Ald. Morrow seconded, to approve the resolution.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Steinmetz, Broderick, Keymer, Christianson.

Nays: Ald. Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Birr. Motion carried.

**17. Resolution - A request from William Schierl, representing the RA Cook & JI Altenburg Cooperative, for a conditional use permit to operate a cocktail lounge on the property located at 2041 Madison Street (Parcel ID 281240832403709), consistent with Ch. 23.02(2)(b)(3)(f).**

Ald. Birr moved, Ald. Keymer seconded, to approve the resolution.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda  
Lang, Buse, Morrow.  
Nays: None. Motion carried.

**18. Resolution - A request from Bill Pritchard, representing the Elizabeth Revocable Trust, for a preliminary subdivision plat review on an unaddressed parcel bounded by West Zinda Drive (Parcel ID 281240831401241) and Lots 1-15 of the Riverwood West Subdivision (Parcel ID 281240831401211-281240831401226), consistent with Ch. 20.05(1).**

Jackie Schimke, 440 West Trillium Court, spoke against the resolution as well as referenced documents that have been added to the minutes.

Katie Schimke, 440 West Trillium Court, spoke against the resolution.

Bill Pritchard, 3364 Cottage Hill Drive Green Bay, spoke against the resolution.

Ald. Lang moved, Ald. Shuda seconded, to approve the resolution.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Steinmetz, Broderick,  
Christianson.  
Nays: Ald. Kneebone, Birr, Keymer. Motion carried.

**19. A request from the City of Stevens Point for a site plan review to construct a principal structure, parking lot and associated site improvements on an unaddressed parcel bounded by Water Street and Ellis Street (Parcel ID 281240832202055).**

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke against the request.

Ald. Morrow moved, Ald. Shuda seconded, to approve the request.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda  
Lang, Buse, Morrow.  
Nays: None. Motion carried.

**20. Ordinance Amendment - To approve the amendments in Chapter 9, Section 9.19 to create an additional ATV/UTV Route.**

Assistant Chief Dana Williams spoke about statistics from community operations.

Ald. Morrow moved, Ald. Birr seconded, to approve the amendment.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer,  
Christianson.  
Nays: Ald. Kneebone. Motion carried.

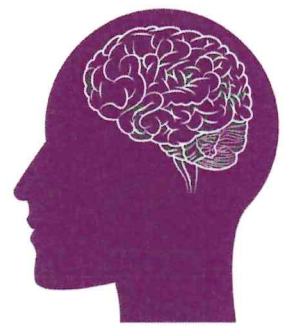
**21. Resolution - World Migratory Bird Day.**

Ald. Shuda moved, Ald. Steinmetz seconded, to approve the resolution.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda  
Lang, Buse, Morrow.  
Nays: None. Motion carried.

**22. Adjournment.**

Adjourned at 11:33 p.m.



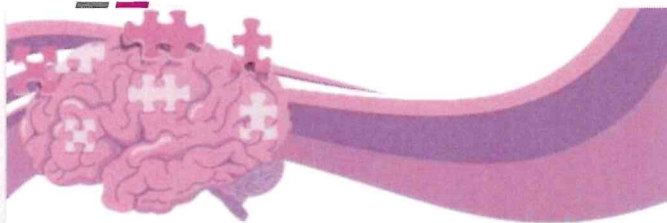
# Dementia Resources

Carley Prochaska  
Dementia Care Specialist  
Aging & Disability Resource Center of Portage County

# What is a Dementia Care Specialist?

- ✿ Memory Screening
- ✿ Educational programming
- ✿ Facilitate Caregiver Support Groups
- ✿ Virtual Dementia Tour
- ✿ Dementia Friendly Business Training
- ✿ Evidence based/Evidence informed programming
- ✿ Memory Cafes
- ✿ Community Education





## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE DEMENTIA CARE SPECIALIST



FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH  
10:00am - 11:00am  
Room C

### Monthly Topics

- January 7<sup>th</sup> - Brain Health Basics ◀
- February 4<sup>th</sup> - Common Dementias ◀
- March 4<sup>th</sup> - Alzheimer's Disease ◀
- April 1<sup>st</sup> - Vascular Dementia ◀
- May 6<sup>th</sup> - Lewy Body Dementia ◀
- June 3<sup>rd</sup> - Frontotemporal Dementia ◀
- July 1<sup>st</sup> - Dementia Myths & Facts ◀
- August 5<sup>th</sup> - Managing Caregiver Stress ◀
- September 2<sup>nd</sup> - Personal Hygiene ◀
- October 7<sup>th</sup> - Understanding Dementia "Behaviors" ◀
- November 4<sup>th</sup> - Caregiver and Dementia Related Support Services ◀
- December 2<sup>nd</sup> - Dementia Friendly Holidays ◀

Join Carley Prochaska, Dementia Care Specialist, for monthly educational topics covering brain health and various dementia topics.

### GET YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED!

Registration is preferred but not required.

✉ [prochasc@co.portage.wi.gov](mailto:prochasc@co.portage.wi.gov)  
☎ 715-343-6275  
📍 1519 Water Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481



## February Caregiver Support Group Meetings

Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026 –

Day Time Support Group from 1:30pm - 2:30pm

Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026 –

Evening Support Group from 4:30pm – 5:30pm

This support group is offered completely virtually at this time.

Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 –

Topic: Supportive Home Care

Day Time Support Group from 1:30pm – 3:00pm

**\*\*Room Change – Wednesday Support Groups in 2026 will be held in Room E (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)\*\***

Our Wednesday support groups are being offered both in-person and virtually. If you are interested in attending, please contact Carley Prochaska or Tonia Simmons at 715-346-1401.

To update your contact information or to be removed from the mailing list, please call 715-346-1401



### FUTURE MEETING DATES:

MARCH 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026

MARCH 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026

MARCH 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026

### WE WANT EMAILS!

PLEASE PROVIDE US WITH YOUR EMAIL TO STAY IN BETTER CONTACT:  
[adrc@co.portage.wi.gov](mailto:adrc@co.portage.wi.gov)  
FOR MORE INFO CALL 715-346-1401

### HELPFUL RESOURCES

Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline  
1-800-272-3900  
Free 24/7 Information Line  
2-1-1

# Myths and Facts

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**Dementia only affects Memory**

✓ Myth

**Most people who have dementia live at home**

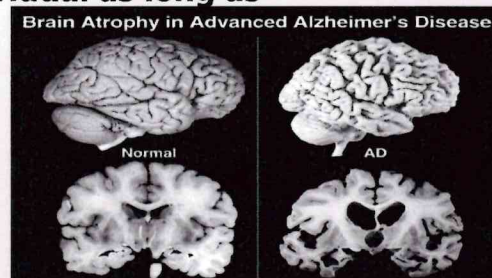
✓ Fact

**Only individuals 65 and older can get Alzheimer's**

✓ Myth

**Dementia progresses the same for every individual as long as they have the same diagnosis**

✓ Myth





# Community Resources

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- Aging & Disability Resource Center of Portage County  
715-346-1401
- Dementia Care Specialist Program – provides support for people living with dementia, caregivers, and the community  
email - [prochasc@co.portage.wi.gov](mailto:prochasc@co.portage.wi.gov)  
direct phone # 715-343-6275  
Family meetings, education, planning, advocacy, DICE, memory café, music & memory, memory screens, support groups, Virtual Dementia Tour, and community & business training
- Alzheimer's Association  
24/7 Helpline - 800-272-3900  
[www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)



# Questions?

Carley Prochaska  
Dementia Care Specialist  
prochasc@co.portage.wi.gov  
715-343-6275

City of Stevens Point  
1515 Strongs Avenue  
Stevens Point, WI 54481-3594



City Assessor's Office  
assessor@stevenspoint.com  
Phone: 715-346-1553

February 11, 2026

Jarod Kivela  
Community Development Director  
1515 Strongs Ave  
Stevens Point, WI 54481

**RE: Kwik Trip Development**

Director Kivela,

Per your request, the Assessor's Office has reviewed the proposed Kwik Trip convenience store and fuel station development along Mcdill Avenue and County Highway HH for potential impacts on surrounding property values. As the development has not yet occurred, there is no direct market evidence specific to this parcel to indicate whether surrounding residential or commercial property values would increase, decrease, or remain unchanged.

