

# America in Bloom 2024 Evaluation Report



**Community:** Rudolph, Wisconsin  
**Evaluation Dates:** June 24-25, 2004

**Lead Advisor:** Sharon Hadden  
**Co-Advisor:** Galen Gates

*America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play – benefitting from colorful plants and trees; enjoying clean environments; celebrating heritage and planting pride through volunteerism.*

Evaluation Areas	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percent
Community Vitality	128.00	97.00	75.78%
Floral Impact	96.00	36.00	37.50%
Landscaped Areas	96.00	61.00	63.54%
Urban Forestry	104.00	15.00	14.42%
Environmental Initiatives	144.00	64.00	44.44%
Celebrating Heritage	88.00	65.00	73.86%
Overall Impression	104.00	80.00	76.92%
Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions	12.00	12.00	100.00%
<b>Total Points and Percent</b>	<b>772.00</b>	<b>430.00</b>	<b>55.69%</b>
<b>Star Rating</b>	<b>6</b>		
<b>Community Involvement Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>54.68%</b>

*Star ratings are based on overall percentage.*

1 star = 0% - 9.99%	2 stars = 10% - 19.99%	3 stars = 20% - 29.99%	4 stars = 30% - 39.99%	5 stars = 40% - 49.99%
6 stars = 50% - 59.99%	7 stars = 60% - 69.99%	8 stars = 70% - 79.99%	9 stars = 80% - 89.99%	10 stars = 90% - 100%

Community representatives to receive the Evaluation Report (three minimum)		
Name	Title	Email
Christy Steinle, 715.340-3552	President of local America In Bloom	csteinle@wctc.net

## **GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION:**

### **Communities are required to provide the following prior to evaluation:**

- Community Profile organized to follow the criteria and metrics. For repeat communities, call out what is new and/or implemented due to advisors' recommendations.
- Evaluation Tour Itinerary with start and finish times for each day
- Community Map with community boundaries and the tour route
- Communities are responsible for addressing the metrics in the Community Profile, Evaluation Tour Itinerary, and during the Evaluation Tour.

### **The areas to be scored:**

Advisors will review Community Profiles, Community Maps, and Evaluation Tour Itineraries to confirm the appropriateness of the areas to be evaluated and contact communities prior to the tour so adjustments can be made.

- All areas (municipal, commercial, and residential) within the boundaries of the entrant's community/municipality (except as noted below) are scored and a representative portion of all areas must be included.
- Property to be scored, whether public or private, must be subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant's community/municipality.
- When a property does not meet these requirements, but the community's volunteers significantly impact the property with labor and/or funding, then advisors may include in their scoring the property not subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant community.
- A community may request recommendations for areas toured but not scored.

### **Metrics are noted with unique codes based on the criteria. Ratings include:**

**N/A (Not Applicable):** Communities should strive to implement all metrics; however, advisors will use N/A when a metric is not scorable in a community. N/A metric is not included in the point totals and does not affect percentages. Examples when N/A may apply in a metric: commercial/business areas do not exist; state or county statutes prevent implementation of a metric.

**Not Started (0 points):** programs or procedures are not in place.

**In Progress (1-2 points):** programs or procedures are developed, and a plan of action is implemented.

**In Place (3-5 points):** programs or procedures are utilized and beneficial.

**Surpassing (6-8 points):** programs or procedures are exceptional, utilized, and beneficial throughout the community.

### **Other:**

- This Evaluation Report's scoring, general observations, and general and criteria recommendations are based upon the community's efforts including its levels of participation in, or implementation of the metrics in each of the criteria.
- Future projects and programs are not scored.
- The scoring for the seven evaluation criteria is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community's location. Make sure the advisors are made aware of any challenges that were faced during the year.

## General Observations and Recommendations (recommendations are indicated in italics):

Congratulations and welcome to Rudolph for becoming a first-time participant in the America in Bloom Program. You join many other communities in Wisconsin who participate in the AIB program. AIB's vision is for communities to be seen as welcoming and vibrant places to live and work, promoting beautification by education and community engagement, benefiting the community by providing a clean environment to live in, to celebrate its heritage and to enjoy the landscapes and trees.

As always, our views, observations, and recommendations are personal to us, taken from our experience, knowledge, and evaluations of other communities. Some of our recommendations will be from successful initiatives and/or programs that we have experienced in other AIB communities. Our recommendations may differ from other advisors but are offered to help engage and encourage wider conversations within your community. Some of what we recommend may be quick-fix solutions; some may be used to develop a wider framework for larger long-term future projects.

We will be sharing this document with the suggested people from your community profile. *We also recommend sharing with any organization or community member that we met and engaged with during our visit. It can help to act as a framework for discussions to better achieve understanding between different organizations and groups, and it can allow for the advancement of initiatives and projects by getting groups to take ownership.*

The Village of Rudolph does a great job with your website; it is well done and regularly updated with future events and gentle prods to your residents reminding them of ordinances pertaining to grass cutting and weed removal. This is a great way of keeping your village neat and tidy. *The addition of the AIB evaluation report to this site and also on any other websites promoting business development and community involvement with a link to America in Bloom [www.americainbloom.org](http://www.americainbloom.org) will bring awareness to Rudolph in Bloom and the wider context of AIB. This is also a great way of reaching out for volunteers.*

AIB does have an element of competition, and we were inspired by your dedication as a team when getting things done and the enthusiasm that you are showing when planning for the future. Your energy and passion toward your Village was wonderful to experience. *When looking at the scores, use them as a tool and roadmap to guide you through future projects and improvements; they are designed to highlight where you can concentrate your efforts.*

Finally, we would like to thank you for your tremendous hospitality, a well thought out itinerary covering everything that we needed to see and packed full of amazing projects, meeting so many wonderful people and showing us what Rudolph has to offer visitors and residents. We would like to extend our thanks to everyone we met from various organizations, businesses, and volunteers. We would especially like to thank the time that your fire department gave to us explaining how it became a Non-profit and its fantastic efforts in fundraising. Our appreciation goes to Christy Steinle and Rich Larsen for being excellent hosts; you are both such strong advocates for Rudolph, no question went unanswered, we thoroughly enjoyed your recommendation for Rusty's Backwater Saloon. We are sad that we were not able to experience Rudolph's Country Christmas, the photos looked amazing. We recognize the effort that goes into making this an event of such success. A big thanks to Kay Zimmerman, the owner of 'Mornin Sunshine Farm,' for a delicious breakfast, if only we could have eaten more blueberry scones. We salute Kris Willfahrt for her stewardship of the Rudolph Grotto Gardens. Kris, we applaud you and your dedication. Thank you to Rich Cournoyer, Post Commander of the Legion for the time that you took to answer our questions and explain your Veterans Banner program to us. A huge thank you the Firefighters at the Rudolph Fire Station. What an impressive collection of vehicles you have and great fundraising initiatives. We

apologize to anyone we did not mention by name.



