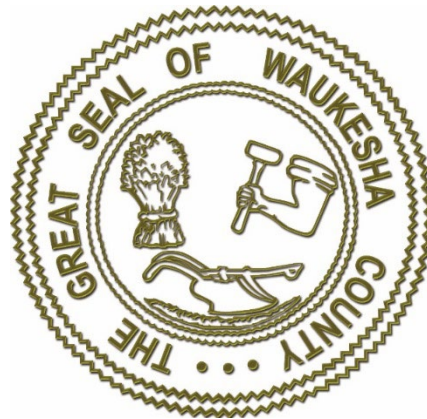


Waukesha County  
Department of Public Works

# Strategic Plan

2026 - 2028



*“Waukesha County Department of Public Works strives to provide quality infrastructure and services that meet or exceed the needs of our customers.”*

- Allison Bussler  
Director of Public Works

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## **Acknowledgements**

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For their contributions to this project, we recognize and thank the following:

**DPW – Engineering Services division**

**Ethan Moser** – Civil Engineer  
**Greg Luedtke** – Senior Engineering Technician  
**Brett Wallace** – Manager

**DPW – Fleet Maintenance division**

**Timothy Childress** – Lead Mechanic  
**Connie Antczak** – Fiscal Specialist  
**Thomas Zembruski** – Manager

**DPW – Highway Operations division**

**Jake Kuk** – Patrol Superintendent  
**Brandon Kerr** – Sign/Signal Maintenance Worker  
**Hans Guderyon** – Manager

**DPW – Facilities Management division**

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**Ty Hietpas** – Architectural Services Technician  
**Shane Waeghe** – Manager

**DPW – Waukesha County Airport**

**Josh Matekovic** – Airport Operations Supervisor  
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**DPW – Administration**

**Ashley Fischer** – Departmental Executive Assistant  
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**Julie Miller** – Senior Fiscal Specialist  
**Rhiannon Cupkie** – Manager  
**Allison Bussler** – Director, Department of Public Works

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## Reader's Guide: How to Read the Strategic Plan

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Thanks for reading Waukesha County Department of Public Works' Strategic Plan.

This plan provides an overview of what Waukesha County leadership aims to achieve over the next three years and how this Department aims to meet those goals.

**Note:** Consider this Strategic Plan a high-level look at problem-solving initiatives. As such, a reader may not encounter data on all departmental activities (as found in an Operational Plan). We [welcome your questions and feedback](#) any time!

### What's an Objective?

In this Strategic Plan, an Objective is a milestone to be reached. It must be **s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**ttainable, **r**ealistic, and **t**ime-bound (aka **SMART**).

Each objective appears in two places: In a list that shows all of our goals in one place, and on its own page (example below, right).

**Owner:** The member of our team that is accountable for this Objective.

Feel free to contact Waukesha County to discuss any objective – just ask for the person listed here. We do the very same!

**Strategy:** What must be accomplished in order to achieve our objective?

A company that sells fruit snacks may set an objective to "increase sales." One of their strategies is to pioneer new points of sale beyond supermarkets and vending machines, like commercial air travel, pizza delivery, and pro sporting events.

Like each Objective, a Strategy has an **owner** who guides efforts for its completion and success. Find this in the center column.

In the right-hand column, please find the **timeframe** for each strategy. This represents each strategy's deadline.

**Performance measures:**

A graphic or image show the progress and status of each Objective's success.

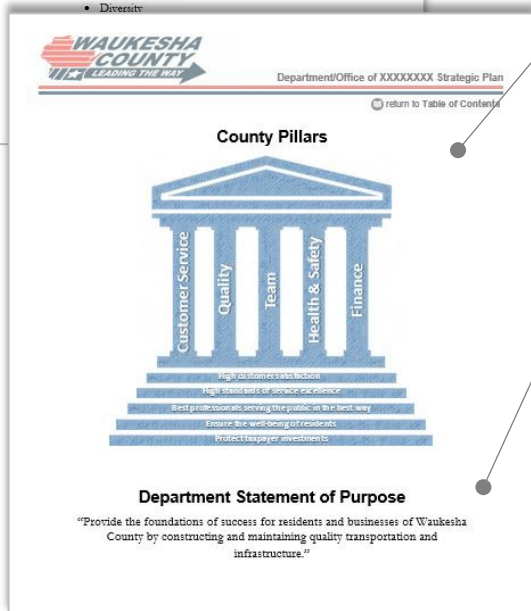
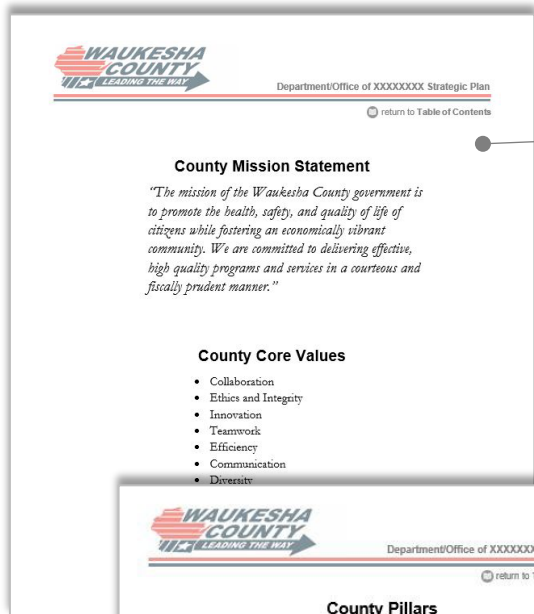
The screenshot shows a digital interface for a strategic plan. At the top is the Waukesha County logo and the title 'Department/Office of XXXXXXXX Strategic Plan'. Below this is a red bar with the text 'Pillar: Choose an item.' and two navigation links: 'return to Objectives list' and 'return to Table of Contents'. The main content area displays an objective: 'Objective 1: Click or tap here to enter text.' with fields for 'Owner: Click or tap here to enter text.' and 'Performance Measure: Click or tap here to enter text.'. Below the objective is a placeholder for a graphic: 'Insert graphic/image here'. To the right of the graphic is a 'Learn More:' section with three bullet points, each containing a 'Type here, update link' placeholder. At the bottom of the screenshot is a table with three columns: 'STRATEGY', 'STRATEGY OWNER', and 'TIMEFRAME'. Each cell in the table contains a 'Click or tap here to enter text.' placeholder.

**Learn More:**

Jump to supporting resources found in this Strategic Plan's appendices, on [WaukeshaCounty.gov](#), or elsewhere!

Reader's Guide Continued

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**The origin of each Objective**

In each of Waukesha County's Departmental Strategic Plans, a pair of pages bears the principles and promises that guide our Objectives:

- Waukesha County's [Mission Statement](#). The big picture.
- County [Standards of Service Excellence](#), the principles we observe on our path to completing our mission.
- Waukesha County's [Five Pillars of Success](#), our framework for identifying core priorities and establishing program goals.
- Department's [Statement of Purpose](#). Each department completes a Strategic Plan. Each declares its own "mission" here.

**How is the objective shaped by the "environmental scan"?**

*Environmental scan (n): Monitoring of an organization's internal and external environments for detecting early signs of opportunities and threats that may influence its current and future plans.*

Find environmental scan data summarized in this document's [Appendix](#) sections.

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## **Transmittal Letter**

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April 1, 2026

Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow  
Waukesha County Board  
Waukesha County residents and visitors

We are pleased to present to you the Waukesha County Public Works (DPW) 2026-28 Strategic Plan. The plan incorporates the Waukesha County planning format shaped around the creation of five countywide Pillars and the creation of Standards of Service Excellence. We have continued the use of surveys to engage our internal and external customers. We have refined our performance metrics and data dashboarding with the focus of communicating results to our stakeholders.

Our department is dedicated to our community and its visitors. We strive to further build communication, advance technology, and aim our revenue to match our community's ever-changing needs. This strategic plan maps out our adjustments which will help us pursue excellent service and plan for the future.

The strategic plan is the cornerstone of the organization. It will drive our planning efforts, shape our annual budget, and set employee performance goals. This plan will provide the roadmap for DPW's future success while working within the framework of the County's vision, Standards of Service Excellence, and countywide Pillars.

I sincerely thank our staff, our fellow Waukesha County departments, and our business and community leaders that helped us create this plan. If you have any questions regarding our strategic plan, please feel free to contact me anytime at 262-548-7740.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allison Bussler".

Allison Bussler, Director  
Waukesha County Public Works

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**Executive Summary: Mission Statement & Standards of Service Excellence**

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## County Mission Statement

*“The mission of the Waukesha County government is to promote the health, safety, and quality of life of citizens while fostering an economically vibrant community. We are committed to delivering effective, high-quality programs and services in a courteous and fiscally prudent manner.”*

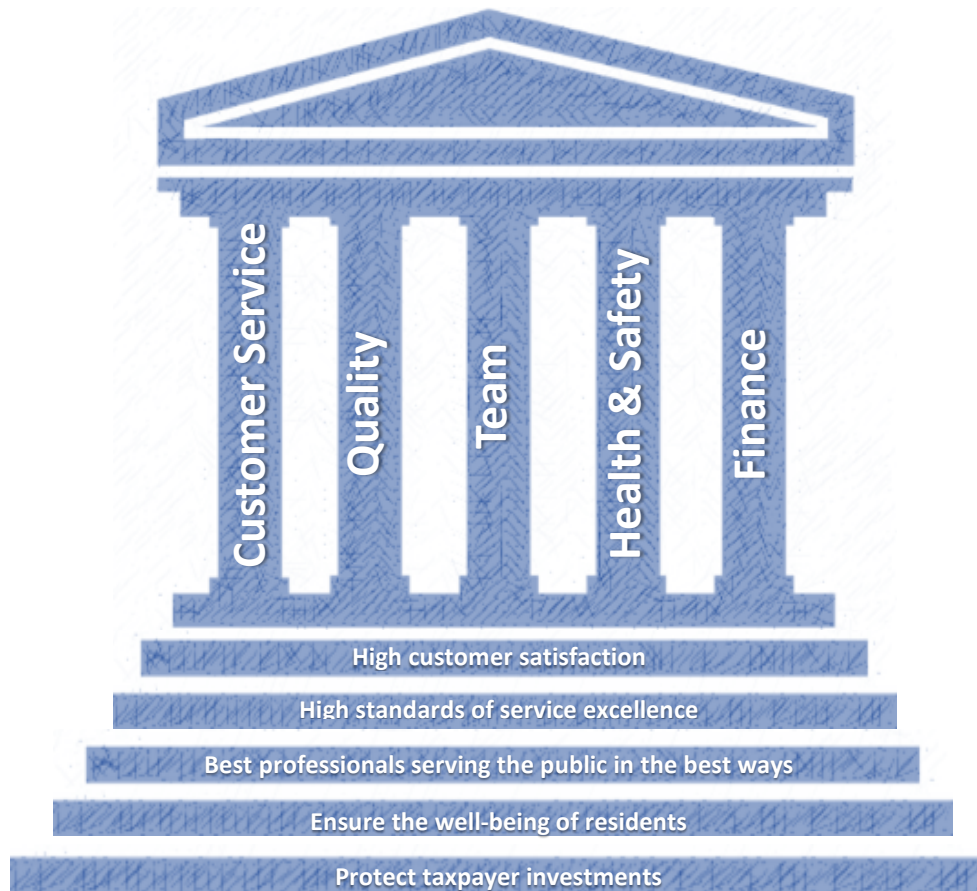
## County Standards of Service Excellence

- Teamwork & Collaboration
- Innovation
- Efficiency & Cost Savings
- Communication
- Ethics & Diversity
- Well-being

**Executive Summary: County Pillars & Statement of Purpose**

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## County Pillars



*“As chief executive officer of county government, the County Executive serves the citizens of Waukesha County by protecting and promoting their welfare, safety, health, and quality of life. The County Executive is responsible for managing administrative functions of County government, which are not vested in other elected officials. County government policy is established in partnership with the County Board of Supervisors, boards and commissions and the County Executive.”*

## Department Statement of Purpose

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## Executive Summary: Overview & Strategic Objectives

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### Strategic Planning Overview

Waukesha County has successfully used strategic planning tools for well over a decade. County Departments hold stakeholder focus groups, conduct environmental scans, and work with departmental strategic planning coordinators to perform major updates to their plans on a three-year basis and provide annual updates as needed.