Historically, similar developments in comparable (transitional or mixed-use areas) settings have not demonstrated consistent negative effects on surrounding values that would warrant adjustments. In certain instances, properties located near neighborhood-serving commercial amenities have experienced stable or increasing values, particularly when developments include buffering, access management, and lighting controls. We also cannot rule out the possibility of negative post-development effects since property values are influenced by multiple changing factors, such as overall market conditions, interest rates, supply and demand, neighborhood characteristics, and individual property features.

In summary, our office does not make value determinations in advance of measurable market evidence, nor do we advocate for or against development proposals. Rather, we analyze measurable market data, including, but not limited to, verified sales, property characteristics, location influences, and broader economic conditions. While there currently isn't enough data to support a definitive conclusion regarding value impacts specific to this development, we remain open to providing an objective and transparent analysis as market evidence becomes available.

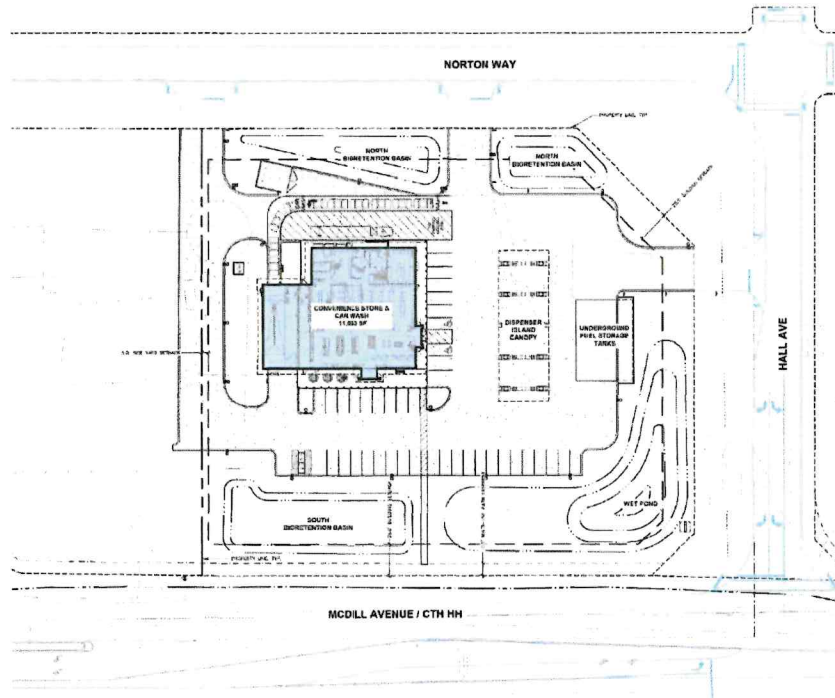
Thank you,  
Steven J Shepro  
City of Stevens Point

City of Stevens Point  
1515 Strongs Avenue  
Stevens Point, WI 54481-3594



City Assessor's Office  
assessor@stevenspoint.com  
Phone: 715-346-1553

### SITE AERIAL MAP:



For access to the map that shows the wetlands visit:

<https://fwsprimary.wim.usgs.gov/wetlands/apps/wetlands-mapper/>

## Susan Pagel

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**From:** Susan Pagel  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2026 8:04 AM  
**To:** Susan Pagel  
**Subject:** RE: city council meeting statements

Alderspersons,

Please see the email below. I am forwarding as was requested.

Sincerely,

*Susan Pagel, City Clerk*

City of Stevens Point  
(715) 346-1569

**From:** Trevor Roark <rambledandy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2026 7:43 AM  
**To:** Susan Pagel <spagel@stevenspoint.com>  
**Subject:** city council meeting statements

Hi Susan,

I hope you're well. If you could be so kind, please submit these statements for the record and distribute to City Council for today's meeting (16 Feb. 2026):

Agenda items:

#8 & 9 - Please reject the Kwik Trip gas station proposal. There's precedent to stop this use in order to protect our land, water, air, and health. Allowing this to go through puts Whiting's wellhead protection area at risk (unnecessarily), puts the lives of those water users at risk, puts the Whiting and Stevens Point economy at risk, puts a lot more benzene into the air in that area/neighborhood, increases the City's long term infrastructure liability with the new roads, and increases the heat island effect and climate change.

#12 - This is a positive light when so much is difficult and dark these days with housing insecurity. I hope the City moves forward to write this grant. Crossing fingers!

#15 - Because of poor planning (not enough density), we won't have the money for reconstructing these new roads when the time comes in 60-80 years. We need to reduce our City's infrastructure liability, not increase it. Please don't approve the new right-of-way.

#18 - With the amount of wetlands and forest being disturbed, I hope this project is rejected. Further, did the City do an assessment to make sure the new residents/homes property tax base can afford to reconstruct the roadway in 60-80 years or will this continue to balloon our debt?

#19 - Even though I support constructing a new City Hall downtown, the site plan concept needs reconsideration for the following reasons:

- It doesn't make sense to build a 2 story building in this location when 4-5 stories would shrink the footprint, allowing the City to either develop other facilities within the same platte or sell parcels to earn property tax revenue.

- There's an opportunity to connect the grid with purpose, increasing access and providing a place people want to be (between Ellis St. and Water St.), but instead there's just a slim sidewalk wedged between the building and the fence of the Berkshire property. Why not instead bridge the neighborhoods to the east with the riverfront by creating more of a pedestrian mall that's a lot more walkable and bikable with more trees, benches, and even spaces for staff and visitors to relax or eat lunch? Further, if the building is 4-5 stories, the entire corridor

would be shaded in the summer. This would only require the building to move southeast by maybe 12 ft.

- The far distance from Water St. (with the primary entrance face) doesn't make sense. Any time we're working with a clean slate for development, it's best to accommodate and encourage less mobile folks to use City Hall. This building should be abutting the Water St. sidewalk so it's more welcoming and accessible. If we're serious about being an age-friendly and pedestrian-friendly city, this is an easy fix. I could see including a small 4 ft buffer between the Water St. sidewalk and building to beautify with native plants/flowers.

- As we have learned the hard way with parking downtown, 'meeting the minimum standards' isn't good for land use. We should reduce this off street parking and encourage the use of other lots and street parking. In terms of land valuation and property tax deficits, we literally can't afford public-owned parking facilities (that are 'free' to the users) downtown.

Thank you!

Trevor Roark  
(he/him)  
local community advocate  
715-570-1961

## Susan Pagel

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**From:** Nichole Good <nicholroseb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2026 7:48 AM  
**To:** Susan Pagel  
**Subject:** Re: Comments on Kwik Trip CUP

Good morning Susan,  
I have forwarded to the alderpersons. No action needed on your end, someone just recommended that I copy you. Thank you.  
-Nichole

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 16, 2026, at 7:30 AM, Susan Pagel <spagel@stevenspoint.com> wrote:

Is your intent that I forward this to Alderpersons?

*Susan Pagel, City Clerk*

City of Stevens Point  
(715) 346-1569

**From:** Nichole Good <nicholroseb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 15, 2026 6:43 PM  
**To:** Clerks <Clerks@stevenspoint.com>; District 1 <district1@stevenspoint.com>; Jarod Kivela <jkivela@stevenspoint.com>  
**Subject:** Comments on Kwik Trip CUP

Dear Clerk Pagel, Director Kivela, and Alderman Christianson,

I am writing regarding the conditional use permit (CUP) for the proposed Kwik Trip development. I am a licensed Professional Soil Scientist with over ten years of experience investigating and remediating soil and groundwater at contaminant release sites, including gas stations. My work has included site characterization, groundwater plume delineation, risk assessment, remediation, and more.

You have already heard from several groundwater experts, and I concur with their assessment: placing a gas station hydraulically upgradient of municipal drinking water wells should be avoided. If it cannot be avoided and the CUP is granted, strong and enforceable conditions are required to safeguard the public water supply.