Well done Rudolph for taking the initiative in joining America in Bloom.

Sharon Hadden and Galen Gates, AIB Advisors

<b>COMMUNITY VITALITY: Policies, programs, activities, and facilities that lead to a vibrant community and promote a sense of health and well-being. Includes, but not limited to, senior and community centers, libraries, museums, arts/cultural organizations, mentoring programs, schools, faith-based organizations, parks, playgrounds, dog parks, sports fields, water activities, trails, golf courses, and other active and passive recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities.</b>	Not Applicable (N/A)	Not Started (N/S) 0	In Progress 1-2	In Place 3-5	Surpasses 6-8
1. An economic development plan is in place and implemented. It includes the direction for short- and long-term economic growth, and programs to improve the economy. It is regularly evaluated, measured, and/or reevaluated.		N/S			
2. Communication of ordinances and policies pertaining to Community Vitality are easily accessible. Topics include, but are not limited to, culture, education, government, recreation, and technology. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.					6
3. Master plan exists for current and/or future public green space. Growth, enhancements, and/or protection of undeveloped areas is included. It is reviewed and routinely updated.		N/S			
4. Public parks and/or green spaces are available. Properties may include pocket, school, neighborhood, city, county, state, and national parks and green spaces. Parks and green spaces meet the needs of the community and are clean, maintained, welcoming, and utilized.					8
5. Active and/or passive recreation opportunities are available and meet the needs of the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, water sports, golf, baseball, pickleball, skiing, soccer, hiking, nature trails, bird watching, picnic areas, and fishing. Year-round programs are available.					8
6. Seating is available near walking, exercise, playground areas, and/or public transportation stops. The seating and area are clean and accessible.					8
7. Shade is provided for participants and/or spectators at cultural and sporting events. Structures include, but are not limited to, shade sails, dugouts, pergolas, arbors, and trees. Structures are maintained and inspected for safety.				5	
8. Community gathering space is available. The space is accessible and used throughout the year for all ages and abilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, community center, senior center, YMCA, churches, libraries, and town hall.					8

9. Age- and ability-appropriate play areas are accessible. Equipment is ADA-compliant and/or inspected by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.					7
10. Active outdoor community events are offered throughout the year. Examples include, but are not limited to, Bike-to-Work Day, Walk to School Day, and 5K events.				5	
11. Community celebrations and/or cultural performances meet the needs of the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, festivals, art, dance, theatre, music, and cinema.					7
12. Secure food programs are available. Examples include, but are not limited to, hunger relief efforts, food pantries, garden plots, rooftop gardens, community gardens, farmers markets, and Community Supported Agriculture.					8
13. Alternative transportation programs are available. Transportation is available in all areas of the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, bicycle/scooter rental, car/van pools, public transportation, and/or ride sharing to all areas of the city.					6
14. Safety policies, programs, and/or services are in place. Examples include, but are not limited to, police, fire, emergency medical services, community health, crime prevention, homeland security, gang prevention, traffic, homelessness, civil and human rights. Information is easily accessible and communicated.					7
15. Youth-focused programs are in place for multiple ages and/or abilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, sports, gardening, clubs, and lectures					6
16. Non-municipal volunteer boards are active and/or comprised of representatives from business and residents. Examples include, but are not limited to, In Bloom committee, Rotary, Veterans, Chamber of Commerce, Scouting, HOAs, and faith-based organizations.					8
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>		<b>Actual Points</b>		<b>Percent</b>
<b>1. Community Vitality</b>	128		97		75.78%

## Community Vitality Recommendations:

Though one of our smaller communities in the America in Bloom family, Rudolph certainly isn't small when Community Vitality matters. With a population of 439 residents and surrounded by beautiful countryside about 7 miles north of Wisconsin Rapids, Rudolph puts community first.



Lumber brought the first settlers to Rudolph with the first house being built in 1854. The Village of Rudolph was incorporated in 1960; in the 1850s it took its name from the first-born boy Freddy Rudolph Hecox. Little did they know that the name would become such a significant factor for the prosperity of the village. Each year the village post office commissions a student to include the famous reindeer in a design for a stamp. At Christmas time the post office remains open 24/7 and people can enter and stamp their cards. *We were not made aware that there is any form of charge to the 1000s of people who visit the post office to use the stamp and the over 20,000 pieces of mail that are hand stamped so that people can have the Rudolph Christmas cancellation stamp on their holiday post. Although this is a lovely sentiment and service it would seem sensible to have a donation box and a QR code for people to*

*make donations. To name a cause or project that the money will be used toward encourages giving. Maybe collect for a splash pad at Rudolph Village Park.* Rudolph is an example of how it has found its niche in its name. The reindeer brand flows through the community although it does not define it, appearing on the Village sign and used throughout it is a successful implementation of branding. What we saw on our visit was how unique Rudolph is, filled with kind people ready and willing to help out in any way possible.

Businesses in the village are thriving. Dairy State Cheese and Pete's Market, a meat processing company, are both large employers. There are hidden gems, such as the Rudolph Grotto Gardens, which is impossible to describe. We have not seen anything like this before; it is an absolute treasure, an above ground cave system constructed in the 1920s by the then priest of St Philips Catholic Church, Father Philip Wagner and his helper Edmund Rybicki.

With beautifully landscaped areas and gardens tended since 1988 by the amazing Kris Willfahrt, it attracts over 30,000 visitors a year. *As a nonprofit and within the curtilage of St Philips church we appreciate there may be some sensitivity around monetizing the Grotto, gardens and museum, but we also believe that the significance of the Grotto from a historical perspective should not be underestimated or overlooked. Overtures should be made regarding looking at entering the Grotto onto the Historical Register <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/chapter-1/part-60/section-60.4> [www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm) We encourage you to pursue this.*



The Rudolph Village board has regular meetings, all minutes are reported and freely available on <https://villageofrudolphwi.org> Your ordinances are available online and in printed form. Pride in the tidy appearance of Rudolph is important to most of your community. You indicated areas that concern you, where grass isn't regularly cut you have found a solution, close neighbors help with keeping it cut.