Through strategic planning, the County has established links between our Standards of Service Excellence, business functions, and measurable program outcomes across all departments which results in an atmosphere of continuous improvement and better service delivery.

To help guide our strategic planning process and identify priorities, the County established a cross-departmental Strategic Planning Executive Committee which holds meetings and trainings with planning coordinators and has worked with outside consultants to provide expert guidance to ensure that each new generation of our strategic plan is better than the last.

### Strategic Objectives at a Glance:

- **[Objective 1](#)** : By December of 2026, develop a list of key operational SOPs for each division with an assigned committee within the Public Works Department and final SOP deliverables by the 4th quarter of 2027.
- **[Objective 2](#)** : Through use of growth inhibitor and reallocating resources, reduce vegetation removal complaints in 2026 by 10%. Use Citizen reporter and call logs from 2025 as baseline data.
- **[Objective 3](#)** : The revenue generating Divisions (Hwy Ops, Engineering, Airport, Fleet) will identify a 3% per year increase in revenue and all Divisions will identify a 3% per year expense/cost reduction to offset operating expense increases and assist in planning for the 2027-2029 operating budgets by June 1st, 2026.
- **[Objective 4](#)** : By December 31, 2026, form a Department of Public Works committee with representatives from each division to identify new and emerging technologies that increase productivity and efficiency, as measured by cost savings and reduced labor hours.
- **[Objective 5](#)** : By 4th Quarter of 2026, develop a database that will recommend a replacement plan for traffic equipment based on established equipment life cycles.
- **[Objective 6](#)** : By December 31, 2027, increase social media engagement by 20% by sharing the work DPW performs through the employees who are accomplishing it.

**County Pillar: Teamwork and Quality**

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

**Objective 1:** By end of December 2026, develop a list of key operational SOPs for each division with an assigned committee within the Public Works Department and final SOP deliverables by the 4th quarter of 2027.

**Owner:** Facilities Manager

**Performance Measure:** Onboarding SOPs completed by end of 2026, with operational SOPs developed in 2027.

**Strategy:** Create committee, link the list to the objective, and store in DPW SharePoint site.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Timeframe
Create Committee	Develop committee for SOP list creation and approval.	Facilities Manager	April 2026
Quarterly Updates	Meet quarterly for SOP review and approval.	Facilities Manager	December 31, 2026
Create SOP List	List and schedule division wide operations SOPs.	Division Managers	December 31, 2026
Store in DPW SharePoint Site	SOPs to be located in DPW SharePoint site.	Division Managers	December 31, 2026
Complete Onboarding SOPs	Onboarding SOPs for all DPW divisions to be completed for new hires.	Division Managers	December 31, 2026
Complete All Other SOPs	Operational SOPs for each division developed and completed.	Division Managers	December 31, 2027

## County Pillar: Customer Service

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

**Objective 2:** Through use of growth inhibitor and reallocating resources, reduce vegetation removal complaints in 2026 by 10%. Use Citizen reporter and call logs from 2025 as baseline data.

**Owner:** Highway Operations Manager

**Performance Measure:** Vegetation removal complaints reduced by 10% in 2026. Increased social media presence.

**Strategy:** Compile 2025 complaint data, test, take before and after photos, evaluate the test results, analyze cost, track data, and increase social media presence.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Timeframe
Compile Complaint Data	Compile 2025 data from Citizen reporter and call logs.	Highway Fiscal Assistant	June 1, 2026
Test	Test by using weed inhibiting sprays and weed whips on the west half of the County.	Highway Ops Manager and Superintendents	June 1, 2026
Take Photos	Take before and after photos.	Highway Ops Manager and Superintendents	2 <sup>nd</sup> / 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2026
Evaluate Test Results	Evaluate test results.	Highway Ops Manager and Superintendents	June 10, 2026
Analyze Cost	Cost will be analyzed, such as hours worked, miles per hour driven (such as 3 miles per hour), how many miles are covered, weather effects of growth, how many employees needed, etc.	Highway Ops Manager	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2027
Track Data	Data is tracked in the Citizen Reporter (a mapping program).	Highway Ops Manager and Fiscal Assistant	Annually
Increase Social Media Presence	More social media presence on when/where we are mowing.	DPW PIO / Chief PIO / Highway Department	Annually

**County Pillar: Finance**

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

**Objective 3:** The revenue generating Divisions (Hwy Ops, Engineering, Airport, Fleet) will identify a 3% per year increase in revenue and all Divisions will identify a 3% per year expense/cost reduction to offset operating expense increases and assist in planning for the 2027-2029 operating budgets by June 1st, 2026.

**Owner:** Engineering Services Manager

**Performance Measure:** Hwy Ops revenue increase based on 3-year average. Engineering revenue increase based on year-to-year. Airport revenue increase based on 3-year average. Fleet revenue increase based on year-to-year.

**Strategy:** Division Managers will develop operating budget contingency plans in early 2026 to help respond quickly to annual budget development requirements.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Timeframe
Finalize Annual Expense/Cost Reduction Goal	Through coordination with Director and Business Manager.	Engineering Manager	April 1, 2026
Report Progress	Report progress at Division Managers Meetings.	Division Managers	Quarterly
Budget Aligned Planning	Create written contingency plans.	Division Managers	May 1 Draft July 1 Final Annual Updates every July 1.
Track Adopted Revenue Increases and Expense Reductions	Implementation of identified revenue increases and expense reductions will be determined at time of budget development and will be tracked year to year.	Division Managers	Annual/Ongoing
Evaluate Opportunities	Evaluate opportunities to improve quality of capital projects to avoid increases in operating expenses.	Engineering, Facilities and Airport Managers	Annual/Ongoing
Evaluate Opportunities	Evaluate appropriate opportunities to shift operating expenses to capital projects and budget, reducing operating budget expenses while maintaining service level.	Engineering, Facilities and Airport Managers	Annual Capital Budget Process/Ongoing

**County Pillar: Customer Service and Quality**

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

**Objective 4:** By December 31, 2026, form a Department of Public Works committee with representatives from each division to identify new and emerging technologies that increase productivity and efficiency, as measured by cost savings and reduced labor hours.

**Owner:** Senior Engineering Technician

**Performance Measure:** Increase productivity and efficiency, as measured by cost savings and reduced labor hours.

**Strategy:** Establish a committee and meet quarterly, identify divisional tasks/jobs, manager meetings, and reporting.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Timeframe
Establish Committee	Establish committee and have the committee meet quarterly.	Sr. Engineering Tech	December 31, 2026
Identify Divisional Tasks/Jobs	Identify those that consume large amounts of time and/or resources.	Objective Committee	June 1, 2027
Manager Meetings	Share information at manager's meetings.	Sr. Engineering Tech	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2027
Reporting	Report to DPW Managers and Director at managers meeting.	Engineering	December 31, 2027

**County Pillar: Quality**

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

**Objective 5:** By 4th Quarter of 2026, develop a database that will recommend a replacement plan for traffic signal equipment based on established equipment life cycles.

**Owner:** Civil Engineer

**Performance Measure:** Traffic signal equipment age within 25% of established life cycle.

**Strategy:** Develop database / inventory and install age of all county traffic signal infrastructure. Define life cycle replacement expectations for traffic signal infrastructure. Develop replacement plan and data to determine future budget needs (priority list of replacements). Coordinate tracking of annual maintenance and overall condition in conjunction with inventory.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Timeframe
Develop Database/Inventory	Develop database / inventory and install age of all county traffic signal infrastructure.	Engineering	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter, 2026
Define Life Cycle Expectations	Define life cycle replacement expectations for traffic signal infrastructure based on industry standards.	Engineering	April 2027
Replacement Plan	Develop replacement plan and data to determine future budget needs (priority list of replacements).	Engineering	June 2027
Tracking Data	Coordinate tracking of annual maintenance and overall condition in conjunction with inventory.	Engineering	3rd Quarter, 2027 and Annual Thereafter

**County Pillar: Customer Service**

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

**Objective 6:** By December 31, 2027, increase social media engagement by 20% by sharing the work DPW performs through the employees who are accomplishing it.

**Owner:** Airport Manager

**Performance Measure:** Increase social media engagement by 20%.

**Strategy:** Designate a story telling representative from each division. Create a schedule of which divisions will share and when. Post one story per division per month. Research and Determine hosting platform (ex. Facebook, X Twitter, Podcast etc.). Collaborate with Waukesha County’s Public Information Officer to format and share stories outside of DPW platforms. Metrics from social media sites on followers, likes, etc.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Timeframe
Designate Division Representatives	Designate a story telling representative from each division. Research and determine hosting platform.	Division Managers	October 31, 2026
Schedule Stories	Create a schedule of which divisions will share and when.	Division Representatives	December 31, 2026
Share Stories	Post one story per division per month.	Division Representatives	Monthly starting January 2027
Collaborate with PIO to Share Stories	Collaborate with Waukesha County’s Public Information Officer to format and share stories outside of DPW platforms.	Division Mgr. and Representatives	Monthly starting January 2027
Collaborate with PIO to Share Stories	Collaborate with Waukesha County’s Public Information Officer to format and share stories outside of DPW platforms.	Division Mgr. and Representatives	Monthly starting January 2027
Metrics	Metrics from social media sites on followers, likes, etc.	Division Managers	December 31, 2027

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## Appendix A: Environmental Scan

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### Environmental Scan Overview

#### COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

##### Population, Census Data, Demographics

Understanding the trends in growth and change in the population of Waukesha County will allow County Departments to strategically plan by responding to the needs of the population. As of the 2020 Decennial Census, 406,978 people resided in Waukesha County and according to the US Census QuickFacts, the County is estimated to have 417,029 residents as of July 1, 2024. The County is made up of 36 municipalities, including 8 towns, 21 villages, and seven cities. When consideration is given to the number of municipalities that our customers work with, it is also important to deliver services in the most efficient and logical way possible. Economic development is vital for communities in Waukesha County to retain optimum paying jobs, maintain municipal infrastructure and essential services, and maintain and expand quality of life.