The central concern is that the site is too close to the wells to allow sufficient time for site characterization and treatment should a release occur. In my professional experience:

- Releases occur at all gas stations.
  - o Minor, incidental releases are extremely common and can accumulate over the life of a facility.
  - o Larger releases due to equipment failure or spills are less common but do occur.
- Contamination response is neither immediate nor perfect.
  - o The time between detection and effective remediation often spans 5 years or more.
  - o While remediation can significantly reduce impacts, achieving complete removal is rarely feasible due to access and infrastructure constraints, and the realities of time and cost.

Given these realities, if the CUP is approved, the following conditions should be required:

- Kwik Trip's *Groundwater Protection Plan and Spill Response Plan* should be reviewed and approved by licensed professionals in relevant fields (e.g., Professional Engineer and Professional Hydrogeologist).
- A monitoring program must be implemented before a release occurs.
  - o Monitoring wells should be installed near the fueling infrastructure and between the site and the municipal wellfield.
  - o Regular groundwater monitoring should start at the time that operations begin.
  - o This aligns with prior recommendations that a qualified third-party professional evaluate existing groundwater data and design an appropriate monitoring network.
- Kwik Trip should bear full financial responsibility for preventative measures, monitoring, reporting, remediation, and any damages. Municipalities and residents should not assume financial burden associated with industry threats to their drinking water supply.
- If additional or more frequent sampling of public drinking water wells is necessary to ensure protection of residents, Kwik Trip should fund that work.

My comments are based on direct professional experience with environmental contamination and remediation. In matters involving public drinking water, prevention and early detection are essential. Requiring robust protective measures is prudent risk management and serves the interests of the community, the municipality, and Kwik Trip alike.

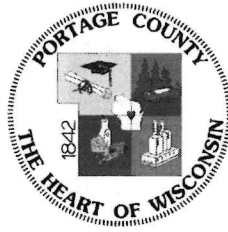
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nichole Good

Licensed Professional Soil Scientist, Wisconsin License No. 209-112

Portage County  
Highway Department



800 Plover Road  
Plover, WI 54467

Nathan Check, PE  
Commissioner

Phone: 715-345-5355  
Fax: 715-345-5356

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**Date:** May 15, 2025

**To:** Highway Committee

**From:** Nathan Check, P.E.

**Subject:** Discussion and Possible Action on CTH HH Access Request – Tax Parcel 281-23-0802301117, City of Stevens Point

**Background:**

A Traffic Impact Analysis(TIA) has been completed by a private developer with plans to develop 18 acres at the northeast corner of CTH HH and Hoover Avenue on tax parcel 281-23-0802301117 in the City of Stevens Point. While all of the exact tenants and users are not locked in, a conceptual lot layout and anticipated land uses were utilized to develop traffic projections for the site. The TIA has been reviewed by City, WisDOT, and County staff and provides recommendations for access locations and modifications.

**Analysis:**

The development is proposed to be served by two main access points: a right in/right out access point on Hoover Avenue north of CTH HH and a full access intersection on CTH HH, east of Hoover Avenue. The conceptual site plan is attached.

The new full access intersection on CTH HH is within the County's jurisdiction and is proposed to be located 850' east of Hoover Avenue. CTH HH is classified as a principal arterial. Under the County's subdivision ordinance, the minimum distance between adjacent access points is 1,000' but the ordinance does allow for a reduction to 850' if there no viable alternatives exist and where the application would create a hardship. Since the City of Stevens Point has its own zoning, the subdivision does not apply in this case but is the standard that the Highway Department seeks to uphold for consistency throughout the county road system.

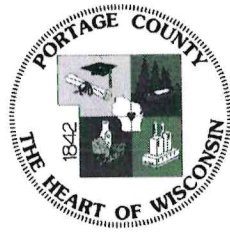
The TIA's Introduction and Executive Summary is attached which includes the recommended modifications. For CTH HH and the south full access driveway, the recommended modifications includes installation of a full access intersection with actuated traffic signal when warranted. Installation of left and right hand turn lanes and coordination with the traffic signals at Hoover Avenue and I39.

Below are items for the Committee's consideration:

1. Intersection Spacing – Through the development process, the Highway Department has stated that spacing between 950' to 1000' would be preferred to match the existing intersection spacing to the east as much as possible. The development team did revise the spacing from 800' to 850' to meet the requirements. If the spacing is pushed farther east, it may affect the lot layout for the development.

County Engineer – Lucas Meddaugh  
County Patrol Manager – Kory Kukuczka    State Patrol Manager – David Johnson  
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- 
2. Traffic Signal Warrants – The TIA found that signal warrant 2 (4 hour volume) is met with the onsite development. The TIA also found that Warrants 1 (8 hour volume) and 2 are met for the full build out of the development. Warrants should be viewed as guidelines to help decide whether traffic signal controls may be installed. Meeting warrants does not translate to a legal requirement for their installation.
  3. Traffic Signal Installation Timing – While one warrant was met for Phase 1, the TIA analyzed the level of service and the delay for the new intersection if was installed with stop control. The original analysis did not take into consideration that a two-way-left-turn-lane(TWLTL) exists which provides for additional median storage for left turns. The original analysis for the southbound left turn resulted in a level of service(LOS) E or F under the stop control but taking the TWLTL into consideration, this LOS was improved to LOS C and D with minimal queuing.

Once the development hits full build-out, the TIA does show that the southbound left turns at the new intersection reach LOS F with significant queuing.

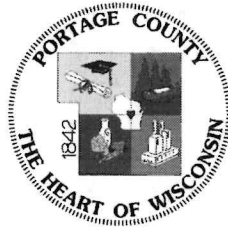
4. Impacts to Adjacent Properties – The new development will have impacts to the surrounding area. The TIA has shown that the City street east of the development, Iris Lane, will operate at LOS F in the PM peak and Saturday mid-day hours with delays ranging from 50 to 64 seconds and queues of 25'(1 to 2 vehicles). Iris Lane does serve a larger subdivision with three access points to Hoover Avenue.

In addition, the full access intersection is proposed to have a raised median extended to the east which will affect two parcels on the south side of the road. These parcels will be right in/right out only. Highway staff has reached out to the Village of Plover for any additional comments or concerns and has also asked that the development team reach out to those property owners.

5. Future Maintenance Costs – While the construction of any new improvements would be the responsibility of the developer or City, the additional intersection with right and left turn lanes will add to future maintenance costs for the County in regards to surface maintenance and winter maintenance. An agreement would also need to be drafted with the City to ensure that any future signal and lighting maintenance, operation, and replacement is a City responsibility.
6. Principal Arterial Operation – The new development vehicle trips and potential addition of a traffic signal will affect the overall LOS for CTH HH which is classified as a major arterial. The addition of another signal along this corridor specifically for a single

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development is going to alter the efficiency of this road. The Committee should consider a possible jurisdictional transfer to the City if these corridors continue to be developed with additional traffic signals as the functional use will change from a county road to an urban city street. The LOS will drop along CTH HH as a result of the development and future traffic.

7. Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations – The development is proposing the addition of a sidewalk on the north side of CTH HH, east side of Hoover Road, and along the new internal street. The sidewalk is proposed to be installed along CTH HH as part of Phase 1, west of the new intersection. Additional land will be reserved east of the intersection and installed when that portion is developed. The Committee may want to consider requiring a multi-use path along CTH HH versus a sidewalk as it would accommodate more users and there is a multi-use path along Hoover Ave and to the east of I-39 that could be connected in the future. If only a sidewalk is required, there should be additional consideration for future r/w if on-road bike-lanes would be needed.

Only bike/ped improvements within the development would be required. Any off-site improvements would not be the responsibility of the developer.

**Fiscal Impact:**

As a condition of the permit approval, any initial and future intersection improvements will be the responsibility of the applicant. If the CTH HH intersection is signalized, a maintenance agreement between the County and City of Stevens Point would be required to ensure that the future signal maintenance, operation, and replacement is a City responsibility.

As stated previously, the additional turn lanes will add to the County's future surface and winter maintenance costs. In addition to plowing the turn lanes, additional delays may be seen with the

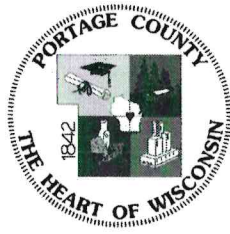
**Recommendation:**

There are multiple considerations for the Committee to consider for this request.