Rudolph Village Park has recently received a grant to complete a fantastic project to move the playground equipment from an area overgrown with poison ivy and honeysuckle by 50 yards to a spot that is much safer, lighter, not susceptible to flooding and closer to the baseball field so parents can watch their children play at the same location. When we visited the kids playing in the new playground space told us pointing "When it was over there it was weedy and there were bugs

everywhere, and there was like metal everywhere.” The project was spearheaded by Christy Steinle who identified the playground was not being used in its previous location. Along with the movement and beautification of the playground Christy identified a memorial bench that was also overlooked, covered in moss and not being used. The memorial bench commemorating Megan Fuller who tragically died in 2007 now sits proudly cleaned at the entrance of the playground under an arch that says, “Enter here to be a kid again.” Megan’s mother is delighted to see kids sprawling over the bench. “It is as if they are all playing together,” she tells us. *It would be a nice gesture to have a plaque here telling us a bit about Megan; not necessarily dates but fun facts about a young girl's life and achievements.* You have achieved so much with this project. *When you have the wooded area behind the park cleared from dead trees try to identify a large tree suitable to place laying down near your equipment. Kids love to climb trees; a ground tree is a cool bit of play.*

[http://www.childrensplayadvisoryservice.org.uk/pdf\\_files/Publications/FallenTreesLeaflet\\_LondonPLAY-0920.pdf](http://www.childrensplayadvisoryservice.org.uk/pdf_files/Publications/FallenTreesLeaflet_LondonPLAY-0920.pdf)



<b>FLORAL IMPACT: Strategic design, use, installation, and maintenance of floral displays and seasonal accents for beautification, including but not limited to annuals, perennials, bulbs, tropical plants, flowering topiaries, colorful foliage, and cultivated and native plants for season-round interest for displays in containers, hanging baskets, window boxes, raised planters, trellises, and in-ground plantings.</b>	<b>Not Applicable (N/A)</b>	<b>Not Started (N/S) 0</b>	<b>In Progress 1-2</b>	<b>In Place 3-5</b>	<b>Surpasses 6-8</b>
1. Plant combinations are carefully selected for location and environmental conditions. The combinations create visual interest, provide dramatic effects, and appear coordinated. Routine maintenance is evident.				5	
2. In-ground flower displays are designed with mature plant heights, color, and texture in mind. Plants are healthy, robust, and floriferous. Routine maintenance is evident.				4	
3. Containers and/or hanging baskets are in use, scaled to their surroundings, and have suitable plants. Plantings are robust, floriferous, and provide a dramatic effect. Routine maintenance is evident.				3	
4. Floral displays are located throughout the community. Displays are well maintained and attractive. Examples include, but are not limited to, flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, topiaries, and/or mosaics are located throughout the community.				3	
5. Regular pruning, dead-heading, weeding, removal, and/or replacement of dead plants is conducted on public properties.				3	
6. Demonstration/display gardens are available. Plants are labeled. The garden is promoted to the public. Garden is available for events to residents and businesses.					8
7. Efficient water-wise strategies are in use. Examples include, but are not limited to, drought-resistant plants, use of gray water, and timing of irrigation. Strategies are easily accessible and communicated. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.		N/S			
8. Appropriate fertilization (chemical and/or non-chemical) procedures for municipal, parks, and/or school properties are implemented. The procedures produce effective results. Educational information about fertilization is communicated. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.				5	

9. Training programs for proper floral displays care and maintenance are offered to seasonal staff and/or volunteers. Training is conducted by Master Gardeners, County Extension, local garden centers, state agencies, and/or contractors.			5	
10. Efforts are in place to educate and raise public awareness of the importance of flowers in the landscape. Educational information about selection and care of flowers for beautification is available and communicated to the public. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.		N/S		
11. Recognition programs are in place monthly, quarterly, and/or annually for attractive displays created by businesses and/or residents.		N/S		
12. Programs are in place to encourage, recruit, and/or engage volunteers of all ages and segments in the community's floral displays. Routine opportunities present themselves for residents and/or businesses to get involved.		N/S		
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
<b>2. Floral Impact</b>	96	36	37.50%	

## Floral Impact Recommendations:

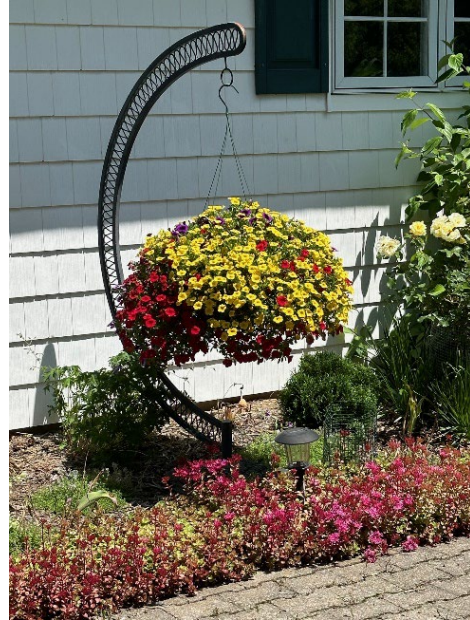


It was good to see the containers outside the post office. We imagined seeing more on both sides of the street. *One way for greater impact with little effort is to use labor saving techniques and products. Consider investing in self-watering, water saving containers. These devices hold up to 2 ½ gallons of water in a reservoir and may only need to be filled every 2-3 days. One such system is the H2O Labor Saver baskets [Home - H2O Labor Saver \(h2olaborsaver.com\) / 586-264-5678](http://Home - H2O Labor Saver (h2olaborsaver.com) / 586-264-5678) made by Eckert's Greenhouse. Also, the 28" Wrap-around is a good choice to complement your work recognizing those who served our country. Savings in labor costs and water usage can be quickly achieved to offset the investment in these containers. We hope you pursue this.*