##### General population

- The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) projects the County's population to increase to 424,472 by the end of 2025, to 436,986 by 2030, and 450,620 for 2035. This equates to a 6.16% increase in population between 2025 and 2035 ([VISION 2050 - 2024 Update - Review of Year 2050 Plan Forecasts](#)).
- Projections show that through 2050, Waukesha County will continue to be the third largest county in population in Wisconsin, Milwaukee and Dane will continue to be the first and second largest counties in population.
- Net migration will continue to be the primary source of population increase. The number of births (natural increase) is expected to increase moderately, but the number of deaths is expected to increase substantially because of deaths from the aging population (baby boomers). Wisconsin DOA Projections show that the number of deaths will exceed the number of births between 2030 and 2040, resulting in a negative natural increase in the County ([DOA Population Projections, produced in 2024, based from 2020 Census](#)).
- Waukesha County's share of the regional population is projected to increase from 19.3% (measured in 2010) to 19.89% by 2050, whereas Milwaukee County's share of the regional population is projected to decrease from 45.90% to 35.19%. Racine County's share of population remains between 9-10% and the population projection shows a minor decrease of 0.01% (SEWRPC: <https://www.sewrpc.org/Files/Info-Data/Demographics/2020-Profiles/RacineCounty.pdf>).

- The median age in Waukesha County is approximately 43.5 years old according to the [2023 ACS 1-year estimates \(Census Bureau Tables\)](#), and 43.1 years old according to the 2020 ACS 5-Year estimates ([S0101: AGE AND SEX - Census Bureau Table](#)). The median age has been increasing since 1970 when it was 25.4 years old.
- People 65 yrs. and older made up approximately 14.3% of the population in 2010, 17% in 2015, and 19.6% in 2020. This population is projected to make up 25.4% of the population by 2040.
- The youngest members of the baby boomer generation will reach age 65 by 2030.

#### Race

- Estimates based on the 2020 Census, approximately 87% of Waukesha County residents are Non-Hispanic White and estimated to be 86.1% as of July 1, 2024.
- The Hispanic or Latino population has increased from 4.1% in 2010 (16,123) to 5.3% (21,664) in 2020 and is estimated to be 5.9% (24,604) as of July 1, 2024.
- The Black or African American population has increased from 1.3% (4,914) in 2010 to 2% (8,175) in 2020 and is estimated to be 2.1% (8,757) as of July 1, 2024.
- The Asian population has increased from 2.7% (10,271) in 2010 to 4.1% (16,759) in 2020 and is estimated to be 4.2% (17,515) as of July 1, 2024.
- The American Indian population has continued to remain steady over the past 20 years. Approximately 0.3% (1,251) of the overall population is American Indian as of July 1, 2024.

#### **Community Analysis: Health and Public Safety**

Waukesha County ranks among the healthiest counties in Wisconsin. According to the [County Health Rankings](#) (2025), the County performs better than average—both statewide and nationally—on overall health outcomes and community conditions. However, local data highlights gaps in key health outcomes. Mental health, substance use, and healthy aging stand out due to both the burden reflected in the data and the opportunity for meaningful impact at the community level.

In identifying local public health priorities, the focus was placed on areas where the County can have the most significant impact. Mental health, substance use, and healthy aging were selected as part of the [Public Health Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#), which leverages shared community action to address high-burden issues through local coordination, prevention, and systems-level change.

Data from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services illustrates the interconnected drivers behind Waukesha County's health priorities:

- **Accidents (unintentional injuries)** accounted for 8.5% of all deaths (1,009 deaths). Of these, 57% were due to falls and 23% to accidental drug overdoses, highlighting risks related to both aging and substance use.
- **Alzheimer's disease** accounted for 4.5% of deaths (538 deaths), **Parkinson's disease** for 1.7% (197 deaths), and **nutritional deficiencies** for 1.3% (155 deaths)—all indicators of a growing need for age-friendly systems and supports.

- **Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis** made up 1.4% of deaths (172 deaths), with 75% of these tied to alcoholic liver disease, reinforcing the connection to substance use.
- **Intentional self-harm (suicide)** accounted for 1.3% of deaths (153 deaths), further underscoring the need for mental health and early intervention strategies.

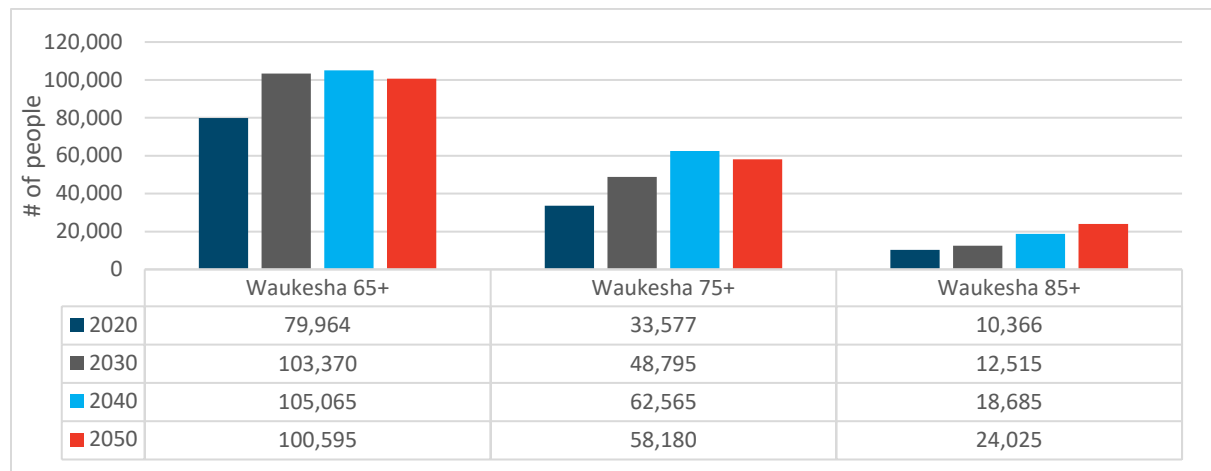
*(Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Informatics, 2025)*

Healthy Aging: An Emerging Priority

**Waukesha County is experiencing a rapid demographic shift.** As of 2020, nearly 80,000 residents were 65 years old or older. This growth leads to an increased demand for systems that help older adults remain healthy, safe, and connected. It highlights the importance of age-friendly planning that promotes independence and quality of life. *(Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center, 2024)*

- The 65+ population is projected to exceed 100,000.
- The 75+ population will grow by 73% (from 33,577 to 58,180).
- The 85+ population will more than double (from 10,366 to 24,025).

Figure 1 Projected Population by Age Group in Waukesha County



*(Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center, 2024)*

As the population ages, the need for long-term services and support (LTSS) is growing, with national data pointing to the scale and impact of this shift:

- 56% of Americans turning 65 today will need long-term services and supports (LTSS).
- 22% will require LTSS for more than five years.
- Average LTSS costs: \$120,900, with 37% paid out-of-pocket.
- Family caregivers provide an estimated \$204,000 in unpaid care per person.

*(U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation [HHS/ASPE], 2022)*

In Waukesha County, fall prevention and social connectedness have surfaced as two leading concerns affecting older adults' ability to age well safely.

Falls are a leading cause of injury and death among older adults in Waukesha County.

- Falls accounted for 57% of all accidental deaths from 2021-2023, making them a key driver of unintentional injury, the County's 4th leading cause of death (*Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Informatics, 2025*).
- Older adults face the highest rates of fall-related emergency visits and deaths. In Waukesha County, about 1 in 8 adults aged 85+ went to the ER for a fall injury between 2021 and 2023, compared to 1 in 19 aged 75–84 and 1 in 42 aged 65–74 (*Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Informatics, 2025*).

Social isolation significantly impacts the health and well-being of older adults, with risks comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, a greater threat than obesity or physical inactivity. (*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2023*)

In Waukesha County:

- 28.1% of adults 65+ live alone (*U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2023*).
- 10% lack internet access; 9% are uncomfortable using technology (*ADRC of Waukesha County Survey, 2023*).
- Only 5 of 37 municipalities have Senior Centers (*Waukesha County Government*).
- Just 17% of residents believe older adults have adequate social support (*Waukesha County Public Health, 2022*).
- Waukesha County has fewer membership organizations per capita than the state average (*University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2025*).

Together, these trends call for coordinated strategies that enhance mobility, strengthen physical and social environments, mitigate fall-related risks, and foster meaningful connections. By investing in community programs, accessible spaces, and digital inclusion, Waukesha County can better support healthy aging for all residents.

### Mental Health: A Growing Crisis

Mental health is a top public health concern in Waukesha County, with youth experiencing some of the most significant challenges. The County has one mental health provider per 320 residents, which is better than the Wisconsin average (1:370) but still below the national benchmark (1:300). Despite this, access to care remains limited (*University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2025*). Only 25.8% of residents reported being satisfied with mental health services (*Waukesha County Public Health, 2022*).

**Youth mental health has emerged as a critical area of concern**, with local data pointing to high levels of distress and significant unmet need (*Tortora, McCoy, & Frederick, 2021*):

- 56% of Waukesha County High School students report anxiety, depression, or self-harm.
- 52% of students said they rarely or never get the help they need.
- 15% of students seriously considered suicide, 12% made a plan, and 7% attempted suicide.

Despite rising need, many young people still face significant challenges accessing mental health support. Common barriers include cost, stigma, insurance limitations, a lack of youth-centered or culturally responsive services, and limited access to school-based support.

Mental health is also shaped by the environments where youth live, learn, and connect. According to the 2021 Waukesha County Youth Risk Behavior Survey (*Tortora, McCoy, & Frederick, 2021*):

- 17.0% of students reported experiencing in-person bullying.
- 16.0% of students reported being bullied online.
- 38% of students said bullying is a problem at their school.
- 11% of students did not feel like they belong at school.
- 17% of students said they did not have a teacher or other adult to talk to about a problem.

These findings underscore the importance of school environments that foster connection, trust, and psychological safety. Improving youth mental health in Waukesha County will require earlier intervention, stronger support systems, and community-wide efforts to reduce stigma, especially within schools and youth-serving spaces.