1. Intersection spacing – While 950' to 1,000' would be preferred, the revised plan does meet the 850' minimum.
2. Traffic Signal warrants and installation – While one warrant is met for phase 1, it does not necessarily require the installation of traffic signals. Based on the TIA results, a traffic signal would be needed as the development progresses. With the minimal queuing for phase 1, staff would recommend that the signal be installed at a future date as the site gets built out. If a signal is installed in the future, a potential jurisdictional transfer should be discussed with the City.

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- 
3. Impacts to adjacent properties – The development is taking a parallel path with City zoning and site plan approvals so the official City's stance on the impacts to Iris Lane is unknown. In addition, staff has reached out to the Village in regards to the impact to the south two properties.
  4. Bike/Ped Accommodations – Staff will request that the developer consider a multi-use path versus a sidewalk for the east to west segment along CTH HH.
  5. Infrastructure Costs – The developer and/or the City would be responsible for any improvements and future maintenance of such items as the signals, lighting, sidewalk or multi-use path.

Attachments: TIA Excerpts

County Engineer – Lucas Meddaugh  
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From Wisconsin Law

Subchapter V — General UST Storage and Underground Piping

ATCP 93.500 General requirements.

(1) Secondary containment.

(a) *General.* All new and replacement underground storage tanks and piping systems shall be provided with secondary containment and continuous electronic interstitial monitoring, except as provided in par. (b).

**Note:** This section is coordinated with the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005, which addresses secondary containment for federally regulated tanks or piping installed within 1,000 feet of any community water system or any potable drinking water well, and which requires interstitial monitoring for any associated double-wall tanks or piping.

(b) *Exceptions.* This subsection and sub. (5) do not apply to any of the following:

1. Any farm or residential underground storage tank system which has a capacity of less than 1,100 gallons and which is used for storing motor fuel for noncommercial purposes.
2. Any underground storage tank system which has a capacity of less than 4,000 gallons and which is used for storing heating oil for consumptive use on the premises where stored.
5. Airport fuel hydrant systems.

(c) *Electronic interstitial monitoring.*

1. Electronic interstitial monitoring installed in new tank or pipe systems after November 1, 2019, shall have the ability to generate a printed status report and alarm history report, except as provided in subd. 2.
2. Subdivision 1. does not apply to any interstitial monitoring device for piping that automatically shuts down product flow when liquid is detected inside the secondary-containment space.

(d) *Motor fuel dispenser containment.* All new motor fuel dispensing systems and all new dispensers added to an existing island or to an extension of existing pipe shall have under-dispenser containment.

[https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/atcp/090/93/v/500](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/atcp/090/93/v/500)

## Conditions to add to reduce negative health effects

### Village of Whiting wants and Stevens Point neighbors support: I support

1. Two monitoring wells in the Whiting wellfield to be installed at the owner's expense and tested quarterly, with results provided to the village within 10 days.
2. Access agreements to be made by the owner on seven nearby parcels to allow quick monitoring and remediation "in case of a spill, release, leak, or discharge." Without these access agreements, there isn't time to find and remediate a groundwater benzene plume before it reaches the Whiting wells. The time for groundwater to travel west across Aspirus property is 6 months, while the time to travel from the Hoover/HH intersection to the Whiting wellfield is 16 months. If Kwik Trip does not have access agreements, this will be time lost to find and remediate a groundwater contaminant plume that takes about 2 years to reach the Whiting wells.
3. Repayment to the village from the owner for any future required monitoring and for any lost revenue for the water utility or costs for purchasing water.
4. Updating of the groundwater monitoring and spill response plans to reflect the new conditions.

### Stevens Point neighbors whose homes are located within 500 feet of the proposed gas station:

5. An easement and development agreement for a 40-foot-wide vegetative buffer (three levels of trees and shrubs) on the north and east property boundaries to filter airborne benzene from the gas station because buffers have been shown to reduce exposure.<sup>i</sup> This is **essential** to mitigate the health-related effects of benzene and other air pollution on the neighbors.
  - Benzene, found in gasoline, increases the rates of childhood leukemia and other cancers, heart disease and respiratory disease for people living near gas stations.<sup>ii</sup> A neighbor who lives on Forest Circle South said thirteen children live on that street, directly north of the site.
  - A city official claimed that this condition cannot be included as a condition because it is for a different lot. In fact, the 14-acre parcel has not been divided into 3 lots (no certified survey map has been approved) so it's one parcel owned by Victor Baeten and the condition can be added to the 14-acre parcel before it is subdivided into lots. The sketch of the 14-acre parcel divided into 3 lots included in the conditional use application is only "lines drawn on a page".
  - A city official claimed that this condition cannot be included because the purpose of the Groundwater Overlay Protection District is to protect municipal wells. In fact, the purpose of this district also includes "promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the residents of Portage County." [Page 102](#) of Stevens Point Zoning Ordinance. In addition, Conditional Use Permit Standard #1 states the Council must find that a conditional use "will not endanger public health." Breathing benzene endangers public health, and health studies have found higher childhood leukemia and other cancer rates near gas stations.

At the Feb 2 plan commission meeting, the mayor said in reference to benzene in air "The world is a dangerous place."

True to an extent. And, how dangerous of a place our community is and each neighborhood is depends on the decisions that the common council makes.

## **Facts about health risks of the proposed Kwik Trip at County Hwy HH and Hoover Avenue, Stevens Point**

### **See back side of handout for conditions to add**

#### **Groundwater pollution and risk to public drinking water**

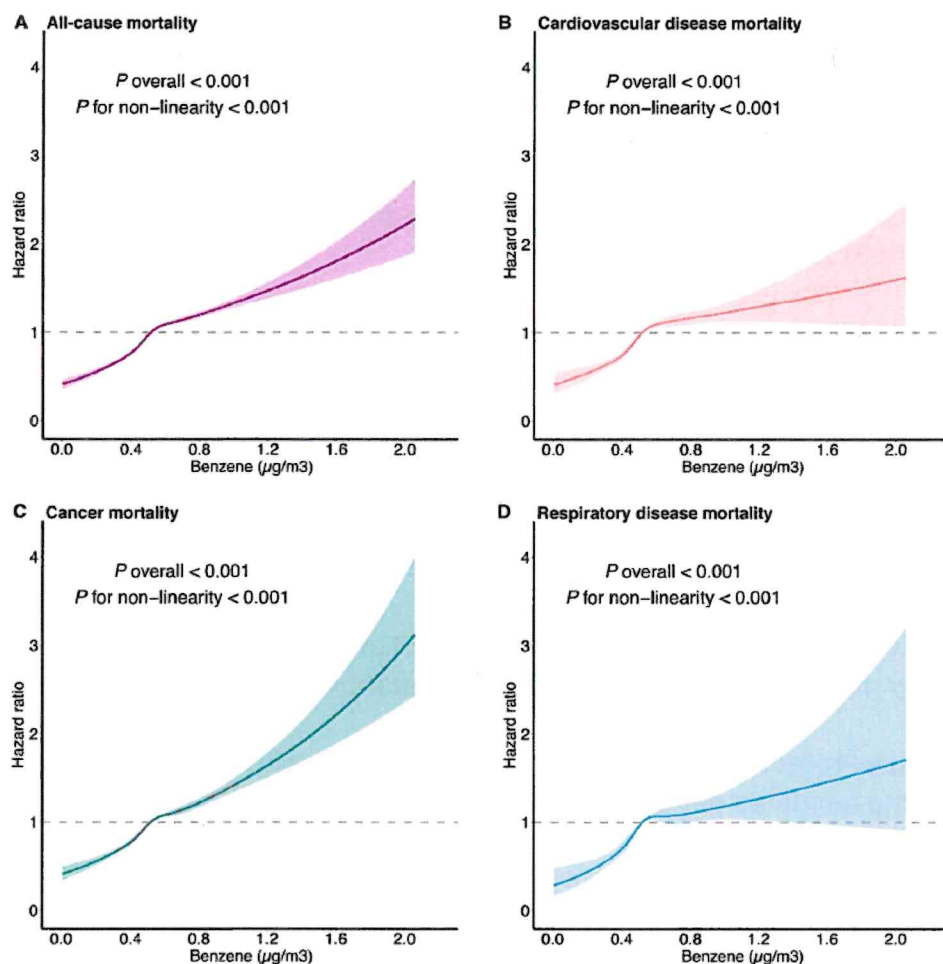
- Contaminated groundwater from the proposed Kwik Trip (KT) could reach the village of Whiting wells in two to three years.
- The Whiting wells provide drinking water to 1600 Whiting residents and a backup water supply for the village of Plover and the city of Stevens Point.
- The proposed KT will be located just over 1700 feet from the Whiting wellfield.
- Groundwater under the KT site flows directly toward the wells at the rate of three feet per day.
- Potential groundwater contaminants at a KT include benzene in gasoline and PFAS (forever chemicals) from the car wash.
- Area soils are sandy and do not filter out contaminants such as PFAS and benzene.
- Limits for these chemicals in drinking water are very low: 4 parts per trillion for PFOA and PFOS (two types of PFAS) and 5 parts per billion for benzene.
- The Wisconsin BRRTS database shows 269 leaking underground storage tanks and 640 spills for KTs in Wisconsin.
- Remediation systems to clean up groundwater don't remove all traces of contaminants – just reduce them to “acceptable” levels.
- Municipal drinking water treatment systems are expensive. Adams spent \$5 million and Weston spent \$3 million to treat PFAS at a single well. PFAS treatment for all Wausau's wells was \$23 million. In 2023, La Valle spent \$1.4 million to address benzene contamination in a single well.