<b>LANDSCAPED AREAS: Strategic design, use, installation, and maintenance of the managed landscape. This includes hardscape features, cultivated and native trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses, vines, succulents, edibles, evergreen topiaries, turf, groundcovers, and pollinator-friendly plant material.</b>	<b>Not Applicable (N/A)</b>	<b>Not Started (N/S) 0</b>	<b>In Progress 1-2</b>	<b>In Place 3-5</b>	<b>Surpasses 6-8</b>
1. Action plan developed and implemented for proper maintenance, pruning, removal, and/or replacement of dead and overgrown plants. Best practices are utilized.				5	
2. Plan developed each season for procurement, scheduling, planting, and/or maintenance of flowers and/or landscapes.					6
3. Landscape ordinances and/or policies are in place. City landscape ordinance requires specifications for landscaping and maintenance for new and improved residential, commercial, and public development. Ordinances and/or policies are easily accessible.				5	
4. Landscaping is found throughout the community including public areas, parks, gateways, and/or key buildings. Landscape displays are selected for location, environmental conditions, and/or impact. Attractive designs are utilized and well maintained. Landscapes serve as focal areas in the community.				5	
5. Landscape displays enhance community entryways. The use of trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials, signage, hardscapes, and/or lighting create a welcome display. The displays are attractive and/or well maintained.					6
6. Residential landscape provides streetscape appeal and reflects community value in landscaping. They are neat, attractive, and well maintained.					7
7. Effective use of naturalization, xeriscaping, rain gardens, and/or suitable plant varieties to enhance such features as traffic calming, bank stabilization, and water management. Displays are well maintained.					7
8. Lawn and turf areas display health and vigor. Procedures and practices, such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and/or permaculture, are used to manage lawn and turf areas, including mowing, edging, watering, and/or weeding.					7
9. Procedures in place to monitor and/or manage diseases and/or pests in the landscape. Pertinent information is available and/or communicated to the public. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.				4	

<p>10. Qualified landscape personnel and/or experienced contractors are available to design, install, source, and/or maintain public landscape floral and landscape sites. Additional support provided by growers, garden centers, County Extension, and/or city departments are utilized to create and implement municipal floral and landscape displays.</p>			2		
<p>11. Training programs for proper landscape display care and maintenance are available for seasonal staff and/or volunteers. Examples include, but are not limited to, Master Gardeners, County Extension, local garden centers, state agencies, and contractors.</p>			2		
<p>12. Programs are in place to encourage, recruit, and/or engage volunteers of all ages and segments of the community in the landscape displays. Volunteers from businesses, residents, schools, and/or organizations participate in the design, planting, and/or care of floral and landscape displays.</p>				5	
<p><b>Totals:</b></p>			<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<p><b>3. Landscaped Areas</b></p>			96	61	63.54%

## Landscaped Areas Recommendations:



We were exceedingly impressed with The Grotto. Of course, the building is an excellent facility for events, and the gardens were so impressive, having a stunning impact on us. There are clearly gifted individuals working on the landscape here. We applaud this site and its varied presentation qualities including the museum. We encourage you to make this a tourist destination. We were so surprised to see the extent of your land here. We feel it can provide additional benefits.



Landscapes of all kinds can play a role in the life and health of citizens and can be accomplished with little effort given the right materials and thoughtful application. It is still surprising to some that green spaces provide mental health benefits. Current media coverage and pending legislation speaks to the increased understanding of mental health. Myriad research shows plants and the environment have a positive influence on people.

Research at the University of Illinois has shown that landscaped areas improve mental health, lower crime, create greater community involvement, the incidence of crime drops, the suffering from ADHD is reduced, and for all – green space lowers blood pressure, among other benefits. The value of plants and plantings has also been

expressed with the field of Horticulture Therapy. A recognized discipline with university undergraduate and graduate degrees. Hospitals have long known that a patient who can view greenery from their room or visit a garden-setting heals more quickly and has a more positive attitude. A similar practice promoted more recently is “forest-bathing” (walking amongst stands of trees).

*An effective time saving method is the use of a hydrogel that reduces a plant’s need for water. These products attract soil moisture vapor and convert it back into plant-usable water droplets – reducing evaporative loss and making more water available to plant roots. Watering frequency can be reduced by 1/3 to 1/2 depending on conditions, and the product will remain active in the soil for 5-7 years. Providing water as the plant requires it increases nutrient uptake, increases the presence of beneficial microorganisms, and provides for the healthy display one desires. In addition, this reduces stress and can speed healing of any potential injury. While containers come to mind as the first use for this, in-ground displays would also benefit.*

*Another recommendation for general landscaped areas is the use of turf-type fescues. This is a more drought tolerant and resilient grass that can take more foot traffic, needs less water, and has a darker green leaf color. It has distinct advantages for other public green spaces when thoughtfully used, public parks, prominent parkways subject to high temperature stress and full sun areas are prime opportunities.*

URBAN FORESTRY: Strategic design, use, installation, and maintenance of trees on public and private lands.	Not Applicable (N/A)	Not Started (N/S) 0	In Progress 1-2	In Place 3-5	Surpasses 6-8
1. The municipal plan addresses the role urban forest initiatives play in the green infrastructure of the community. Policy is enacted and enforced that includes performance requirements to meet the minimum crown canopy and/or succession planting.		N/S			
2. Efforts are in place to educate and raise the public awareness of the importance of urban forestry. Examples include, but are not limited to, the use of print, videos, websites, apps, and social media.		N/S			
3. Municipal ordinance enacted and enforced for tree planting and/or preservation. Ordinance addresses the handling and removal of damaged, dying, or dead trees. Ordinance includes public property, private property, and new construction projects. Communication of ordinances and policies are easily accessible.		N/S			
4. Tree board and/or department is available, active, and/or interact with the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, tree planting events, addressing safety concerns, education, and making recommendations to municipality.				3	
5. Certified municipal personnel, trained arborist, urban forester, and/or Department of Natural Resources (DNR) entity actively manages the urban forest. Businesses and residents are updated routinely on urban forestry matters. Information delivered via city website, paper, and social media.				5	
6. Trees are healthy and contribute to public health and wellness. Procedures are in place for the appropriate selection, diversity of tree species, proper spacing, planting depth, and/or monitoring and managing diseases and pests. Pertinent information is available and/or communicated to the public.				5	
7. Policies are implemented for the protection of historic trees located on public and private properties. Tree programs exist that spotlight and honor historic trees. Trees are labeled and/or indexed. Historic trees are highlighted in a brochure and/or tree walk.		N/S			
8. Programs in place to increase, support, promote, and/or protect trees. Examples include, but are not limited to, civic native tree nursery, repurposing fallen trees, managing destructive pests, and urban orchards.		N/S			



9. Trees are identified in public sites such as arboretums, parks, and/or cemeteries. Examples include, but are not limited to, identification labels, descriptive signage, QR codes, kiosks, maps, apps, and brochures.		N/S			
10. Policies are implemented and education is available for the safe participation by volunteers and staff in planting trees on public properties. Ongoing urban forest tree care training and educational information and/or seminars available for residents and/or businesses.		N/S			
11. Effective communication of recommended trees is available to the public. Topics include "Right Tree in the Right Place," mulching, placement, spacing, and/or maintenance. Examples of communication include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, library, City Hall, and social media.			2		
12. The municipality is a member of urban forestry organizations, participates in programs, and/or earns designations and awards. Examples include but are not limited to Tree City USA, Arbor Day Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, and regional or state agencies.		N/S			
13. Programs are in place to encourage, recruit, and/or engage volunteers of all ages and segments of the community's urban forestry. Volunteers from businesses, residents, schools, and/or organizations participate in the design, planting, and/or care of the urban forest.		N/S			
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
<b>4. Urban Forestry</b>		104	15	14.42%	