#### Substance Use: A Complex and Evolving Landscape

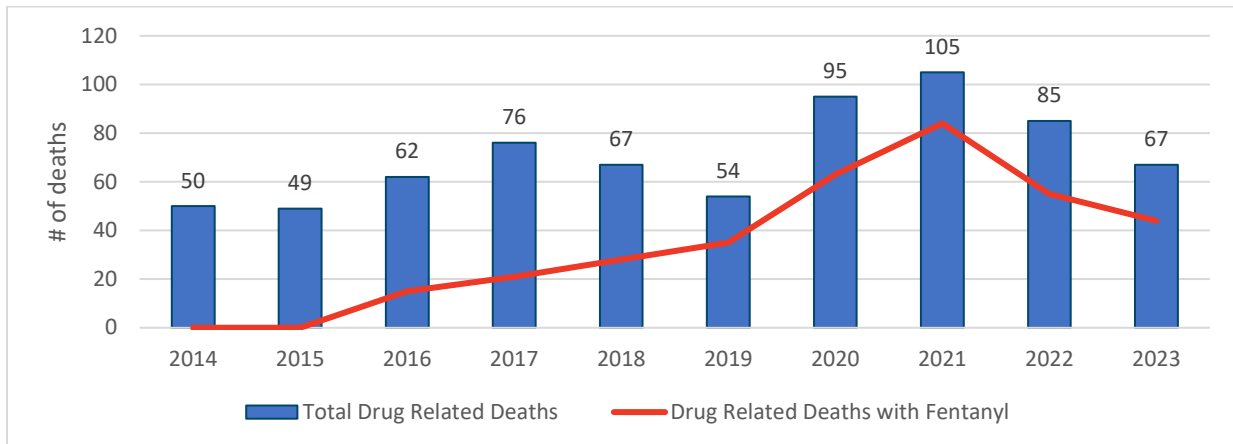
Substance use in Waukesha County is a complex and evolving public health issue. The Community Health Improvement Plan prioritizes opioids, particularly fentanyl, due to their immediate lethality and significant local impact.

On August 1, 2022, Waukesha County declared a [community health crisis](#) after opioid-related deaths nearly doubled from 2019 to 2021. This declaration led to the formation of the Fentanyl Crisis Response Team, focused on reducing overdose deaths. These efforts, combined with declining state and national drug-related death rates, suggest that harm reduction strategies are beginning to make an impact.

Yet the crisis continues to shift. Fentanyl remains the most acute threat, with overdose deaths increasingly driven by potent and unpredictable drug mixtures. In Wisconsin, cocaine deaths involving synthetic opioids increased by 134% from 2019 (182 deaths) to 2021 (426 deaths), and an estimated 40% of counterfeit pills contain a potentially lethal dose of fentanyl (*Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2024*).

Emerging substances like xylazine—a tranquilizer not reversible with naloxone—further complicate response efforts. These evolving threats underscore the ongoing need for a coordinated approach that spans education, prevention, harm reduction, and strong community partnerships.

Figure 2 Drug Related Deaths in Waukesha County from 2014 - 2023



(Waukesha County Medical Examiner’s Office, 2025)

Beyond Opioids: Alcohol, Tobacco, Vaping, and Marijuana

While opioids remain the most urgent substance-related threat, broader patterns of substance use, particularly alcohol, tobacco, vaping, and marijuana, also present serious and often underestimated public health challenges. These substances are frequently socially accepted or perceived as less harmful, yet they contribute to long-term health risks, especially when use begins early.

Alcohol remains one of the most widely used and socially accepted substances in Waukesha County, yet it contributes to significant harm across the lifespan:

- In Waukesha County, 25% of adults reported binge or heavy drinking (University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2025).
- 27% of motor vehicle crash deaths in the County involved alcohol (University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2025).
- Binge drinking rates remained statistically unchanged from 2009 to 2020; however, high-use patterns persist, particularly among adults aged 35–44 and those in higher-income households (ProHealth Care, 2022).
- Among high school students in Waukesha County (Tortora, McCoy, & Frederick, 2021):
  - 23% reported having a drink within the last 30 days.
  - 9% reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.
  - Among students who drank:
    - 41% engaged in binge drinking.
    - 28% had their first drink before age 13—early use often linked to trauma, violence, or abuse.

Tobacco and vaping continue to pose significant public health concern in Waukesha County, despite overall progress in reducing cigarette smoking.

- 12.9% of Waukesha County residents were current smokers from 2017–2021 (*Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2025*).
- In 2020, 11% of adults reported smoking cigarettes, while 4% reported using electronic vapor products. Among those who smoked or vaped, 55% attempted to quit for at least one day, and 69% of those who saw a healthcare provider were advised to quit (*ProHealth Care, 2022*)
- Vaping remains especially concerning among youth in Waukesha County:
  - 25% of students have tried vaping
  - 11% of students reported use in the past 30 days
  - Local use is likely underreported, complicating prevention and intervention efforts (*Tortora, McCoy, & Frederick, 2021*):

As public support for marijuana continues to grow, with 63% of Wisconsin voters supporting recreational use and 86% supporting medical use, a new and largely unregulated threat has emerged: Delta-8 THC (*ACLU of Wisconsin, 2025*). Derived from hemp and chemically altered to produce a high like traditional marijuana, Delta-8 is psychoactive, widely available, and currently unregulated at the state level in Wisconsin (*Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2024*).

This regulatory gap means:

- There are no statewide age limits—Delta-8 can legally be purchased by youth.
- Products are sold at gas stations, vape shops, and convenience stores.
- No standard exists for packaging, labeling, or potency.
- Some local municipalities have implemented their own restrictions, but these vary.

Without consistent regulation or enforcement, Delta-8 THC remains a growing concern for youth health and safety in Waukesha County. Figure 3 Delta-8 THC Legality: A State-by-State Guide



(Ty, 2024)

Often sold in forms that mimic candy or vape cartridges, Delta-8 is especially appealing to young people. Among high school students in Waukesha County:

- 17% of students have used marijuana.
- 13% of students who have used marijuana started before age 13.

*(Tortora, McCoy, & Frederick, 2021)*

Health officials warn that Delta-8 use can result in impaired memory, judgment, and coordination; hallucinations, anxiety, psychosis, and loss of consciousness; as well as dependency, addiction, and withdrawal symptoms *(Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2024)*.

Tackling substance misuse in Waukesha County requires a coordinated, community-wide response. The lasting impact will depend on strong partnerships among public health, behavioral health, law enforcement, schools, and community organizations working together to deliver prevention, harm reduction, and recovery support.

Waukesha County Deaths

Between 2021 and 2023, there were 11,908 deaths among Waukesha County residents. Heart disease and cancer were the leading causes, accounting for just over 40% of all deaths *(Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Informatics, 2025)*. While these chronic conditions remain important, they represent long-term health challenges that are typically addressed through broader clinical and healthcare system strategies.

Table 1 Top 15 Causes of Death by Broad Groups in Waukesha County from 2021 - 2023

Rank	Broad Cause	Count	% of Total	Notes
	All Causes	11,908	100%	
1	Diseases of heart	2471	20.8%	
2	Malignant neoplasms	2386	20.0%	Includes several cancers
3	Other causes*	1969	16.5%	
➔ 4	<b>Accidents (unintentional injuries)</b>	1009	8.5%	Includes Falls (57%) and Accidental Drug Overdoses (23%)
5	Covid-19	661	5.6%	
6	Cerebrovascular diseases	648	5.4%	
➔ 7	<b>Alzheimer's disease</b>	538	4.5%	
8	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	374	3.1%	
9	Diabetes mellitus	249	2.1%	
➔ 10	<b>Parkinson's disease</b>	197	1.7%	
11	Chronic liver disease & cirrhosis	172	1.4%	Includes Alcoholic Liver Disease (75%)
➔ 12	<b>Nutritional deficiencies</b>	155	1.3%	

→ 13	<b>Intentional self-harm (suicide)</b>	153	1.3%
14	Nephritis, Nephrotic Syndrome and nephrosis	141	1.2%
15	Influenza and pneumonia	128	1.1%
NA	All Other Broad Causes (Grouped)**	657	5.5%

**NOTES:** \*Other causes is a defined category in WISH that includes a wide range of less common, residual, and ill-defined causes. It accounted for 16.5% of deaths in Waukesha County from 2021 to 2023.

\*\*All Other Broad Causes (Grouped) is a custom category combining lower-frequency causes not shown individually. Together, these causes accounted for 5.5% of deaths in Waukesha County from 2021 to 2023.

**SOURCE:** Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Informatics, 2025

## Waukesha County Political and Legislative Issues

### County Board

All 25 County Board Supervisors will be up for election in nonpartisan 2-year term races held in April of 2026 and 2028. The County Executive will be up for election in a nonpartisan 4-year term race held in April of 2027. The Sheriff, Clerk of Courts, and Register of Deeds are elected to four-year terms with these positions up for election in November of 2028.

Any significant changes resulting from these elections could impact spending priorities, tax policies, and how services are delivered to residents.

### Wisconsin Political Landscape

Wisconsin's political landscape for the next three years (2026-2028) is characterized by partisan division and a series of high-stakes elections. With the announcement that Governor Tony Evers will not be running for re-election next fall, the race for governor in 2026 is wide open for both parties, marking the first open-seat gubernatorial election in the state since 2010. Whoever wins the executive seat will significantly influence the state budget and legislative agenda going forward.

Additionally, the 2026 state legislative races are expected to be more competitive. New legislative district maps, which were redrawn after the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled the old ones unconstitutional, have made several districts more competitive, giving Democrats a stronger chance to challenge the long-standing Republican majorities in both houses of the legislature.

Supreme Court elections scheduled for 2026, 2027, and 2028 will make the court's ideological balance a central political battleground, with potential ramifications for highly contested issues.

### Wisconsin State Budget

In July of 2025, Governor Evers signed the state's \$111.1 billion State Budget. Key provisions of the 2025-2027 state budget that support Waukesha County include:

- Increase in funding for Circuit Courts
- 6 additional assistant district attorney positions in Waukesha County
- Increase to General Transportation Aids (GTA) of 3% in the first year of the biennium and an additional 3% in the second year of the biennium
- No significant change in Shared Revenue or state mandate relief

### Federal Political Landscape

Increased pressure from President Trump to cut federal spending should result in county departments preparing for potential reductions in federal aid, increased competition for remaining federal funds, and a need to diversify revenue streams. Changes to social safety net programs, that counties administer on behalf of the federal government, could lead to more administrative work, new eligibility requirements, and a reduction in federal dollars.

The political landscape from 2026 to 2028 will be defined by two major elections, midterms in November 2026 setting the stage for the presidential race in 2028.

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## **ECONOMICS: Unemployment/Jobs/Business**

### Unemployment

- The County's 2024 unemployment rate (2.6%) is lower than the national average (4.1%) and lower than the state's average (3%).

There continues to be a tight labor market that is making recruitment of county employees difficult and is increasing salary demands across many job classifications.

### Jobs:

- Job growth is projected to increase from 242,001 in 2017 to 338,000 in 2050. (SEWRPC 2020)
- 32.1% of Waukesha County residents have a Bachelor's Degree (10.6% above the national average) and 10.1% hold an Associate's Degree (1.2% above the national average)
- Waukesha County has more individuals 55 years and older than the national average for an area of similar size, with 147,092 compared to 124,551 nationally. Individuals in this age range may consider retiring soon.

