

# Women in Local Government, 2015

Wisconsin Women's Council  
January 2017

*I think more women serve on the Eau Claire City Council than a decade ago because there is a woman Chief Elected Officer—the Council President. Whether they want to topple her, or join her, I think more women serve on the Eau Claire City Council than a decade ago because there is a woman Chief Elected Officer—the Council President. Whether they want to topple her, or join her ... they see how women's leadership leaves an indelible stamp on a city, and they want that too.*

**Kerry Kincaid, President, Eau Claire City Council**



# 23%

The 2015 census of women in local government in WI includes more than 13,000 elected offices in over 2,300 units of government. Women held 23% of these elected offices and 14% of leadership positions, up from 20% and 10%, respectively, in 2005.

# 40% School Boards

The level of government where women are most likely to serve. Women make up 29% of School Board Presidents, the same as in 2005.

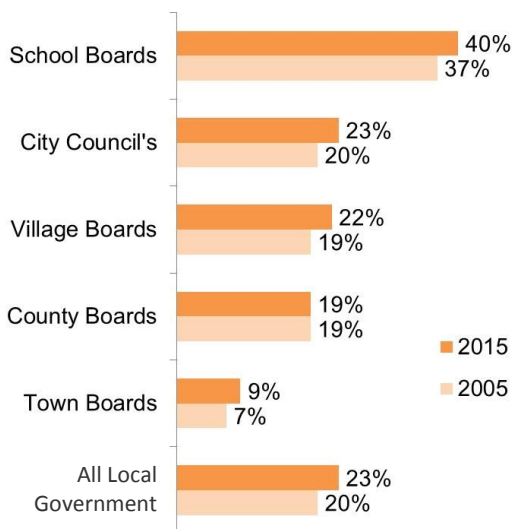
# 23% City Councils

Accounting for over 300 seats. Thirty-one Wisconsin cities (1-in-6) have no women on the City Council — representing nearly 400,000 people.

# 19% County Boards

Accounting for about 300 women, over 90% of WI counties now have two or more women members and all have at least one woman member.

**Percent of Elected Seats Held by Women  
WI Local Governments, 2015 vs. 2005**



**Women in other offices and leadership positions (selected)**

**County Constitutional Officers**

- 94% Register of Deeds
- 85% Treasurer
- 75% County Clerk
- 15% Clerk of the Court
- 15% District Attorney
- 1% Sheriff

**Women in Leadership**

- 29% School Board Presidents
- 15% County Board Chair
- 12% City Mayor
- 11% Village Board President
- 9% County Executive
- 5% Town Board President

**Did you know ...**

**94%** The vast majority of women holding elected office in Wisconsin serve in local government.

In 2015, about half of legislators held local elected office before serving in the State Legislature.

**48%** The most common office: County Board.

Since 2005, the Women's Council has tracked and published statistics on women in state and local elected offices in Wisconsin, including post-election fact sheets updating data on Women in the Wisconsin Legislature.

## RELATED PUBLICATIONS

### Moving Wisconsin Forward, 2015

An analysis of women in elected office in Wisconsin's state and local governments with updated statistics and 10-years trends.

### Wisconsin Women's Political Firsts Timeline, 2015

Timeline of women in elected office in Wisconsin state government, including the first women elected to the Legislature (1925), first female Lieutenant Governor (2001), and first Latina elected to the Legislature (2011). Printed copies available by request (while supplies last).

### Moving Wisconsin Forward, 2010

An analysis of Wisconsin Women in Elected Office, with updated statistics.

### Wisconsin, Women and Elected Office, 2005

Wisconsin's first statewide benchmark report on women holding elected office in state and local government, including elected seats in Wisconsin's counties, cities, towns, villages and school districts.

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We thank the following organizations for their assistance and support in compiling data on women in local government: League of Wisconsin Municipalities; Wisconsin Association of School Boards; Wisconsin Clerks of Circuit Courts Association; Wisconsin Counties Association; Wisconsin County Clerks Association; Wisconsin County Treasurers Association; Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association; Wisconsin Sheriffs & Deputy Sheriffs Association; Wisconsin Towns Association.

Statements of fact and opinion are made on the responsibility of the authors alone and do not necessarily represent the views of organizations listed in the report. No endorsement by such organizations is given or implied.



## About Us

The Wisconsin Women's Council is the state's statutory commission on the status of women and girls. Founded in 1983, the 15-member Women's Council is appointed by the Offices of the Governor, Senate President, Senate Majority Leader and Assembly Speaker.

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