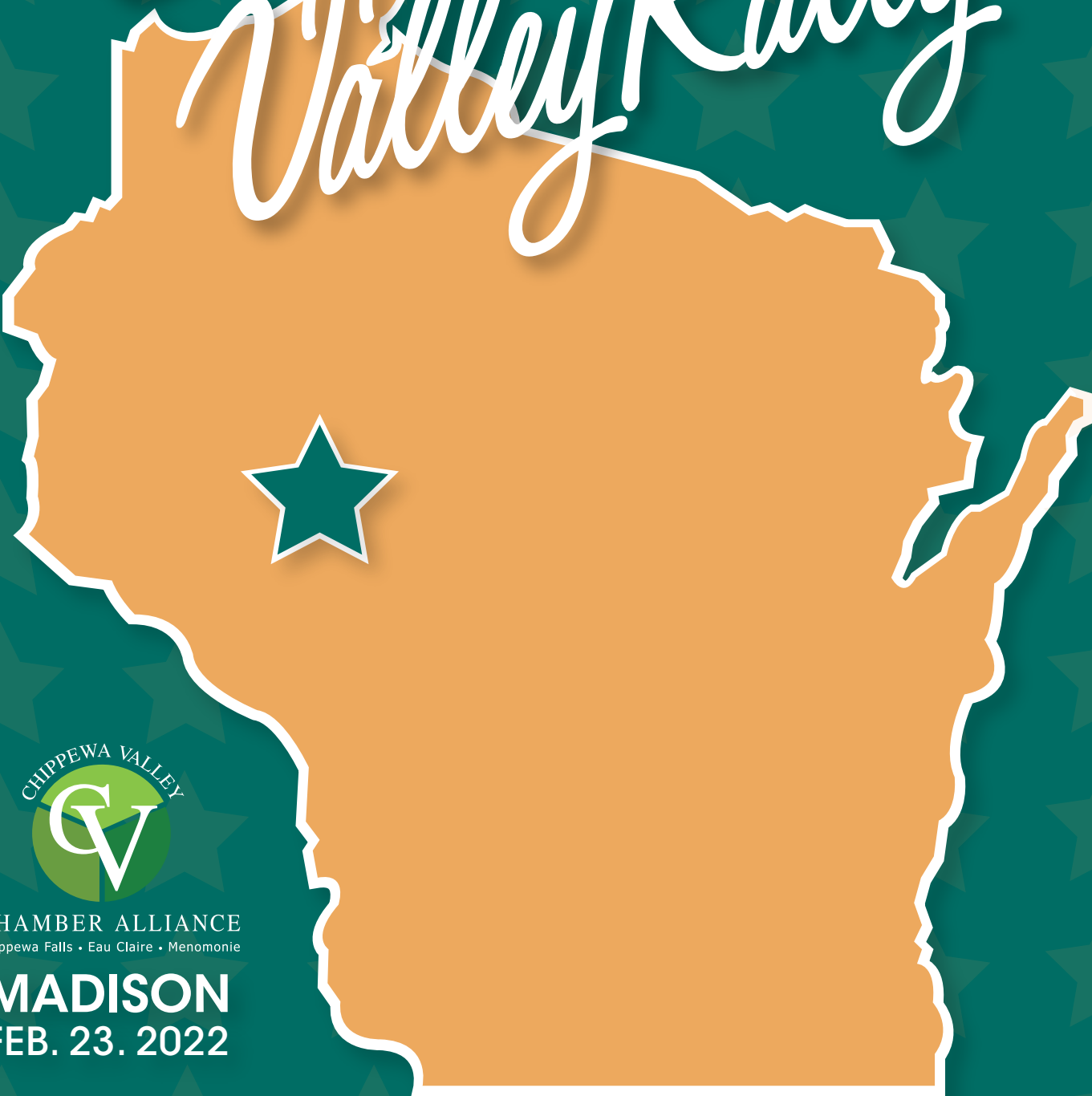


28th Annual

# Chippewa Valley Rally



CHAMBER ALLIANCE  
Chippewa Falls • Eau Claire • Menomonie

**MADISON**  
FEB. 23. 2022

# Greetings from the Chippewa Valley

## Vibrant Regional Economic Hub Chippewa Falls · Eau Claire · Menomonie

The Chippewa Valley is West Central Wisconsin's regional economic hub. The vitality of our communities is driven by a desirable quality of life, low cost of living, top quality educational institutions, and strong businesses and non-profit organizations. We are becoming increasingly known for our ability to create collaborative relationships that improve the lives of our citizens and foster a positive economic environment.