## Urban Forestry Recommendations:

Strengthened by the phenomenon of climate change, there is a growing awareness of our environment by the public. In whatever manner, the impact of climate change on residents' lives is real, and public green space is one indicator, right before them. *Overextended, partially successful tree planting efforts make for a bad impression and can diminish a well-earned reputation. A poor impression/reflection on any public entity is costly. Once seen, it is difficult to erase the image of a dead tree. In short – Seeing no tree is better than a dead tree.*

*One opportunity we noticed for additional trees was at your “tank” memorial. A very nice structure is in place and we feel it can only be enhanced with a few trees. These could be smaller-statured, ornamental trees and/or large scale multi-stemmed shrubs. The University Extension Service would be a great resource for recommendations for your specific area.*



Of course there are two sides to everything. Today it is felt by environmentalists that leaving a dead tree in place is beneficial. The idea being that it benefits cavity-nesting birds, insects, and soil microorganisms among others. We agree with this in areas where there is not a potential threat to human injury, a potentially serious liability. We bring this up given the attention your newly placed playground has garnered. Only your committee can decide what is safe, and if the pictures indicate safe conditions, you have thought about it and have established an informed decision.

*We know you have temperature extremes with a record low of -28 degrees F. The addition of fall color can be a welcome site as the growing season winds down and you continue with planning for your festivals. We highly recommend the two trees seen below; one might call them industrial-strength. They will grow into significant, large shade trees that have no real problems and can be considered maintenance free with the bonus of fall color. Interesting note, the ginkgo has been around since the dinosaurs roamed the earth.*



***Celtis occidentalis*, hackberry**



***Ginkgo biloba*, ginkgo**

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES: Environmental and sustainable leadership, policies, plans, and programs for water, resource conservation; pollution control; trash, recycling, and reuse; climate change issues, green Infrastructure, and alternative energy resources.</b>	<b>Not Applicable (N/A)</b>	<b>Not Started (N/S) 0</b>	<b>In Progress 1-2</b>	<b>In Place 3-5</b>	<b>Surpasses 6-8</b>
1. Comprehensive plan to identify, protect, restore, and/or maintain natural areas. Examples include, but are not limited to, removal of invasives, no-mow areas planted with native grasses and wildflowers, and succession tree plantings.		N/S			
2. A municipal environmental plan is accessible and reviewed annually. The plan promotes water conservation, alternative energy use, food security and sustainability, carbon reduction, and/or responsible land management.		N/S			
3. Environmental board and/or Green Team are available, active, and/or interact with the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, sustainability initiatives, events, education, and making recommendations to the municipality.				5	
4. Public awareness strategies regarding environmental issues are implemented and effective, such as the 3 Rs (reduce/recycle/reuse), Earth Day events, pollution prevention, "leave no trace," landfill reduction, and community clean-up days. Municipal employees and/or volunteers receive training on environmental initiatives and participate in events.				5	
5. Communication of environmental plan and ordinances is easily accessible. Topics include sustainability, water quality, recycling, composting, reducing pesticide use, and light pollution. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.				4	
6. Programs to educate, encourage, and/or expand the understanding of the role and importance of pollinators and ecological habitats are available for all ages. Programs are held routinely.				5	
7. Green infrastructure policies and/or techniques are used throughout the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, naturalization, xeriscaping, rain gardens, suitable plant varieties to enhance such features as traffic calming, bank stabilization, stormwater run-off, and water management.		N/S			
8. Green infrastructure and natural asset inventory mapping are implemented. The inventory is regularly updated and includes climate, vegetation, soils, topography, wetlands, air, and/or water quality.		N/S			

9. Home and business energy audits are available and promoted. Incentives are available and communicated for items such as solar energy, water conservation, home appliance replacement, weatherization.				5	
10. Water conservation measures are used throughout the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, water-saving shower heads, full loads for dishwashers and washing machines, sink and toilet leaks, and lawn irrigation. Methods of water conservation are shared with the community through lectures, print, city website, library, City Hall, and/or social media.				3	
11. Management strategies implemented for the effective reuse/repurpose of buildings, structures, and/or land. The municipality has a reuse plan in place.				5	
12. Collection is available for trash, recyclables, compostables, and food waste. Events and/or sites are offered for drop-off of hazardous, household, electronics, shredding and/or difficult-to-recycle items. Sites are available for year-round recycling.					6
13. Recycling and trash containers are available in public areas. Containers to address both recyclables and trash present themselves together. Labeling is consistent. Routine trash and recycle pickup are scheduled. Additional containers are available during special events. Events promote zero waste.					6
14. Reuse opportunities are offered. Clothing, books, household goods, resale shops, tool lending, durable medical equipment, and/or equipment repair initiatives are available for donations and/or purchase.					7
15. The municipality uses energy-efficient vehicles in its fleet for police, fire, public transit, and/or city employees. Options may include electric, fuel cell electric, plug in electric hybrid, compressed natural gas, and/or hybrid electric vehicles.	N/A				
16. Electric vehicle charging stations are located throughout the community. Charging stations are available to city, residential, and/or visitor vehicles. 240-volt home charging outlet installation incentive is available and promoted.	N/A				
17. Mulch from renewable and/or sustainable sources is appropriately used by the municipality. Mulch is available for residential use.					6
18. Educational programs for all ages are available and promote environmental initiatives such as rain barrels, backyard habitats, rain gardens, solitary bee hotels, xeriscaping, chemical reduction, water conservation, and green business practices.		N/S			

<p>19. Youth organizations such as Scouts, Green Teams, schools, and 4H encourage involvement in environmental initiatives. Participants are recognized for their efforts and/or achievements. Efforts are communicated to the public through social media, newsletters, city website, and other methods.</p>			3	
<p>20. Programs are in place to encourage, recruit, and/or engage volunteers of all ages and segments of the community's environmental initiatives. Volunteers from businesses, residents, schools, and/or organizations participate in events, programs, boards, and promotions.</p>			4	
<p><b>Totals:</b></p>	<p><b>Possible Points</b></p>		<p><b>Actual Points</b></p>	<p><b>Percent</b></p>
<p><b>5. Environmental Initiatives</b></p>	<p>144</p>		<p>64</p>	<p>44.44%</p>

## Environmental Initiatives Recommendations:

It was so good to see your recycling/compost operation and to know you are actively managing it. This is something more communities should undertake. We did not see large equipment here but imagine the piles are turned/aerated regularly for composting. This might be a resource shared with the community.