#### **Air pollution and risk to health, especially children's health**

- Benzene in gasoline fumes pollutes the air and is known to cause cancer in humans. It is implicated in childhood leukemia among children living near gas stations.
- There is no safe level of benzene. Recommended separation distances between residential areas and gas stations range from 300 feet to 1000 feet.
- A 2024 study showed that increasing concentrations of benzene in outdoor air were linked to increased risk of death from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and especially from cancer.

#### **Claims about the protections proposed for this gas station**

- Kwik Trip and city officials are claiming that they would have more protections in place at this site than any other of their gas stations. Most of what they're claiming is “above and beyond” is required by state law so is required at any new gas station in Wisconsin.
- State law [ATCP 93.50](#) titled *General Underground Storage Tank Storage and Underground Piping* requires double-walled underground tanks, double-walled piping and under dispenser containment. These standards are required for all gas station fuel tanks installed today in WI, so it's not something extra Kwik Trip is doing for Stevens Point.



Downloaded from <https://academic.oup.com/iaq/article/20/9/987/8427077> by University of Wisconsin--Stevens Point user on 10 February 2022

**Figure 2.** (A–D) Concentration–response curves of the effects of exposure to benzene on all-cause mortality (A), cardiovascular disease mortality (B), cancer mortality (C), and respiratory disease mortality (D). Models were adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, education level, Townsend deprivation index, drinking status, smoking status, body mass index, physical activity, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, solid-fuel cooking or heating, exposure to tobacco smoke at home, exposure to tobacco smoke outside the home, and annual average concentration of residential exposure to particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter  $\leq 2.5 \mu\text{m}$ .

<sup>i</sup> A Review of Vegetated Buffers and a Meta-analysis of Their Mitigation Efficacy in Reducing Nonpoint Source Pollution

<https://access.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2134/jeq2008.0496>

Association between residential greenness and exposure to volatile organic compounds

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969719354282>

<sup>ii</sup> Gasoline stations and risk of childhood cancer: a population-based cohort study in Quebec, Canada

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0269749126001077>

Benzene emissions from gas station clusters: a new framework for estimating lifetime cancer risk

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34150235/>

Long-Term Exposure to Low Concentrations of Ambient Benzene and Mortality in a National English Cohort

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38128545/>

A bit of history: Zoning was first created to reduce dangers, to separate industrial uses from residential uses where people live and raise their families. They recognized the dangers that came from smoke stacks and chemical manufacturing and located areas for homes in residential zoning districts, away from the dangerous industrial uses. Gas stations don't have smoke stacks and they don't have visible plumes of air pollution. They do have hundreds of thousands of gallons of gasoline containing benzene delivered by tanker and then pumped into cars and trucks with some evaporation to the air.

In this situation the homes on Forest Circle South (to the north of the site) and Iris Lane (to the east) were there first. Then the site was rezoned to B-4.

Adding a gas station near these homes will increase benzene levels in the air the neighbors breathe above the benzene levels there today.

[Show graphic] A 2022 paper states the average ambient urban concentration of benzene is 0.44 ppb. Living within 500 feet of the fence line of a gas station increases benzene concentrations by 0.5 ppb while living within 300 feet raises benzene levels by 1.0 ppb. (pages 8 and 11 in Benzene Releases from Gasoline Stations: Implications for Human Health)

Research has found that as benzene levels in air rise, so do deaths from childhood leukemia and other cancers, heart disease and respiratory disease for people living near gas stations.

So when the city's Groundwater Overlay Protection District purpose says the city will "promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the residents of Portage County" and Conditional Use Permit Standard #1 states the Council must find that a conditional use "will not endanger public health" what will you do?

Will you safeguard public health? Or create a dangerous place to live in our community?

# Long-Term Exposure to Low Concentrations of Ambient Benzene and Mortality in a National English Cohort

Jianing Wang<sup>1,2</sup>, Yudiayang Ma<sup>1,2</sup>, Linxi Tang<sup>1,2</sup>, Dankang Li<sup>1,2</sup>, Junqing Xie<sup>4</sup>, Yu Sun<sup>3</sup>, and Yaohua Tian<sup>1,2,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education Key Laboratory of Environment and Health, State Key Laboratory of Environmental Health (Incubating), <sup>2</sup>Department of Maternal and Child Health, School of Public Health, and <sup>3</sup>Department of Otorhinolaryngology, Union Hospital, Tongji Medical College, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China; <sup>4</sup>Center for Statistics in Medicine, Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences, University of Oxford, The Botnar Research Centre, Oxford, United Kingdom; and <sup>5</sup>School of Population Medicine and Public Health, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences/Peking Union Medical College, Beijing, China

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9853-6991 (Y.T.).

## Abstract

**Background:** Benzene affects human health through environmental exposure in addition to occupational contact. However, few studies have examined the associations between long-term exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene and mortality risks in nonoccupational settings.

**Methods:** This prospective cohort study consists of 393,042 participants without stroke, myocardial infarction, or cancer at baseline from the UK Biobank. Annual average concentrations of benzene for each year during follow-up were measured using air dispersion models. The main outcomes were all-cause mortality and mortality from specific causes. Cox proportional-hazards models with time-varying exposure measurements were used to estimate the hazard ratios and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for mortality risks. Restricted cubic spline models were used to estimate exposure–response relationships.

**Measurements and Main Results:** With each interquartile range increase in the average annual concentration of benzene, the adjusted hazard ratios of mortality risk from all causes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and respiratory disease were 1.26 (95% CI, 1.24–1.27), 1.24 (95% CI, 1.21–1.28), 1.27 (95% CI, 1.25–1.29), and 1.25 (95% CI, 1.20–1.30), respectively. The monotonically increasing exposure–response curves showed no threshold and plateau within the observed concentration range. Furthermore, the effect of benzene exposure on mortality persisted across different subgroups and was somewhat stronger in younger and White people (*P* for interaction < 0.05).

**Conclusions:** Long-term exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene significantly increases mortality risk in the general population. Ambient benzene represents a potential threat to public health, and further investigations are needed to support timely pollution regulation and health protection.

**Keywords:** benzene; mortality; long-term exposure; cohort study

Benzene holds significant importance as an industrial chemical, with widespread use in production (1), but it is also one of the most common air pollutants released into the environment (2). The main source of outdoor benzene exposure for the public is

road transport, contributing approximately 85% of outdoor benzene (3, 4). Apart from producing from combustion reactions like many other air pollutants (e.g., particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter  $\leq 2.5$   $\mu\text{m}$  [ $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ ] and nitrogen dioxide [ $\text{NO}_2$ ]),

benzene is also a volatile organic compound that is likely to occur near industry and gas stations (5, 6). The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified benzene as a group 1 carcinogen (7). Benzene exposure has been linked with qualitative and

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Author Contributions: Y.T. and J.W. conceived and designed the study. L.T. and Y.M. prepared the data. J.W., J.X., Y.M., and Y.T. conducted the data analysis, performed interpretation of the results, and drafted the manuscript. Y.T., Y.S., and D.L. made critical revisions. All authors agreed on the final version of the manuscript and take responsibility for its content. The corresponding author attests that all listed authors meet authorship criteria and that no others meeting the criteria have been omitted.