The Chippewa Valley boasts a diverse economy that must compete every day with our Minnesota neighbors to the west, a regional center for medicine, manufacturing, retail, technology, financial services, education, customerservice and, increasingly, the arts and culture.

### Strengthening partnerships

The Chippewa Valley Rally is organized by the Chippewa Valley Chamber Alliance – Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire and Menomonie – representing over 2,200 members with more than 55,000 employees. We come to Madison to recognize and strengthen our region's mutually-beneficial relationship with state government – including transportation, workforce development, education, economic development and more

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Scott Rogers  
715-834-1204  
rogers@eauclairechamber.org



Seckora Photography

## February 18, 2022

11:00 a.m.....Rally Issues Briefing and Q&A (via Zoom)

## February 21, 2022

1:00 p.m.....Repeat of Issues Briefing and Q&A (via Zoom)

2:00 p.m.....Political experts panel - How to be effective in talking with lawmakers (via Zoom)

## Chippewa Valley Rally: Schedule

9:30 a.m.....Arrival and registration	<b>Park Hotel - 8th floor</b>
<b>10:00 a.m..Opening session with</b> <b>Chippewa Valley area legislators</b>	<b>Park Hotel - 8th floor</b>
11:15 a.m....Legislative appointments	State Capitol
11:45 a.m....Legislative appointments	State Capitol
<b>12:30 p.m..Luncheon</b> <i>- Keynote Speaker Governor and Interim UW System President Tommy Thompson</i>	<b>Park Hotel - 8th floor</b>
1:45 p.m....Legislative appointments	State Capitol
2:15 p.m....Legislative appointments	State Capitol
2:45 p.m....Legislative appointments	State Capitol
<b>4:00 p.m....Cabinet Panel</b> <i>- Secretary Peter Barca, Department of Revenue</i> <i>-Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld, Department of Administration</i> <i>-Secretary Craig Thompson, Department of Transportation</i> <i>-Deputy Secretary Sam Ridders, Wisconsin Economic Development Corp.</i>	<b>Park Hotel - 8th floor</b>
4:30 p.m..... <b>Reception</b>	
5:30 p.m.....Events conclude	



Chippewa Valley Rally, 2020, Capital Rotunda

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## ★ *Action Requested*

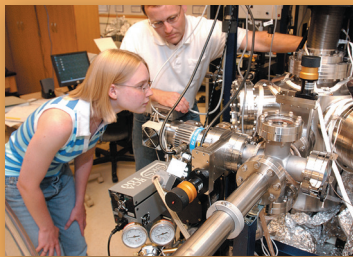
### *Thank you for...*

#### **Increased funding in the 2021-23 state budget for Youth Apprenticeship programs.**

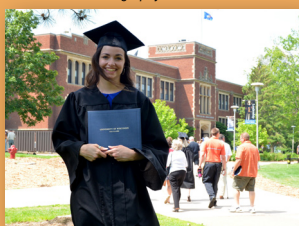
The increase in the annual appropriate and per-student grant to schools will help fuel growth in this valuable career-focused program for high school students.

#### **Chippewa Valley Technical College - \$10 million Workforce Innovation Grant:**

The "Restoring Employment through Support, Training, Outreach, Recruitment, and Education in Northwestern Wisconsin" (RESTORE) project will implement plans to address the critical workforce shortage in the manufacturing industry across the primarily rural areas of northwestern Wisconsin. Employers are struggling to hire qualified workers into key metal fabrication careers across the manufacturing sector. While these jobs are high-paying and in-demand, workers lack the necessary training and skills required to be hired and succeed in long-term employment opportunities.



Tim Abraham Photography



#### **UW-Eau Claire - \$9.4 million Workforce Innovation Grant.**

In December of 2021, UW-Eau Claire and Mayo Clinic Health System received a \$9.4 million Workforce Innovation Grant

from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. The grant focuses on the placement and training of nurses, teachers, and social workers prepared to establish family-supporting careers in rural communities. A rural care hub will also pilot a new personal care app and upskill medical assistants into rural care coaches who can effectively extend telemedicine services in rural areas. Finally, UW-Eau Claire's Small Business Development Center and Mayo Clinic's Office of Entrepreneurship will design trainings and programs to help rural businesses innovate their operations for a competitive modern economy. This state funding will allow targeted interventions to support Wisconsin's rural economies.