*An opportunity to save resources and reduce landfill waste is to start a repair initiative. Instead of discarding broken electronics and small appliances, neglecting broken eyeglasses and jewelry in a drawer, or dumping clothes that need mending, encourage residents to repair and re-use such items. An excellent example is Orange County, FL which offers such programs, recruiting repair volunteers from local businesses and the community. These can include seamstresses, bicycle and eyeglass repair people, jewelers, clock and watch smiths, etc. Go to: [Fix It Dont Pitch It \(ocfl.net\)](http://FixItDontPitchIt.ocfl.net) to see how to set up a repair initiative.*

*At present, invasive plants and animals cost the US \$125 billion per year in their removal ([National Invasive Species Council | U.S. Department of the Interior \(doi.gov\)](http://NationalInvasiveSpeciesCouncil.U.S.DepartmentoftheInterior.doi.gov)). City staff and, ideally, the community should have a cursory knowledge of invasives and whenever possible provide people with the resources to identify and successfully remove these plants. A valuable resource can be found at [Policies, Statements, and Resources | Chicago Botanic Garden](http://Policies,Statements,andResources.ChicagoBotanicGarden).*

*We applaud your environmental efforts to date, including the use of goats to eradicate invasives where your playground stood. We do want to encourage you to keep watch for remnants of the three plants that are toxic. Hopefully the goats will eliminate these, but there may be remnants and may exist in other areas of Rudolph.*

<b>CELEBRATING HERITAGE: Recognition, designation, protection, commemoration, and celebration of historical, cultural, natural, agricultural, and industrial resources.</b>	<b>Not Applicable (N/A)</b>	<b>Not Started (N/S) 0</b>	<b>In Progress 1-2</b>	<b>In Place 3-5</b>	<b>Surpasses 6-8</b>
1. Historic Preservation, Historic Society, and/or Architectural Review Board are available, active, and/or interact with the community. Activities/responsibilities include, but are not limited to, review proposals for construction and rehabilitation, promote historic preservation incentives, submit recommendations to National Register, and designate local historic landmarks.					6
2. Historic Preservation ordinances are enacted and enforced. Ordinances effectively provide commercial and/or residential designation, guidance, and/or protection. Ordinances, policies, and restoration resources are available, easily accessible, and communicated.				4	
3. Historic districts, neighborhoods, structures, landmarks and/or objects are identified and/or labeled. Designation by such organizations as the Department of Archives and History and/or National Register are in place and/or in progress.	N/A				
4. Cemeteries and monuments are in place and well maintained. Historical plaques are used and well maintained. Examples of plaque locations include, but are not limited to, buildings, sites, residences, districts, historical events and people, and battle sites.					6
5. Historical museums and/or interpretive displays are available and maintained. Events and educational opportunities are held for all age groups to utilize historic assets.					7
6. Archives, artifacts, community records, and/or oral histories are collected, safely stored, preserved, and/or catalogued.					7
7. Volunteers and/or staff are trained to maintain historical sites, archives, records, collections, artifacts, structures, and/or landscapes. Historic educators are trained to effectively communicate a community's history.					7
8. Historic preservation incentives are available and promoted. Incentives may include but are not limited to tax credits, waived permit fees, eased setbacks, and/or rebates.				5	



9. Programs are in place for the purchase, installation, and/or long-term maintenance of memorial features. Examples include, but are not limited to, memorial benches, trees, brick pathways, and lamp posts.					6
10. Natural and agricultural areas are identified and protected. Designation by such organizations as The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Service, Department of Natural Resources are in place and/or in progress.	N/A				
11. Parades, festivals, events, and/or programs are held to commemorate the community's heritage, culture, and/or diversity. Participants represent all segments of the community.					7
12. Programs and/or events are available to bring history to life. Examples include, but are not limited to, theater dramas, reenactments, and historic characters at public events.	N/A				
13. Community heritage and/or cultural diversity are supported and promoted to all ages. Educational opportunities such as websites, publications, tours, interpretive signage, mobile apps, and/or programs.				5	
14. Youth of all ages and abilities participate in historical programs. Examples include, but are not limited to, lectures, tours, events, reenactments, research, and reader's theater. Participants are recognized for their efforts and/or achievements.	N/A				
15. Programs are in place to encourage, recruit, and/or engage volunteers of all ages and segments of the community's heritage preservation efforts. Volunteer representatives from businesses, residents, schools, and/or organizations participate in events, programs, boards, and promotions.				5	
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>		<b>Percent</b>
<b>6. Celebrating Heritage</b>		88	65		73.86%

## Celebrating Heritage Recommendations:

Rudolph was settled in the 1840s; it drew settlers to harvest the white pines that were abundant. In 1874 the Wisconsin Valley Railroad was looking for the straightest route from Grand Rapids to Wausau, bypassing nearby Reeds Mill. It caused a new village to spring up at Rudolph Station. Standing in Main Street Rudolph today you can hear the rumbling freight trains coming as they still cut through the village every hour. After the lumber industry declined with no trees left to fell, the cleared land was used for farming. Highly fertile, the main crop was Timothy Oats. Today it's cheese and meat processing that are the main businesses. Everywhere you go in Rudolph there are snatches of its history, collections of newspaper articles, photos and postcards adorn the walls of the American Legion building Post 485, the Fire Station, Post Office and the Village Hall.



Although we have already addressed this subject in Community Vitality, we believe it is worth mentioning it again in Celebrating Heritage. The Rudolph Grotto and Gardens is a jewel in your crown. Along with all the facilities that are available for you at St Philips Church we hope that you are able to maximize their use. The historic value of the Grotto is hugely significant, with over 30,000 visitors a year the need for its maintenance is a priority. Kris Willfahrt and her team do an amazing job and go well above and beyond anything we have seen before. We believe that every effort should be made to preserve it for the future. We appreciate that it sits within the curtilage of St Philips Catholic Church, but this construction and its historical significance absolutely must not be overlooked. *We would strongly urge you to pursue getting the Grotto and Gardens placed onto the Historical Register.* Please look into this and try to take the necessary steps. We suggest you look at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/how-to-list-a-property.htm> Our concerns are that the necessary funds or time may not be available. We see the Grotto and Gardens as having huge significance over and above its original intended devotional value. We will watch your progress with interest.