- Waukesha County has fewer Millennials than the national average for an area of similar size, with 69,611 individuals compared to 83,832 nationally. Individuals in this age group are typically considered mid-career.
- 93.2% of businesses in Waukesha County have 49 or fewer employees. 6.5% of businesses have between 50 – 499 employees and 0.2% of Waukesha County businesses employ over 500 individuals.
- By 2050 Waukesha County is projected to have 24.4% of the total jobs in the metropolitan statistical area (Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties).

### Business Survey

The Waukesha County Business Survey was conducted in cooperation with Waukesha County, the Waukesha County Business Alliance, the Waukesha County Center for Growth, Carroll University and the Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington (WOW) Workforce Development Board in the winter of 2025. A total of 163 businesses responded to the survey. Respondents included representatives from 35 of Waukesha County's 37 municipalities, a wide range of business sectors, and companies sized from the self-employed to operations with more than 1,000 employees.

Highlights from the survey include:

- 71% of businesses plan to expand their workforce in the next three years, down from 80% on the 2023 survey.
- 73% of manufacturing businesses and over half of all types of businesses report a skilled-labor shortage as the top challenge to workforce growth.
- Of those hiring
  - 53% are looking for industry-specific skilled labor
  - 32% are looking for marketing/sales
  - 30% are looking for administrative
  - 26% are looking for engineering
  - 13% are looking for business services (Finance/Legal/HR)
- Top skills organizations are looking to develop in employees include project management, strategic management, and data analytics.
- Companies are preparing for advancements in emerging technologies by
  - Upgrading technology infrastructure (55%)
  - Implementing or upgrading AI-driven tools and technologies (51%)
  - Developing or enhancing cybersecurity or AI strategy (48%)
  - Recruiting or upskilling employees with skills in AI/cyber (48%)
  - Piloting or adopting automation (37%)
- 83% of businesses in Waukesha County are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the local business climate. Economic uncertainty, workforce availability, tax and regulatory policies factor into broader state and national perceptions.

- 44% of respondents have reached 100% capacity at their existing location which is down from 60% in 2017

## **Technology**

Technology use within County government and among its customers continues to grow. Trends toward cloud, e-commerce, remote work, and end user driven systems enable more functionality and services available to internal and external customers. This “always on – always accessible” expectation requires increased dependence on information technology and the support services to implement/manage systems and mitigate risk.

Continued strategic investment in technology and a focus on system and process effectiveness/efficiency results in productivity and subsequent return on investment. Enhancements to information management, IT security, business continuity and data access will continue to develop. The increased use and access of data means that IT security is an ever-increasing responsibility, and the need to protect data and follow sound information governance policy is critical.

Investment in IT security, business continuity, and disaster recovery will assist in reducing cyber-attack vectors and help ensure confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information/data. An evolving, multi-tiered approach will provide protection from internal/external threats and keep public trust and brand reputation intact.

The post-pandemic world has accentuated the need to focus on improving the delivery of digital government services through the development of the external website. Enabling anytime, anywhere, and any device alternatives to in-person, paper-based services will provide operational efficiencies and increase constituent satisfaction.

The reality of continuous technological change requires increased employee training. Technology is not a centralized IT responsibility alone. Portions of traditional information technology responsibilities continue to shift to end-users and business-specific subject matter experts act as application administrators. This creates efficiencies and it also requires increased focus on effective end-user solutions and the development of end-user expertise, documentation, and business continuity. The focus on end-user applications and lean IT staffing results in IT expertise in some areas being “one-person deep,” requiring the need for supplemental outside resources and prioritization of core functionality.

The County will continue to invest in people, processes, and application efficiencies to enable IT services and deliver business objectives and goals.

## COUNTY FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

### Housing

Economic development is vital for communities in Waukesha County to retain optimum paying jobs, maintain municipal infrastructure and essential services, and maintain and expand quality of life.

The population in Waukesha County continues to age. As the baby boomer population enters retirement, the county must consider a variety of housing types to accommodate the changing needs of this age group as it relates to household type, income, and location. With the baby boomers leaving the workforce and requiring services, there is also a need to attract a new workforce. The available workforce population, which is younger and more racially diverse than before, requires the same housing considerations as the baby boomers. Locating a variety of housing near job centers helps attract skilled workers to the county and provides a customer base for nearby goods and services, parks, and available public transit. Nationally and locally, there has been an increasing demand for living units located near entertainment venues and workplaces, as millennials and empty nesters look for more dynamic living arrangements within walkable settings.

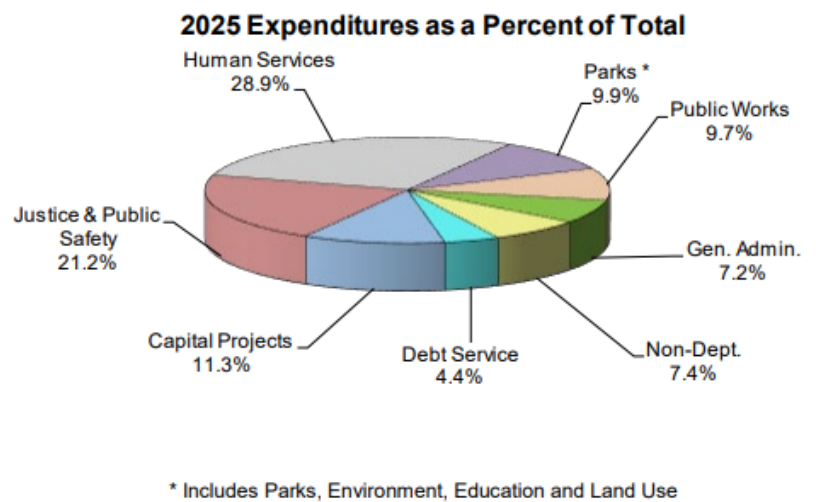
### Household/Family

- In 2024 there were 167,392 households in Waukesha County. The number is expected to increase about 3% every 5 years. The average person per household is approximately 2.4.
- The county is relatively affluent with a median household income of \$99,168, which is above both the state (\$74,671) and national (\$77,719) median, and the second highest among all counties in Wisconsin, behind St. Croix County just outside of the Twin Cities (\$103,731). Similarly, per capita income in Waukesha County is estimated at \$91,766, which is higher than the state (\$64,976) and the nation (\$69,418), and the second highest among all counties in Wisconsin (behind Ozaukee County at \$104,780). The latest data available is from 2023.
- The county has experienced healthy property value growth in recent years. Following several years of declining property value during the Great Recession, property values began increasing for 2014. From 2014 to 2021, property value growth increased about 4.4% on average annually, with a gradual trend of larger percentage increases over that period. Since then, property values have increased more rapidly, at about 13% for 2022 and 2023, and 8.5% in 2025, driven largely by residential property inflation. (The increase for 2024 was just under 4.0% but was artificially lower due to the state exempting personal property from taxes.) A realistic assumption for future growth would be about 4%-5% but could be higher if residential property inflation continues or could be lower or negative if there's an economic downturn.
- According to the Wisconsin Realtors Association, the median home sale price in 2024 (the last complete year of data) was \$455,650. Statewide home prices rose 4.5% in the past year.

- The county is subject to state-mandated property tax levy limits, with growth in the levy primarily tied to “net new construction.” Net new construction consists of the value of new construction (i.e., development) minus demolition and is divided into the previous year’s total tax levy base (including tax increment districts) to get the growth factor.
- The county has experienced healthy growth recently; however, the county’s tax base is comparatively large so that this growth results in a relatively small net new construction growth factor. Assuming continued property value growth levels like recent years, the net new construction factor is expected to continue to decrease even if high levels of development are maintained.

Waukesha County Budget: Expenditures

The total operating budget (excluding capital projects and debt service) typically increases about 2%-3% and can fluctuate from year-to-year due to state and federal funding awards. The county provides many labor-intensive services, and personnel costs consistently make up about half of total operating budget. The two largest functional areas, Justice & Public Safety and Health & Human Services, consistently comprise about 55%-60% of the operating budget (excluding capital and debt). Debt service costs are expected to increase in future years due to additional borrowing needed for the courthouse project and the increasing cost of maintaining infrastructure. The graph above displays expenditures by functional area, including capital and debt.



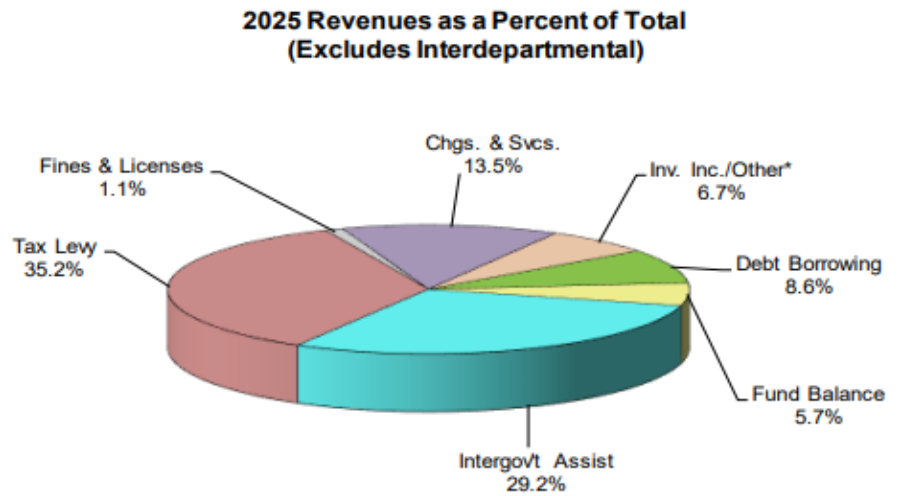
External factors will continue to play a key role in significantly impacting future trends and projections including how federal and state funding priorities may likely affect local funding policies and services carried out by local governments provided in different ways. Also, volatility of fuel, energy, and commodity prices, and increasing medical and health insurance costs are likely to have future budget impacts. In addition, internal factors include high costs of jail inmates, Emergency Preparedness 9-1-1 dispatch communications, and future debt service payments as a result of infrastructure projects, including the project to expand and modernize the courthouse and funding of major highway projects.

The county typically assumes slower growth in revenues, due to state-mandated levy limits and minimal increases in ongoing state/federal aid to help cover mandated services, resulting in forecasted gaps between revenues and expenditures. Typically, the gap has been between \$3 million and \$5 million but is forecast at about \$6 million for 2026.

Waukesha County Budget: Revenues

Intergovernmental assistance and tax levy comprise the majority of county revenues. The share of total budgeted revenues coming from the property tax has declined from 42% in the 2018 budget to 35.2% in the 2025 budget, mostly due to state-mandated levy limits.

The county carries out several programs on behalf of the state and federal government (mostly in Justice & Public Safety and Health & Human Services), so about a quarter of the total revenue budget is typically from state and federal revenue sources, though growth in these revenue sources is often minimal and insufficient to keep up with the increasing cost of mandated services. Also, the county attempts to maintain a diversified and stable revenue stream, which includes a reliance on user fees where costs can be directly related to the level of service provided and recovered through charges to individuals and organizations that directly benefit from those services. The county’s budget philosophy is to review and adjust user fees where allowable to cover increasing program costs, reducing reliance on tax levy. User fees/charges for service, for example, made up about 13.5% in the 2025 budget.