Correspondence and requests for reprints should be addressed to Yaohua Tian, Ph.D., School of Population Medicine and Public Health, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences/Peking Union Medical College, No. 31, Beijige-3, Dongcheng District, Beijing 100730, China. E-mail: yaohua\_tian@hust.edu.cn.

This article has a related editorial.

This article has an online supplement, which is accessible from this issue's table of contents at [www.atsjournals.org](http://www.atsjournals.org).

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Internet address: [www.atsjournals.org](http://www.atsjournals.org)

## At a Glance Commentary

### Scientific Knowledge on the

**Subject:** Benzene is one of the most common air pollutants, affecting human health through environmental exposure in addition to occupational contact. Previous studies were focused mainly on the health impacts of exposure to high concentrations of benzene on occupational populations.

### What This Study Adds to the

**Field:** The results of this large national cohort study suggest that long-term individual exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene elevated mortality risk from all causes and a wide range of specific causes in the general population. Furthermore, the monotonically increasing exposure–response curves showed no threshold and plateau within the observed exposure range.

quantitative disruptions in blood cells (8, 9) and a number of diseases, such as hematologic malignancies (10, 11). Furthermore, epidemiological research has examined the prolonged impacts of exposure to high concentrations of benzene on occupational populations. These studies primarily used occupational cohorts or case–control study designs involving benzene concentrations of less than 1 ppm (3.19 mg/m<sup>3</sup>) to more than 10 ppm (31.9 mg/m<sup>3</sup>) (12–18). The outcomes of these investigations have consistently demonstrated that benzene is among the most significant hazardous air pollutants, incurring substantial risks of cancer, cardiovascular disease (CVD), and respiratory disease.

As a ubiquitous air contaminant, benzene might affect human health through environmental exposure in addition to occupational contact (5). Considering the widespread global distribution of low concentrations of ambient benzene and its exposure to a large population, benzene might pose a potential health risk to the global population. However, the potential health effects of low concentrations of benzene in ambient air among the general

population have been historically overlooked. To our knowledge, only two previous epidemiological studies have investigated the associations of long-term exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene and the risk of mortality in nonoccupational settings, primarily because of the lack of benzene monitoring data (19, 20). Furthermore, these two studies were limited by a lack of individual exposure assessment, single-city study design, or restricted health outcomes. Thus, the effects of benzene exposure on different causes of death are still uncertain. There is an urgent need to assess the overall impact of individual benzene exposure on human health and to provide evidence to support the development of regulatory strategies.

Hence, in the present study, we comprehensively investigated the associations between individual long-term exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene and the risk of mortality in a large prospective cohort. We aimed to provide scientific evidence for developing public health measures to regulate ambient benzene pollution.

## Methods

### Study Population

We sourced data from the UK Biobank for the present study. Details of the rationale, study design, and survey methods can be found elsewhere (<https://www.ukbiobank.ac.uk>) (21, 22). Briefly, the UK Biobank is a population-based cohort study consisting of more than 500,000 participants aged 37–73 years in the UK National Health Service (NHS) who attended one of the 22 centers across the United Kingdom for baseline assessment from 2006 to 2010. Individuals completed a computer-based questionnaire on baseline information, medical history, and treatments and underwent a standardized portfolio of clinical measurements. The UK Biobank has approval from the National Information Governance Board for Health and Social Care and the NHS North West Multicenter Research Ethics Committee, and all participants gave written informed consent. Of the 502,479 UK Biobank participants, we excluded those with prior cancer, myocardial infarction, or stroke at baseline ( $n = 56,568$ ), missing data on benzene exposure ( $n = 8$ ), or missing covariate data ( $n = 52,861$ ), yielding an analytic cohort of 393,042 participants.

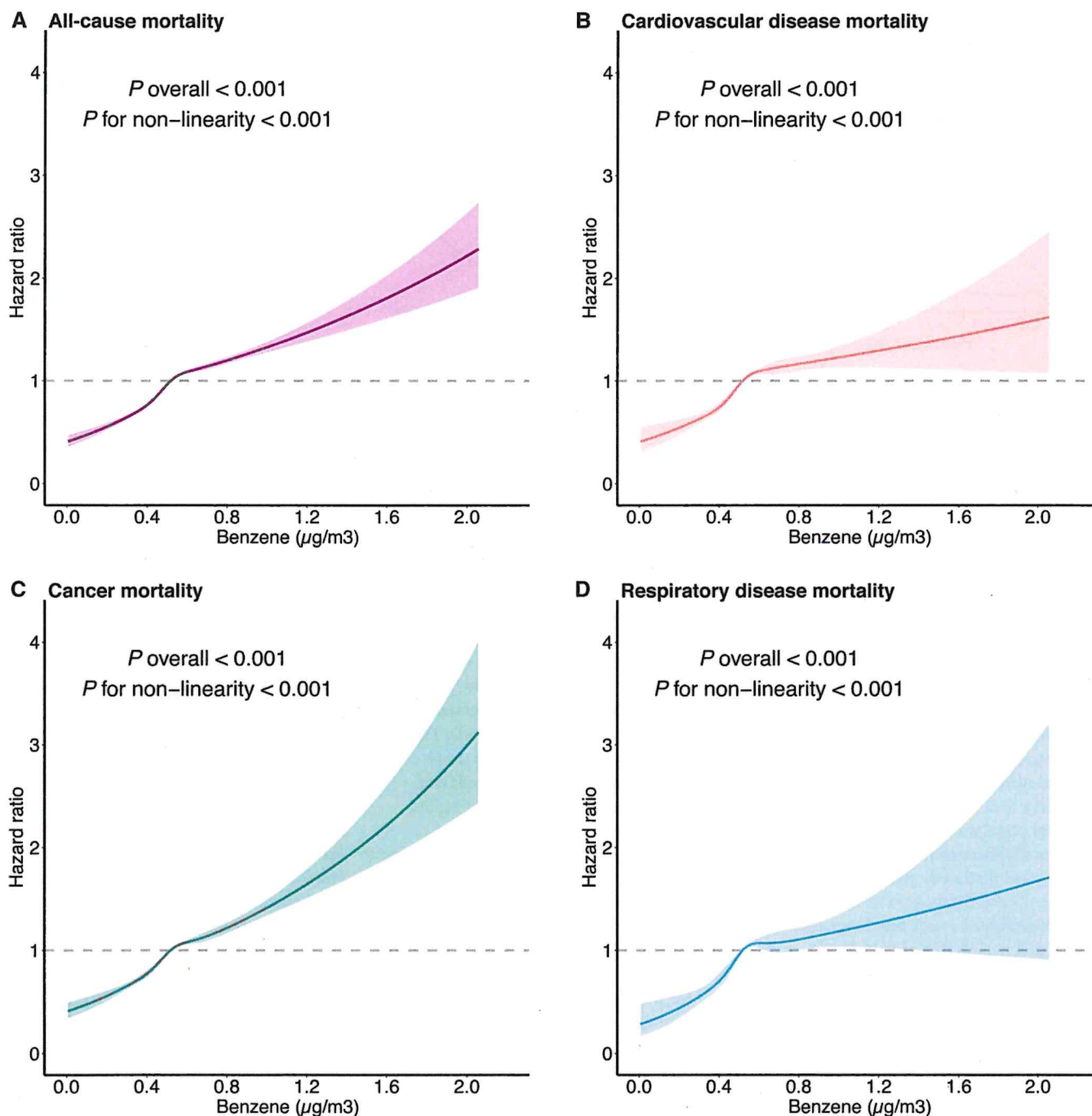
### Exposure Assessment

Annual average concentrations of benzene (2006–2020) were obtained from the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), which collects high-resolution, near-surface air pollution data in the United Kingdom (<https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk>). The data are used in official government publications and have been widely used in existing publications (23–25). This system generated annual concentration maps of diverse air pollutants with a resolution of  $1 \times 1$  km. This is achieved through an air dispersion model that relies on multiple sources derived from the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, incorporating data from secondary inorganic aerosol measurements and models accounting for various sources such as dust resuspension. Subsequently, the estimated concentrations underwent calibration by integrating actual measurements obtained from background sites within DEFRA's Automatic Urban and Rural Network. To ensure the reliability of models, DEFRA carries out a comprehensive set of comparisons between modeled and measured annual mean air pollutant concentrations. These evaluations show strong agreement between the observed data and the model's output values. Detailed summary statistics regarding the model's performance can be accessed at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/pcm-data>.