With a Vintage tractor and truck annual event, the Dick Trickle Memorial and no shortage of old memorabilia

Rudolph has a great way of celebrating its heritage. The Museum at the Grotto has alongside its religious artifacts an extensive collection of Rudolph's history. For such a small community we have to commend you on how much history you have collected. Much of this is from newspapers and written articles. *Although all of these are in cases they will deteriorate over time. We recommend that you have a digital copy of each for the future. Create a link on your village website so that they can be accessed by the public. Some of the storage cases are in direct sunlight so we recommend either moving them away from bright light or making a copy and displaying the copy.* <https://www.archivalmethods.com/blog/storing-old-newspapers/>



The Rudolph American Legion Post #485 currently has 95 members from 39 when it that started in 1946. The Legion has created a memorial banner program, called the Honor Walk. It celebrates military veterans with their photo and the years that they served. In its 5 years, 36 banners are installed along Main Street and Grotto Avenue.

A free book which features each veteran honored is published each year. In May with help from local business it takes one day to install all the banners, and they remain until Veterans Day in November. *We would*

*like to recognize Rich Cournoyer, Chairman of the walk and Post Commander.* With the help of his wife, Rich accepts with care the photos sent in to be used by relatives. He feels the weight and responsibility of looking after what might be the only record of a loved one. Approached by the National Guard with the offer of a decommissioned tank the village Board accepted. It proudly sits on Main Street. A covered shelter has been constructed alongside which is used for events this becomes the site of the ice-skating rink in winter. A great relic of Military history. We do not remember seeing any information about the tank's history. A plaque explaining the dates and use of the M60 tank would be useful.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=m60a3+tank&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en-us&client=safari>

This site has the feel of a memorial, copies of the Honor Walk booklet are also available here.

The Fire Department and its history is a huge part of your community. Our visit was so informative and with such an interesting story of how the Station came about starting with a volunteer brigade in 1917 and has developed into a nonprofit corporation in 1950. With a restored 1952 vintage fire truck paid for by fundraising from a yearly street dance and other initiatives it is almost a museum. A fantastic place to visit. *With such a history it would be great to see this information displayed outside the station, perhaps with a donation box alongside.*

Rudolph is all about community and being there for each other. Families have lived here for many years and the local history is talked about with such passion and knowledge. We were so fortunate to have time to hear many of these stories. *We always encourage communities to collect and record their oral history; not only does this preserve stories but from spoken history there is so much more to learn, you are able to become more present in the events that happened. We would recommend taking time to collect the many memories and experiences of your community from people who are willing to share. It's a fun school project for kids especially*

when they can record their own Grandparents oral histories. <https://siarchives.si.edu/history/how-do-oral-history>



The Dick Trickle Memorial at the Village Park commemorate the NASCAR legend who grew up in Rudolph. A tremendous understanding to create an impressive tribute built mostly by donations it has a healthy endowment fund to guarantee its maintenance. With involvement from the Master Gardeners and Cub Scouts trees have been planted around it to create shaded space. *There is a donation box available; we would suggest also placing a QR code which will make donating easier for visitors.*

The Museum at the Grotto Gardens with an extensive collection of religious artifacts also has the historic record of the construction of the Grotto, alongside this are many other historic collections relating to Rudolph's history. All collected and curated by Kris Willfahrt we could have spent hours in this charming building constructed out of wooden poles. Kris carefully packs away and stores during the winter months anything that could deteriorate. Her attention to this collection is commendable. *We would suggest that this collection be digitally preserved, certainly photographed and recorded. During the end of year removal and storage each item could be photographed with the help of volunteers. This is a massive undertaking; we hope that plans can be made for the future when Kris may decide that this is too big of a task. Her care and devotion to the Grotto and its Gardens is so impressive.*

The history of your buildings and their past uses along Main Street is interesting. We talked about your desire to somehow recognize the buildings heritage. *Take a look at [www.pacificgroveheritage.org/historic-home-plaques](http://www.pacificgroveheritage.org/historic-home-plaques)*

*This way of creating interesting information about the people or use of buildings and businesses may be something that you could consider.*

Rudolph, your history is rich and for a small community we heard so much of the way that you are going about keeping this for future generations. We applaud your recognition of what is important to treasure and record and the ingenious ways that you bring your history together, from parades, to saving the traditional recipes of the village to creating and selling Christmas ornaments celebrating Rudolph's name then using the money to give grants you as a community are certainly celebrating your heritage. We think the last word goes to Christy Steinle; her guest bathroom has become a mini pictorial museum recording every event in Rudolph's history.

<b>OVERALL IMPRESSION: Adequate and effective amenities are provided and in good condition. The community is welcoming, attractive, and leaves a positive impression.</b>	<b>Not Applicable (N/A)</b>	<b>Not Started (N/S) 0</b>	<b>In Progress 1-2</b>	<b>In Place 3-5</b>	<b>Surpasses 6-8</b>
1. Signage ordinances are enacted and enforced. Ordinances address temporary stake signs, billboards, and/or permanent signs. Enforcement helps to reduce visual clutter and/or helps to enhance the community's identity.					6
2. Ordinances are enacted and enforced to address issues such as overgrown lots, abandoned vehicles, unscreened dumpsters, public nuisances, unregulated garage sales, building facades, and/or empty storefronts windows. Ordinances are routinely reviewed and updated as needed.					6
3. Code enforcement/compliance officer is available. Violations are detected, investigated, and/or resolved. Code enforcement includes but is not limited to Public health, safety, consumer protection, building standards, and land use.				5	
4. Communication of ordinances is easily accessible. Examples of communication include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, library, City Hall, and social media.					6
5. First impressions are positive in residential, business, and/or municipal areas. Properties, buildings, structures grounds, decks, patios, and yards are neat and in order. Examples include, but are not limited to, lack of vandalism, graffiti, broken windows, peeling or faded paint, and rust. Programs exist and are effective to minimize graffiti, litter, and nuisance areas.					7
6. Community infrastructure is in good condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, roadways, road shoulders, curbs, corner pads, medians, sidewalks, railroad crossings, sewers, transformers, and/or utility poles.					6
7. Community amenities are in good condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, signs, site furnishings, public restrooms, water features, lamp posts, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, trash and recycling receptacles, safe parking, proper lighting, crosswalks/pavement markings, containers, planters, and/or cigarette receptacles.					7
8. Community is accessible to people of all abilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, public buildings, parking, sidewalks, public transportation, playgrounds, parks, sports fields, and trails.					6

