

# BELOIT IS NAMED 'MOST UNDERATED' WISCONSIN CITY

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Bodnar

BELOIT - The City of Beloit has been named Wisconsin's most underrated town by lifestyle blog House Method, beating out over 500 entries from across the state, according to Visit Beloit staff. House Method released a list including 50 of the most underrated communities in the country.

Visit Beloit Director of Marketing and Public Relations Stacey Bodnar submitted Beloit to the blog last month, she said.

"Making this list is important because we have been working diligently through our marketing efforts to illustrate how Beloit is an amazing city worthy of being considered a tourist destination," Bodnar said.

Two years ago the tourism group conducted a study that found most Wisconsin visitors and residents weren't aware of Beloit's offerings, she said.

Beloit staples listed in Bodnar's pitch included the award-winning farmers market, downtown Beloit businesses, the Rock River Trail and Beckman Mill. She also highlighted popular events such as Music at Harry's Place and the Beloit International Film Festival.

"Making lists like this one help make Beloit known throughout the country as a perfect getaway for couples, friends, and families," Bodnar said.

Downtown Beloit is undergoing a period of rebirth and growth, with the new Hotel Goodwin and Velvet Buffalo Cafe, along with the incoming truk't street tacos, whiskey & tequila and Blue Collar Coffee cafe that are all under construction.

Last year, the city was featured in "Around the Corner with John McGivern" and tourism numbers are on the rise. Out of Wisconsin's 72 counties, Rock County is ranked at number 11, according to figures released today by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Total business sales associated with travel and tourism in Rock County grew from \$384.2 million in 2016 to \$398.5 million in 2017, a 3.7 percent increase. In Rock County, there were 4,052 tourism-related jobs in 2016, which grew to 4,146 jobs in 2017, a 2.31 percent increase.

Total labor income from jobs related to travel and tourism increased from \$96 million in 2016 to \$96.5 million in 2017, a 0.54 percent increase. State and local taxes tied to tourism grew from \$28.4 million in 2016 to \$29.4 million in 2017, a 3.62 percent increase.