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding will officially end on December 31, 2026, eliminating the county’s allocation from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program.

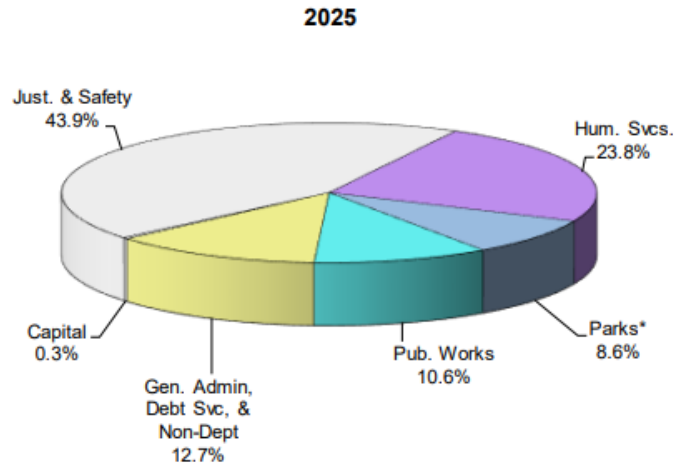
Other external factors that may affect estimated future revenue trends include a change in state funding, a change in the interest rate trend affecting county investments, or a change in moderate inflation trends. Also, other impacts which could affect future revenue include federal and state budget deficits which will likely result in revenue reductions and the potential for higher interest rates. Internal factors mainly include user fee increases, which help cover the rising costs of services and the ability to collect on client accounts, and the uncertainty of the County Executive and County Board supporting a revenue source, like a 0.5% county sales tax, which, if enacted, would significantly increase county revenues.

County Tax Levy

Section 66.0602 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, imposes a limit on property tax levies by cities, villages, towns, and counties. These entities cannot increase their tax levy by a percentage that exceeds their prior year change in equalized value due to net new construction plus an increment for terminated Tax Incremental Districts. The limit also includes exemptions for debt service obligations, consolidated services, and unused tax levy from the prior year. In a typical year Waukesha County is allowed to

increase its property tax levy somewhere between 1% and 2% under these limits. That new tax revenue is then distributed to various county departments to support ongoing operations.

The area of Justice and Public Safety receives the most new tax levy support in a typical year. The share of tax levy going to Justice and Public Safety has increased from 41% in the 2014 budget to 43.9% in the 2025 budget, due in part to it being a priority area for the county and the limited ability for these operations to generate other revenues. That trend will continue into the near and medium-term future. Together with Health & Human Services, over 2/3 of tax levy goes to these two functional areas. State-imposed tax levy limits as described above continue to put pressure on our county budget. The pace of inflation and the increasing market demand for higher wages that have accompanied the tight labor market is making living within levy limits increasingly difficult. The county continues to resist imposing the statutorily allowable county sales tax to offset the restrictions of the tax levy cap. The county will continue to monitor actions of the State Legislature that could ease levy limits or support alternative funding sources for counties.



**INTERNAL ANALYSIS**

County Facilities and Operations

In 2026 the existing Waukesha County Courthouse Building will continue to undergo an extensive renovation to upgrade the facility and prepare the county to serve its citizens for at least the next 50 years. This project, which will be completed in 2027, will have an impact on county employees working in both the existing 1959 Courthouse Building and the Administration Center, as well as the visiting public. Business operations in both buildings will be affected at various times during the project. Departments should consider how their employees will be impacted by temporary office movements and consider potential changes or modifications to service delivery to customers who visit the two buildings.

In addition to the Courthouse Building itself, the county is examining changes to the county’s jail as well as the county’s Administration Building. Two separate studies will determine what renovations or expansions are warranted for those facilities.

The county is also in the process of divesting itself from two long-held properties, the campus at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee at Waukesha and the Northview building and land. The university campus has already been marketed via an RFP process and it is anticipated the Northview property will follow suit sometime in 2026.

Customer Service

Waukesha County is committed to the highest levels of customer service. Our team is dedicated to serving all customers by living our core values, standards of service, and behaviors of excellence. Waukesha County continues to focus its efforts on high levels of customer service; we can measure this using the Waukesha County Customer Service Survey. Waukesha County sets a goal to meet a 4.65 out of 5 for our overall customer service interactions. The table below shows the county’s scores across all departments for 2023-2025.

Performance Measure:	2023 Actual	2024 Estimate	2025 Target
Countywide Customer Satisfaction Rating	4.58	4.70	4.65

Employee Survey

Waukesha County received 737 complete responses to its 2024 Employee Engagement Survey.

As in past years, respondents were asked a range of questions about communication, sharing information, professional development, and continuous improvement. This includes four key questions that we have been measuring over time with a goal of meeting an 80% agreement threshold (Calculated by adding the % of ratings of Strongly Agree and Somewhat Agree).

Countywide results of those questions as of 2024 can be found [here](#).

- 96%** I understand that I can be recognized for extra effort while demonstrating the County’s Standards of Service Excellence
- 97%** Information and knowledge is shared openly within my department
- 96%** During my annual performance evaluation with my direct supervisor, I discussed training needs and opportunities for professional development
- 98%** I understand how my work and assigned goals directly contribute to the overall success of the County in meeting its key strategic priorities

**Historical Perspective:**

2014      2024    Difference

I understand how my work and assigned goals directly contribute to the overall success of the County in meeting its key strategic priorities

87%      98%    +11%

Information and knowledge is shared openly within my department

64%      97%    +33%

During my annual performance evaluation with my direct supervisor, I discussed training needs and opportunities for professional development

73%            96%    +23%

I understand that I can be recognized for extra effort while demonstrating the County’s Standards of Service Excellence

61%            96%    +35%

Comparing the 2014 results with the 2024 shows dramatic improvement in responses. The results are a testament to what a culture of continuous improvement should produce. We should all be proud of our progress and keep working to reach our 80% goal across all categories.

Countywide and Departmental Results using Power BI Dashboarding

To help understand the survey data and facilitate communication with county teams, Department Heads are provided with a link to dashboards visually depicting the survey data in each department. Data may then be shared across Departments and utilized to determine individual or departmentwide performance goals or measure success of key initiatives.

**County HR Scan Overview**

County Employment Demographics - Years of Service

2012						
	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	County Total
Administration	11	17	20	11	30	89
Circuit Court Services	16	19	19	7	31	92
Corporation Counsel	3	9	9	3	15	39
Emergency Preparedness	16	29	5	2	6	58
Public Works	15	14	27	26	48	130
District Attorney	2	4	10	6	10	32
Health and Human Services	96	76	65	52	111	400
Parks and Land Use	7	16	27	14	43	107
Sheriffs Department	65	86	60	47	83	341
Multi Departments	20	19	18	14	15	86
<b>County Total</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>1374</b>
	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	County Total
Administration	12%	19%	22%	12%	34%	100%
Circuit Court Services	17%	21%	21%	8%	34%	100%
Corporation Counsel	8%	23%	23%	8%	38%	100%
Emergency Preparedness	28%	50%	9%	3%	10%	100%
Public Works	12%	11%	21%	20%	37%	100%
District Attorney	6%	13%	31%	19%	31%	100%
Health and Human Services	24%	19%	16%	13%	28%	100%
Parks and Land Use	7%	15%	25%	13%	40%	100%
Sheriffs Department	19%	25%	18%	14%	24%	100%
Multi Departments	23%	22%	21%	16%	17%	100%
<b>County Total</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The charts below outline the distribution of employees by years of county service. During the period between 2022 and 2025 the percentage of employees with five or fewer years of county experience grew 45% to 48%. This trend is even more pronounced in comparison to 2012 when county work experience was more evenly distributed and the largest percentage of the workforce having twenty or more years of experience at Waukesha County. The trend affirms the impact of the Baby Boom generation’s retirement and reflects the higher levels of turnover experienced coming out of the COVID-19pandemic.



Department of Public Works 2026-2028 Strategic Plan

	2022						2025						Δ 2025 vs. 2022					
	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	County Total	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	County Total	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	
Administration	37	15	12	19	16	99	46	15	10	11	19	101	9	0	-2	-8	3	
Circuit Court Services	40	10	5	10	12	77	39	20	4	4	14	81	-1	10	-1	-6	2	
Corporation Counsel	18	7	5	5	5	40	17	9	5	6	6	43	-1	2	0	1	1	
Emergency Preparedness	20	11	7	10	3	51	29	12	3	6	8	58	9	1	-4	-4	5	
Public Works	62	17	10	10	28	127	58	28	14	7	18	125	-4	11	4	-3	-10	
District Attorney	19	3	5	6	11	44	13	3	4	2	11	33	-6	0	-1	-4	0	
Health and Human Services	186	73	44	41	44	388	226	78	48	26	45	423	40	5	4	-15	1	
Parks and Land Use	38	18	9	8	25	98	41	18	14	6	22	101	3	0	5	-2	-3	
Sheriffs Department	145	49	36	50	40	320	161	46	37	32	52	328	16	-3	1	-18	12	
Multi Departments	18	14	6	6	10	54	37	15	15	8	10	85	19	1	9	2	0	
<b>County Total</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>1298</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>1378</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-57</b>	<b>11</b>	

	2022						2025						Δ 2025 vs. 2022					
	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	County Total	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	County Total	<5	5-9	10-14	15-20	>20	
Administration	37%	15%	12%	19%	16%	100%	46%	15%	10%	11%	19%	100%	8%	0%	-2%	-8%	3%	
Circuit Court Services	52%	13%	6%	13%	16%	100%	48%	25%	5%	5%	17%	100%	-4%	12%	-2%	-8%	2%	
Corporation Counsel	45%	18%	13%	13%	13%	100%	40%	21%	12%	14%	14%	100%	-5%	3%	-1%	1%	1%	
Emergency Preparedness	39%	22%	14%	20%	6%	100%	50%	21%	5%	10%	14%	100%	11%	-1%	-9%	-9%	8%	
Public Works	49%	13%	8%	8%	22%	100%	46%	22%	11%	6%	14%	100%	-2%	9%	3%	-2%	-8%	
District Attorney	43%	7%	11%	14%	25%	100%	39%	9%	12%	6%	33%	100%	-4%	2%	1%	-8%	8%	
Health and Human Services	48%	19%	11%	11%	11%	100%	53%	18%	11%	6%	11%	100%	5%	0%	0%	-4%	-1%	
Parks and Land Use	39%	18%	9%	8%	26%	100%	41%	18%	14%	6%	22%	100%	2%	-1%	5%	-2%	-4%	
Sheriffs Department	45%	15%	11%	16%	13%	100%	49%	14%	11%	10%	16%	100%	4%	-1%	0%	-6%	3%	
Multi Departments	33%	26%	11%	11%	19%	100%	44%	18%	18%	9%	12%	100%	10%	-8%	7%	-2%	-7%	
<b>County Total</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>-5%</b>	<b>0%</b>	

The County continues to emphasize succession planning. Training programs such as Standards of Service Excellence (SOSE), Management University, Effective Supervision and Mentoring have been instrumental in employee transitions and in the mitigation of institutional knowledge loss as experienced employees, senior professionals, and managerial staff, have retired.