9. Wayfinding signage is visible, attractive, and in appropriate locations throughout the community. Signage adequately lists directional information and/or areas of interest.					6
10. Public art is located throughout the community. Features such as banners, murals, and/or statues are used, attractive, and effective.					6
11. Year-round seasonal decorations are used in key areas. The decorations are well maintained and attractive. Examples include, but are not limited to, lighting, ornamental displays, wreaths, planters, luminaries, and displays in government buildings, residential homes, and storefronts.					6
12. Pet waste policies are posted and/or enforced. Pet clean-up stations are available throughout the community. Stations are monitored and stocked.	N/A				
13. Volunteers participate in community improvement initiatives. Examples include but are not limited to Habitat for Humanity, home repair programs, disaster relief, and clean-up days.					7
14. Programs are in place to encourage, recruit, and/or engage volunteers of all ages and segments of the community's overall impression. Volunteers from businesses, residents, schools, and/or organizations participate in events, programs, boards, and promotions.					6
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>		<b>Percent</b>
<b>7. Overall Impression</b>		104	80		76.92%

## **Overall Impression Recommendations:**

Rudolph, what a surprise you are. One could be forgiven for thinking that you are a small quiet rural village with just a Main Street on a pretty drive between Wisconsin Rapids and Steven's Point, but how wrong that thought would be. First impressions should not always be believed. At your heart is community; you exude care and compassion for all of your residents. St Philips Church is at your center and plays a large part in fundraising programs and the stewardship of all of the parish.

We still are reeling from the jewel that is The Grotto and Gardens; this is truly an unforgettable place. We know that you as a community are so very proud of it and the efforts that Father Wagner and Edmund Rybicki put into its construction. This is a rare and unique place you are aware of your responsibilities in maintaining it for the future.

We see that as a community you work hard at the fundraising events that you organize alongside preserving your heritage. Your fundraising activities are far reaching and are beneficial to so many people.

For a small village we were pleased to see how you take recycling seriously with a well-run green waste area and recycling opportunities at numerous locations. A mini library on Main Street offers an opportunity to recycle books.

With the Village Park playground project completed with the help of grants, you know you can raise funds and get large renovations done.

*We suggest you look at the playground area near St Philips Church, because the ground beneath the equipment needs attention and some of the equipment updating.*

Overall Impression is a great opportunity to take a 360-degree look at everything that you have and what you can do. *Identify small changes that will have a large impact.*

Rudolph, you are an amazing place full of surprises. We will watch your growth within the AIB family. We always recommend reaching out to other communities with questions or for support. As an organization there is a vast amount of experience and knowledge and always someone who is willing to share their experiences.

EVALUATION TOUR PREPARATION AND ACTIONS: Community's readiness prior to and the action during the Evaluation Tour including an Informative Community Profile, preparedness prior to Advisors' arrival, and effective content during the Evaluation Tour.	Not Applicable (N/A)	Unmet (U/M) 0	Met 1
1. Community contact was available for pre-visit meeting for introductions and discussion of preparations.			1
2. Community Profile was provided to Advisors at least two weeks prior to the first official tour date.			1
3. Community Profile includes contacts with emails and positions.			1
4. Community Profile from a returning community includes what is new and implemented from previous Advisors' recommendations (scored as Not Applicable for a new community).	N/A		
5. Community Profile includes a map with tour boundaries and a daily itinerary.			1
6. Evaluation Tour provided a representative cross-section of the community.			1
7. Advisors met with elected/appointed municipal leaders and staff.			1
8. Advisors met with the business and non-profit community.			1
9. Advisors met with volunteers.			1
10. Advisors met with the media.			1
11. Advisors were asked to give a presentation.			1
12. A tour wrap-up session was conducted with a community representative.			1
13. Enough time was allotted for Advisors to work on the Evaluation Report in a quiet place with adequate Wi-Fi.			1
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Actual Points</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>8. Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions</b>	12	12	100.00%



## Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions Recommendations:

Thank you, Rudolph, for preparing our visit and showing us how wonderful your community is with everything that it has to offer. We appreciated that you got your Community Profile to us in plenty of time before our tour.

Your choice of accommodation was perfect and gave us the opportunity to work after our days with you. Your tour was well thought out and so enjoyable. We appreciated meeting the kids at the park and loved talking to them. To meet Megan's mother and hear her appreciation of the care you have taken with Megan's bench was so nice. You had arranged for us to meet with the media which raises awareness of what you are doing alongside AIB. We even achieved celebrity status at Rusty's Backwater Saloon.

Meeting with all the organizations that play a part in the success of your community was fantastic for us and gives us a wider understanding of how much cooperation and support you have.

Thank you for allowing us time at the Grotto and Gardens it is such an interesting place and deserves the attention.

*When preparing your Community Profile, we suggest you follow the evaluation grid as a guide, this is available to you on the AIB website <https://americainbloom.org/> Following this it allows you to recognize the full extent of what you have. Often there will be things that you forget to mention, this will act as an aid memoir so that nothing is forgotten.*

We hope to follow your progress with AIB and watch your growth.

## **DISCLAIMERS:**

1. Communities are responsible for addressing the metrics in the Community Profile, Evaluation Tour Itinerary, and during the Evaluation Tour. Please note that the metric calculations contained herein are final, and each community is encouraged to focus on any changes during the following year's entry in the America in Bloom Level 3 program.
2. All information is given to the best of America in Bloom's knowledge and is believed to be accurate. Your conditions of use and application of recommendations and/or suggested products are beyond our control. There is no warranty expressed or implied regarding the accuracy of any given data or statements. America in Bloom specifically disclaims any responsibility or liability relating to the use of the recommendations and/or suggested products and shall under no circumstances whatsoever, be liable for any special, incidental, or consequential damages which may arise from such use.
3. Reference herein to any specific commercial products, processes, or service by trade named trademark manufacturer or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation or favoring by America in Bloom. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes.

# 2024 Community Recognitions

**Community name/state:** Rudolph, WI

**Recognized Criterion:** Community vitality

**Noteworthy Project or Initiative:** Of the communities we visited, Rudolph was the poster child for community vitality – never have we experienced such community – the loving and caring for one another. We have not seen as small a population exhibit such deep caring for others, everyone we met who interfaced with others enjoyed seeing their fellow townspeople and more than that, they respected each other.

As with taking this step to be an AIB community, we think it is time for another move forward. The Grotto seems to have potential written all over it. You have a unique architectural feature of some historic significance, in effect a museum onsite, a beautiful facility for events, and – the secret sauce of community vitality. We think it's time to pursue the various opportunities that seem ripe for the picking at the Grotto. Sometime State Economic Development grants exist that could be the ember that starts a fire making your community glow even brighter. There are ideas amongst you that should not be kept in any one corner. It's time to further unleash your vitality.

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