On the basis of an existing study (26), we estimated benzene exposures for each participant. Using the residential address history provided by UK Biobank, we linked the annual average benzene concentrations to each participant using a unique code (ukgridcode) corresponding to individual  $1 \times 1$  km cells in the annual concentration map.

### Mortality Ascertainment

Information on vital status, date of death, and the underlying cause of death was sourced from the NHS Information Centre (England and Wales) and the NHS Central Register (Scotland). Specific causes of death were defined on the basis of codes from the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision: 1) CVD (codes I00–I99), ischemic heart disease (codes I20–I25), and cerebrovascular disease (codes I60–I69); 2) cancer (codes C00–C97), leukemia (codes C91–C95), multiple myeloma (codes C90), non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (NHL; codes C82–C85), respiratory cancer (codes

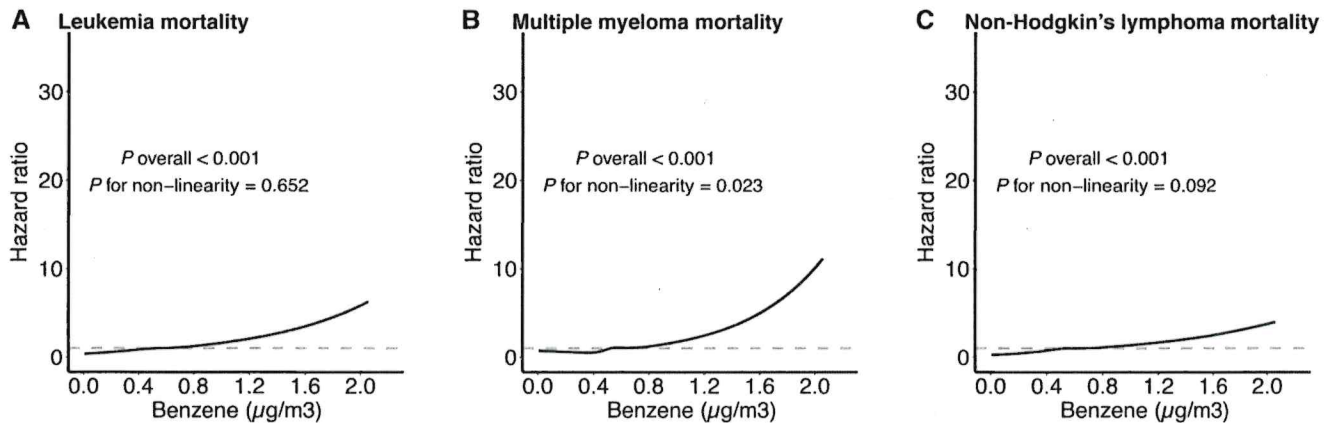


**Figure 2.** (A–D) Concentration–response curves of the effects of exposure to benzene on all-cause mortality (A), cardiovascular disease mortality (B), cancer mortality (C), and respiratory disease mortality (D). Models were adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, education level, Townsend deprivation index, drinking status, smoking status, body mass index, physical activity, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, solid-fuel cooking or heating, exposure to tobacco smoke at home, exposure to tobacco smoke outside the home, and annual average concentration of residential exposure to particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter  $\leq 2.5 \mu\text{m}$ .

disease at baseline, we excluded the participants who died during the first year of follow-up, and the results were identical to those in the main analysis (see Table E3). Sensitivity analyses showed no substantial change when we excluded participants

living at their current addresses for less than five years (see Table E4) or included only individuals without poor self-reported health at baseline (see Table E5). The associations between long-term benzene exposure and mortality risk did

not change materially when adjusting for  $\text{NO}_2$  (see Table E6). In addition, the results of adjusting the directed acyclic graph–determined minimal sufficient adjustment set did not change (see Table E7).



**Figure 3.** (A–C) Concentration–response curves of the effects of exposure to benzene on subtypes of hematologic malignancy mortality: leukemia (A), multiple myeloma (B), and non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma (C). Models were adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, education level, Townsend deprivation index, drinking status, smoking status, body mass index, physical activity, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, solid-fuel cooking or heating, exposure to tobacco smoke at home, exposure to tobacco smoke outside the home, and annual average concentration of residential exposure to particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter  $\leq 2.5 \mu\text{m}$ .

## Discussion

In this study involving nearly 400,000 individuals from the United Kingdom, we explored the health effects associated with long-term exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene, which has previously been an overlooked issue in the public health sector. To our knowledge, this is the first study to reveal that long-term individual exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene elevated mortality risk from all causes and a wide range of specific causes in the general population. Furthermore, the monotonically increasing exposure–response curves showed no threshold and plateau within the observed exposure range. These findings highlight the necessity to develop effective, practical strategies to control ambient benzene concentration for general public health.

Prior studies have been informative for the adverse effects of benzene exposure on human health but were limited to highly exposed populations, such as a specific occupational group, and lacked individual measurements. In a retrospective cohort study performed on benzene-exposed Chinese workers, chronic benzene exposure increased a notable risk of overall mortality, respiratory disease mortality, lung cancer mortality, and death of hematopoietic, lymphoproliferative, and related disorders (36). According to research conducted in the United States, individuals with occupational exposure to benzene exhibited an overall standardized mortality ratio for leukemia of

337 and for multiple myeloma of 409, calculated by multiplying the relative risk by 100 (37). A cohort consisting of 20,625 employees from the French national electricity and gas company reported that long-term exposure to benzene was associated with an increased risk of nonaccidental mortality. However, no significant associations were observed for CVD and respiratory mortality (38). The reason for this may be due to the small number of deaths of CVD ( $n = 165$ ) and respiratory disease ( $n = 284$ ), limiting the statistical power to detect the effects.

The primary route of benzene exposure is through the air (39). For nonsmoking individuals in the general population, fuel-related emissions are the major sources of exposure (40). However, very few studies to date have examined the health effects of long-term exposure to low concentrations of ambient benzene exposure on the general population. In our study, we did a subgroup analysis according to the smoking status of participants and found that the association between benzene exposure and higher mortality was significant in both never- and ever-smokers. Similar to our findings, a previous cohort study composed of 58,760 residents in Toronto showed that each interquartile range ( $0.13 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) increase in the baseline exposure to benzene was associated with an increase in all-cause mortality (HR, 1.04; 95% CI, 1.01–1.07) and cancer mortality (HR, 1.06; 95% CI, 1.02–1.11). (19). However, they did not observe significant associations between

long-term benzene exposure and CVD and respiratory disease mortality. This difference may be due to a larger sample size and a more precise adjustment for individual-level risk factors, including smoking, in our study. A cohort study of 70,000 U.S. male veterans also revealed significant associations between benzene exposure and all-cause mortality (20); however, that study used data on county-level ambient benzene, which may result in potential exposure measurement error because of the notable within-city variations in benzene concentrations. Our findings also agree with earlier results from the U.S. NHANES (National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey), which was conducted in the general population of 16,968 participants, that blood benzene elevated the risk of total mortality and the mortality from cancer and heart disease, and these associations were also observed among nonsmokers (41). Of note, NHANES used a single baseline blood sample for each participant, and blood benzene is typically eliminated from the body within hours to days; thus, this exposure measurement may not represent long-term benzene exposure.

Benefiting from sufficient sample size and a long follow-up period, we found significant exposure-dependent positive associations of long-term exposure to low concentrations of residential benzene with the risk of all-cause death and death of a wide range of specific causes. The specific causes of death include CVD, ischemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, cancer, leukemia, multiple myeloma, NHL,

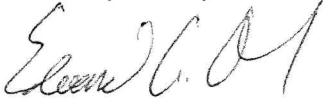
Dear Mayor and Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the council on this very important issue regarding unhoused individuals within the City of Stevens Point. As incoming Chief of Police, I agree with former Chief Kussow and Interim Chief Williams on the two proposals before you this evening.