County Employment – Turnover

As the workforce transitions, it points toward the need for continued emphasis on county-wide efforts to recruit, develop and retain employees. This is especially clear when reviewing countywide turnover data, which in recent years has been affected by the low unemployment rate and changes in workforce participation. The chart below presents twelve years of data, and shows an uptick in overall turnover, regrettable turnover, and total resignations during starting in 2021.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
FTE--Budgeted Positions	1366	1368	1363	1354	1354	1373	1381	1390	1390	1404	1426	1426
FTE--Total Turnover	102	123	157	163	133	175	159	156	238	284	237	198
% Turnover	7.47%	8.99%	11.52%	12.04%	9.82%	12.75%	11.51%	11.22%	17.09%	20.23%	16.62%	13.88%
Regrettable Turnover*						68	66	68	106	169	105	94
% Regrettable Turnover						4.95%	4.78%	4.89%	7.59%	12.04%	7.37%	6.59%
Death	3	2	1	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	1
Disability Retirement	0	1	3	4	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	1
Discharge	8	8	21	7	8	8	8	12	15	13	14	23
Position Eliminated	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	7	0	0	2
Resignation	42	45	74	92	86	101	108	87	146	228	176	140
Retirement	49	67	58	58	38	65	41	52	68	43	46	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>198</b>

\*Regrettable Turnover: Employees who left County employment that we planned to retain, or voluntary separation by individuals who are top performers, or high-potential employees, or where the separation is from a key position for which a possible successor has not been previously identified

\*This turnover analysis does not include employees that transferred to other departments or had job assignment changes within the county

## **DPW Specific Environmental Scan Information**

**DPW recognizes the information provided in the county wide environmental scan data published at the executive level. In our analysis, DPW focused on the following key points that may impact our processes and operations.**

**Census:** Key points of the census include the projected population increase including a projected population growth of 6.1%. As the third largest county in the state with a growing population, DPW must consider the impacts of overall service including road maintenance, mowing, and most importantly plowing. Additionally, with growth and expansion, DPW will need to consider the impacts on increased number of signs and signals to be installed and maintained.

**Economic:** The county projects increased job growth of approximately 40% by the year 2050. With the potential for increased population and new workers traveling from outside Waukesha County, DPW will again focus on the impact of roads and infrastructure, and our level of service provided for road repaving, maintenance, and snow removal operations.

**Legislative:** Key points to legislative for DPW include our sources for funding including Federal, State, General Purpose Revenue and Bonding. Funding to support infrastructure is critical – general fund tax collections have increased by 14% with support from growing incomes and consumer spending. However, transportation user fee revenue is declining including revenue generated from gas taxes – primarily because of fuel efficiency increases over the last decade. Legislative officials may have to consider additional fees including wheel taxes and taxes based on miles driven annually when preparing future budgets.

### **2025 Environmental Scan: Revenue & Expenses**

Traditional revenue sources for public works are county tax levy, state reimbursement and aid revenues and locally earned revenue.

#### **Transportation Fund**

General Transportation Aides have declined steadily in the past ten years. 2026 General Transportation Aid allotment is \$4.8 Million, the lowest allotment for Waukesha County since 2017 and \$561,000 lower than General Transportation Aids awarded to the county in 2006.

Tax Levy has increased an average of 4.5% per year in the past five years. Budgeted state maintenance reimbursement revenues have increased an average of 1.2% per year in the past five years. Locally earned revenues have increased 3.7% per year. This tax levy trend is unlikely to continue with the average annual tax levy increase for Waukesha County at less than 2%.

Budgeted State maintenance reimbursements have increased an average of 1.2% in the past five years. The primary contract for this revenue, Routine Maintenance Agreement (RMA), has remained flat for the five-year period from 2020 to 2025. State revenues increase by 5% in 2026, with a potential for

another adjustment in 2027. It is not anticipated that these increases will be repeated after 2027 but will reset a new long term contract level.

The Department continues to pursue federal (FHWA) and state funding revenues for capital projects, while also requiring local cost participation for locally requested project components. The Department has been successful in the pursuit of traditional federal formula (STP) funding on Moorland Road and Racine Avenue and with federal bridge funding on a variety of county bridge rehabilitation projects. The Department submitted 10 STP funding applications in the upcoming 2026-2031 program cycle. The Department continues to successfully achieve important federal safety funding (HSIP) at urban signalized intersections, which allows quick implementation of critical safety improvements. The Department has also been successful in receiving non-traditional reimbursement funding through federal CMAQ and CRP funding opportunities. CMAQ and CRP have been used to improve traffic signals and accelerate needed equipment upgrades and intersection safety improvements. The Department is applying for a \$25 million federal discretionary BUILD funding for a targeted investment that meets the competitive grant criteria on CTH K.

The state funded Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) continues to provide important state revenue that supports the county's annual paving program. The supplemental component of LRIP, which provides about \$1.9 million every two years, has not been established as a base program and there are state budget risks that the supplemental component may not be sustainable. The current federal funding authorization is set to expire on September 30, 2026. Federal legislators will be debating and developing the next 5-year reauthorization which will include funding levels, policy directives and programmatic requirements for various federal transportation programs that will impact county highway revenues and opportunities.

The Department continues to face challenges with achieving full federal-eligible participation percentage on larger, longer duration design projects due to inflation and industry cost escalation. The overall construction bidding environment continues to favor the contractor due to an imbalance in industry contractor supply and public construction funding demand. Engineering revenues related to federal design reimbursements have increased based on additional project opportunities and land acquisition delivery.

#### **General Fund**

General fund is almost entirely levy funded and has seen an average 2% increase in levy in the past five years. Fund balance usage has increased by 400% in the past five years, to \$401,000 in the 2026 budget, to supplement low tax levy increases for building maintenance.

#### **Airport Fund**

Airport revenues have increased an average of 6% annually for the past five years. The largest portion of income is lease rates, most of which are tied to CPI rates and have seen good growth in the past five years with higher inflation rates. This is beginning to slow as inflation decreases. Fuel sales have also increased by an average of 6%, reflecting growth in airport usage.

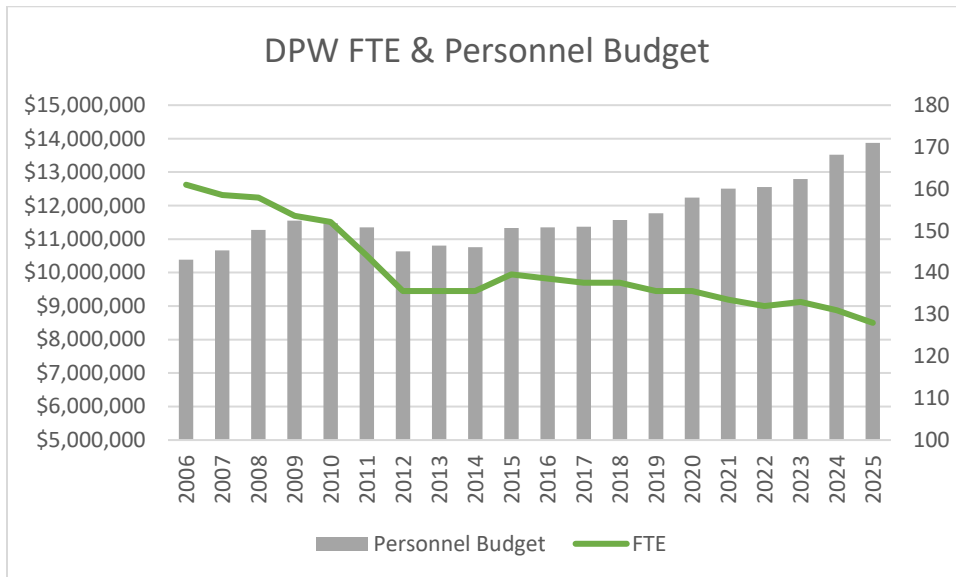
**Central Fleet Fund**

Internal repair revenues have increased 4% per year for the past five years, and external revenues have increased 11%. The bulk of Central Fleet internal revenues are from tax levy funded departments in the county. Though external revenues have increased, they are lower than the averages seen 10 years ago. Fuel revenues fluctuate based on current actual fuel pricing, which has been decreasing in the past few years.

**EXPENSES**

**Personnel**

The main driver for expenses in every division is personnel costs. Personnel costs have increased 3% on average over the past five years for the Transportation, General and Central Fleet Funds. These funds are largely linked to tax levy as a source of income. These increases in personnel costs have been mitigated by a reduction in 5.5 full-time FTE in these divisions in the past five years. This follows a long-term trend of reducing positions to address unfunded increases in personnel costs. Full-time FTE has been reduced by 21% since 2006, a reduction of 33 positions.



Though FTE has decreased personnel costs have steadily increased, reflecting annual salary increases, salary range adjustments and increased benefit costs. Despite market research-based salary adjustment ranges Public Works has had a difficult time successfully recruiting positions in engineering and skilled trades such as fleet mechanics. This is addressed further in the Human Resources Environmental Scan.

If revenues cannot keep up with cost to continue for current staff, the department should be prepared to cut 1.0 FTE every one to two years in divisions funded by tax levy or tax levy reliant customers. Level of service impacts should be monitored as well as increased reliance on labor provided by contractors and annual contractual cost increases, which would affect operating budgets.

**Operating Budget Drivers**

As the largest driver in the Transportation Fund operating expenses, road salt for winter road maintenance and safety is consistently a million-dollar budget line. To alleviate budget stress due to price increases for this necessary expense, the department has invested in and adopted other alternative road maintenance treatments such as brine and calcium chloride. Both can help reduce road salt usage and maximize the effectiveness of what is applied to highways. A ten year look at salt prices and budgeted usage shows budgeted salt use has reduced by 4700 tons, nearly 30%, while price per ton has increased 33%. Actual annual costs vary, as they are heavily dependent on weather.

ROAD SALT	2016	2021	2026
<i>Budgeted Tons</i>	16,400	15,700	11,700
<i>Price/Ton</i>	\$63.72	\$74.81	\$84.90
<i>Total Budget</i>	\$1,045,008	\$1,174,517	\$993,330

This effort has been necessary to keep up with cost increases in other critical areas, such as plow blades. Each plow truck will wear through a couple plow blades per year. Due to price increases and the addition of tariff charges the cost of plow blades has doubled in 2025. This is one example of many operating expense lines and material costs that are increasing for Public Works budgets.

One of the largest drivers in the General Fund operating expenses are utilities. Though capital investment into upgrading to more efficient equipment has helped reduce consumption, utility rates continue to increase at a pace much higher than historical averages and much higher than increases to tax levy can cover.