#### **Provide state leadership on talent attraction and retention.**

It's essential for the state to help address the workforce shortage through initiatives to attract and retain talent – including marketing the positive attributes of the state and its regions to attract new talent, encouraging former residents and students to return, highlighting opportunities for transitioning veterans, and keeping Wisconsin graduates in the state. \$3 million was provided to WEDC for this purpose in the 2021-22 State Budget. This funding and more should be deployed as soon as possible and could include a statewide effort and/or matching support to local and regional talent-attraction initiatives.

#### **Address housing affordability and supply.**

Wisconsin's housing shortage across all levels is closely related to the workforce crisis, as well as having a detrimental effect on affordability. We support several of the measures incorporated into the Assembly's workforce housing package, including a sales tax exemption for workforce housing developments, tax credits for workforce housing creation, the proposed shovel-ready workforce housing sites program, a workforce housing rehabilitation loan program, and the local housing investment fund program.

Five bills that have passed the Assembly have merit and should be considered to address specific challenges, including:

AB156 – Workforce Housing Incentives

AB603 – Creating Shovel-Ready Workforce Housing Sites

AB606 – Sales Tax Exemption for Construction Materials for Workforce Housing

AB607 – Creating Workforce Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program

AB609 – Creating a Local Housing Investment Fund Program



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## ★ *Action Requested*

### *Thank you for...*

#### **Covid-related economic relief measures.**

Thank you for Act 1 that ensured relief payments such as the Payment Protection Program (PPP) and Shuttered Venue Operator Grants (CVOG) were not subject to taxation. This relief should also be extended to funds received under the Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF).

#### **Sell unused state land in Chippewa Falls for economic development**

Request the Department of Administration sell state land in Chippewa Falls for economic development purposes. With continuing business expansions in the Chippewa Falls area, the community is struggling to meet continuing strong demand for economic development property because of a shortage of available land. The State of Wisconsin holds several acres of excess property in the City of Chippewa Falls that could be prime development land. We support the state selling these properties to increase economic development options for the Chippewa Valley.



Tim Abraham Photography

# INFRASTRUCTURE

## ★ *Action Requested*

### **Prioritize continued expansion of broadband access to unserved and under-served areas**

With the pandemic highlighting the critical nature of broadband access, connecting rural Wisconsin towns, villages, and communities with reliable broadband requires a strategic and thoughtful approach. The Chippewa Falls school district alone estimates over 750 of its students would benefit from better access. As funding is deployed, it should prioritize appropriate data collection, mapping, and sufficient speeds. Cooperatives, telephone companies, and middle-mile backbone networks all play a critical role in broadband delivery.



### **Build out electric vehicle charging infrastructure to include major highway corridors and rural areas.**

With significant federal funding for EV stations on the way, the preparation, planning, and investments in building out Wisconsin's charging station network must include small and medium-sized communities. Economic development partners like local electric utilities will play an important role in fulfilling the needs of the traveling public. Legislative action is appropriate to incentivize the production and deployment of charging infrastructure



### **Position Wisconsin to benefit from coming federal infrastructure funding opportunities.**

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the bipartisan infrastructure enacted last fall, includes significant competitive and formula funding for state and local investments in water infrastructure, roads & bridges, aviation, and freight & passenger rail. It's important for Wisconsin to be prepared to seek and utilize these funding streams where they will provide benefits to our economy.

### **Confirm critical UW System capital investments in the 2023-24 State Budget**

During 2022, UW System leaders and the Board of Regents will be determining capital budget requests to forward to the Governor and Legislature for the 2023-24 State Budget. There are two critical projects at universities in the Chippewa Valley that are essential to fulfilling their mission and economic potential:



*Outdated Phillips Hall*

### **UWEC Science & Health Sciences Building Phase II funding:**

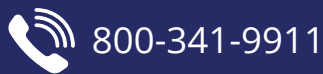
With Phase I enumerated in the 2019-21 State Budget, design has moved forward and it's time to commit Phase II funding so that a single replacement building can be constructed to replace outdated Phillips Science Hall. Including a key partnership with Mayo Clinic, the project meets 21st century STEM research and education needs, providing regional economic benefits far beyond the borders of the campus.

**UW-Stout Heritage Hall renovation and addition:** Originally built in 1973 as the Home Economics Building, this renovation is critically needed to update building systems and meet the needs of today's Family and Consumer Sciences programs, focusing on nutrition, hospitality and food service, family health, and child development.



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Beyond being a reliable energy provider for the community, Xcel Energy is committed to being a true partner by promoting economic vitality here. That's why we're continuing to make the right investments to meet our growing energy needs — investing in infrastructure, supporting carbon-free energy and getting involved in advocacy at the local, state and national levels. All to ensure a bright future for Wisconsin.