This two-prong approach would provide individuals with safe housing by giving them the resources they need by joining resources with Partnering Together Portage County, as well as a mechanism for the police department to address any issues that may arise. A big part of the camping ordinance is the diversion program, which allows those individuals to find those resources such as housing. I believe these two proposals would also support the business/property owners, as well as the citizens/visitors of Stevens Point.

I look forward to working with the Council in the future on this issue and other issues impacting the City of Stevens Point.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed A. Orgon, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Edward A. Orgon, Jr.

Incoming Chief of Police – City of Stevens Point Police Department

## Susan Pagel

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**From:** Susan Pagel  
**Sent:** Friday, February 6, 2026 9:18 AM  
**To:** Susan Pagel  
**Cc:** Mike Wiza  
**Subject:** Re: Please distribute this letter to the Mayor and members of the city council.  
**Attachments:** BJ\_Welling\_Support\_for\_Odd\_Fellows\_Shelter\_Dated.pdf

Greetings Alderpersons,

I have been asked to forward this letter from BJ Welling.

Sincerely,

*Susan Pagel, City Clerk*

City of Stevens Point  
1515 Strongs Ave, Stevens Point, WI 54481  
(715) 346-1569

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**From:** BJ Welling <bjwell.wi@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 6, 2026 9:04 AM  
**To:** Susan Pagel <spagel@stevenspoint.com>  
**Cc:** Gregg Hansel <ghansel7@gmail.com>; DowntownBID5 <briancumminsspbid@gmail.com>; Karen Margelofsky <kmargelofsky@stevenspoint.com>  
**Subject:** Please distribute this letter to the Mayor and members of the city council.

Good morning.

I would appreciate it if you could deliver the attached letter to the Mayor and members of the Stevens Point City Council.

Thank you,  
BJ Welling.

From my cell phone

February 06, 2026

**Support for Grant to Partnering Together for Overnight Shelter**

Dear Members of the Stevens Point City Council,

I am writing to express my support for the City's current plan to provide a \$150,000 grant to Partnering Together to assist with the purchase of the Odd Fellows building on Church Street for use as an overnight shelter for our unhoused population.

I support the approach of using the Odd Fellows building as an overnight-only shelter, while continuing to utilize the Salvation Army location for daytime services and meals. While some have suggested that the Odd Fellows building should operate as a 24/7 facility housing both overnight shelter and all services, I do not believe that is necessary or advisable.

Closing the shelter during the day helps prevent people from remaining in one place continuously, which supports healthier routines and makes it easier to maintain a clean, organized, and well-managed facility. At the same time, continuing daytime services and meals at the Salvation Army provides several important benefits. It keeps that location active and relevant, effectively expanding the overall network of assistance available in our community.

Importantly, the Salvation Army's services and free meals support not only unhoused individuals, but also members of the working poor. Housing these services exclusively within an overnight shelter could unintentionally limit access for people who are struggling but not unhoused. By maintaining this separation of functions, the City ensures that more people in need can benefit.

With these two pieces in place—an overnight shelter and a separate, active daytime service center—I believe the City will be in a much stronger position to enforce the no-camping ordinance. This is critical for addressing the negative impacts the current situation has had on downtown businesses. Business owners need meaningful change, and this plan represents a practical and compassionate step forward.

While the formation of this new shelter may not solve every challenge immediately, it goes a long way toward improving the situation. Once it is in place, we can evaluate outcomes and address future challenges as they become clear.

In conclusion, I urge you to vote in favor of providing the grant for the purchase of the Odd Fellows building so that Stevens Point can move forward in addressing this important community issue.

Sincerely,

BJ Welling  
Stevens Point BID Board of Directors Member

## Susan Pagel

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**From:** Susan Pagel  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2026 7:28 AM  
**To:** Susan Pagel  
**Subject:** FW: Common Council Handout  
**Attachments:** Wetland Graphic - West RiverZinda Dr. .docx

Alderspersons,

I am forwarding the attachment as requested.

Sincerely,

Susan Pagel, City Clerk  
City of Stevens Point  
(715) 346-1569

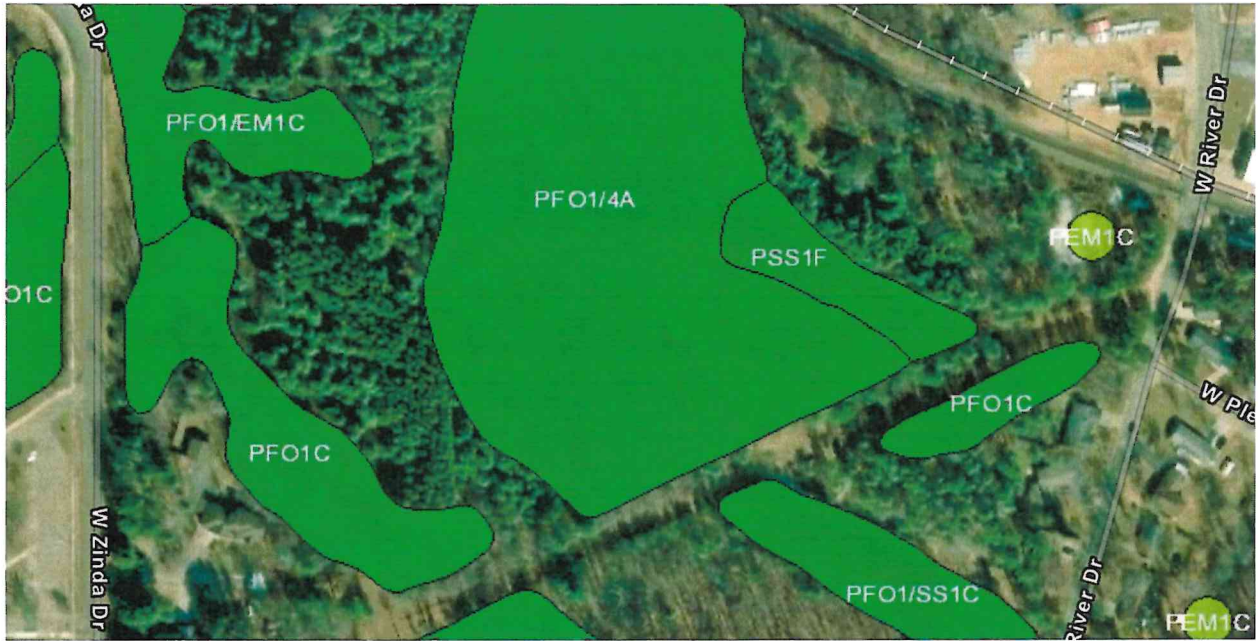
-----Original Message-----

From: Katie <schimke.katie@gmail.com>  
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2026 1:18 PM  
To: Susan Pagel <spagel@stevenspoint.com>  
Cc: Mike Wiza <MWiza@stevenspoint.com>; Adam Kuhn <akuhn@stevenspoint.com>;  
mchristianson@stevenspoint.com; jguthrie@stevenspoint.com; gkeymer@stevenspoint.com;  
lbroderick@stevenspoint.com; abirr@stevenspoint.com; dsteinmetz@stevenspoint.com;  
mkneebone@stevenspoint.com; dshuda@stevenspoint.com; slang@stevenspoint.com; dbuse@stevenspoint.com;  
Shaun Morrow <SMorrow@stevenspoint.com>  
Subject: Common Council Handout

Hello,

My name is Katie Schimke and I am just sending a small handout I would like to discuss tomorrow at the Common Council meeting. It is in regards to agenda item #18, about the West River/West Zinda preliminary subdivision plat review. I can print a few copies for tomorrow, but will not be able to print enough for each council member to have a physical copy.

Thank you!  
Katie Schimke  
440 W. Trillium Court



(Above) From the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the map above shows wetland areas represented in the highlighted dark and light green portions.

(Below) The same exact area, now highlighted in red, is proposed to be land on which 18 single family homes and a park could be built.