Electricity	Ave Cost/KwH	Total Cost
2016	\$0.10	\$1,327,498.78
2021	\$0.10	\$1,304,658.62
2026*	\$0.15	\$1,884,664.00
<b>Ten Year Increase:</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>42%</b>

Water	Ave Cost/Gal	Total Cost
2016	\$0.01	\$228,414.55
2021	\$0.02	\$388,947.59
2026*	\$0.03	\$697,571.00
<b>Ten Year Increase:</b>	<b>249%</b>	<b>205%</b>

Natural Gas	Ave Cost/Gal	Total Cost
2016	\$0.40	\$276,017.81
2021	\$0.63	\$385,596.41
2026*	\$0.66	\$422,400.00
<b>Ten Year Increase:</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>53%</b>

\* Rates for 2026 are budgeted rates and costs.

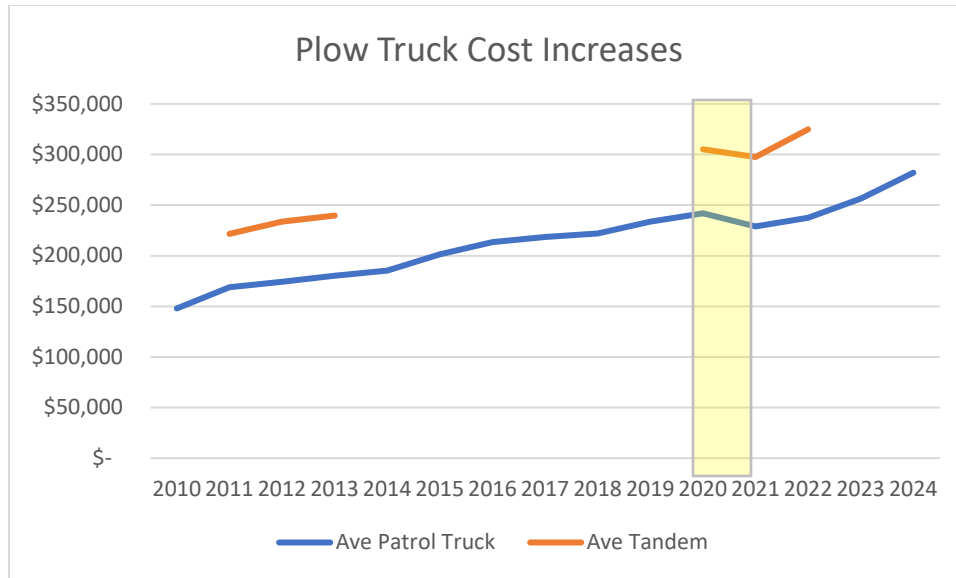
The housekeeping contract for county-owned buildings is another main driver of expenses in the General Fund budget. Internal housekeeping staff positions have slowly been reduced and now all cleaning is completed by contract staff. This contract will typically increase by CPI or 3% annually. This often outpaces increases in tax levy revenues, despite service level adjustments to reduce costs, such as adopting centrally located garbage and recycling stations.

<b>Contracted Housekeeping Costs</b>	
2016	\$567,940.67
2021	\$641,230.73
2026*	\$759,814.00
<b>Ave Annual Increase:</b>	<b>3.1%</b>

Contracting out services can be more cost effective than maintaining in-house employees. Though, annual increases for contracts often exceed increases in tax levy and other revenues. It can quickly become a budget hardship to keep up with costs after those initial savings are realized.

A cost driver across most of Public Works is vehicle acquisition and maintenance costs. Cost of parts for maintenance continues to increase, with many vendors now implementing fees for credit card payment and adding tariff charges to invoices. Vehicle prices have increased sharply in the past five years, particularly in the heavy equipment and vehicle areas. Patrol trucks are a consistent purchase for the department, replacing 6 trucks annually. Truck prices have risen 22% in the past five years, averaging 4.5% per year. To keep cost increases at this low-rate specification modifications have been made to reduce pricing, as you can see illustrated in the slight drop of 2020 pricing below. The department will likely need to find additional ways to reduce costs, whether by continuing to downgrade specifications or reducing fleet size.

Airport division is also seeing a large increase in vehicle acquisition and maintenance costs, due to bringing snow removal operations in-house in 2023. Much of the equipment acquired to begin in-house snow removal is being repurposed from the Vehicle Replacement Plan or purchased used from other airports. Long-term equipment replacement and storage plans should be factored into financial decisions for the foreseeable future.



One area of relief for vehicle costs is the gradual drop in fuel prices in the past 4 years, after sharp increases in fuel prices in 2022. Though costs have reduced the past few years, it is likely to stay at this level.

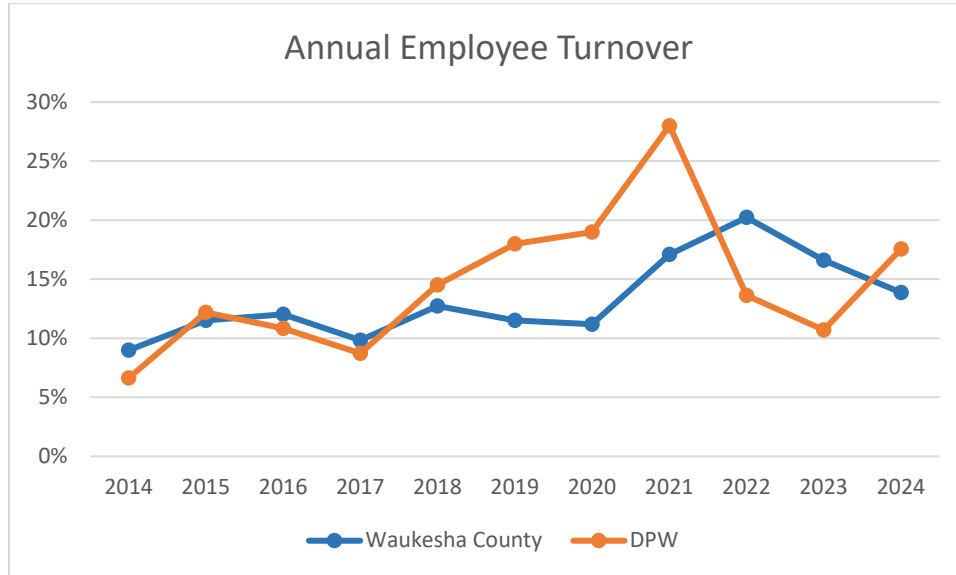
In summary, revenue growth in much of the Department of Public Works does not keep pace with increasing costs of the people, materials, equipment and contracts necessary to perform services. The department should continue to focus on maximizing revenue and looking for opportunities to lower costs wherever possible. To continue to close the gap between costs and revenues the department may need to further prioritize critical work to maintain a safe buildings and transportation systems while identifying lower priority areas to reduce level of service.

**2025 Environmental Scan: Human Resources**

The Human Resources section of this Environmental Scan is intended to review and interpret human resource data to help identify opportunities and threats that may affect the Public Works organization. This information should help the department develop strategies and plans in human resources and staffing. The data presented can provide insights into planning for the possibility of changes in our human resources and staff over the coming years. This information allows the department to proactively plan for, rather than react to the effects staff changes may have on the operations. Effects of staff changes may include need for succession planning and staff development; increased cross-training; transfer of knowledge; consideration for restructuring; designing onboarding/off-boarding procedures; budget impact planning.

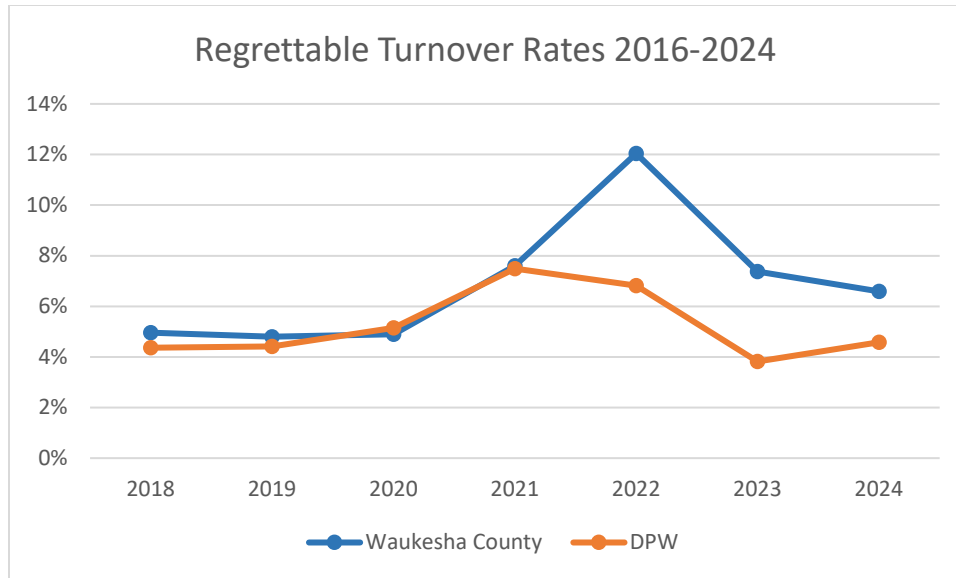
Typically, data regarding retirement eligible employees by division is analyzed to determine if there are areas of the department where succession planning and capture of institutional knowledge should be a priority. This data is not currently available at the division level. At a department level, the number of employees that have more than 20 years of service has dropped steadily from 37% in 2012 to 14% in 2025. This indicates that turnover from retirement is slowing from past rates.

An increasing trend related to Human Resources is the rate of employee turnover. The following chart shows Waukesha County’s turnover rate and DPW’s turnover rate from 2014-2024. 2018 through 2021 showed the department exceeding the average Waukesha County turnover rates. In 2022 and 2023 that trend has reversed but appears to be increasing again.



DPW should continually develop, implement and manage a succession plan; provide cross training or knowledge transfer to prevent a break or lapse of service; consider the opportunities for identifying necessary skills and gaps in the skill set; review organizational restructuring; and plan for the costs of paying out retirement benefits and the cost of training new staff.

Employee turnover occurs for many reasons. Retirement as mentioned above is declining but is a continual reason for employee separation. Employee retirement rate has declined but DPW turnover rate continues to trend higher than historical averages. This indicates an increase in mid-career employee driven and employer driven separations. The 2022 Environmental Scan pointed out an increase in regrettable turnover in DPW. These are employees we want to retain but are leaving county employment for other employment opportunities. Recent data indicates that regrettable turnover rates have returned to a normal level after a peak in 2021 and 2022.



Turnover affects the workplace in several ways, such as work time lost due to vacancy, which can have revenue earning implications. There is also the time required to recruit, onboard and train new employees. One challenge DPW has noted is the difficulty in recruiting certain positions in the department. Much longer vacancies have been seen for positions such as Fleet Mechanics and Civil Engineers. In both cases, offers of employment have been declined by candidates for pay and benefit reasons. To fill long-vacant positions it has been necessary to adjust traditional job specifications, such as hiring positions in an underfilled status and working with Human Resources staff to change long standing job specifications and experience requirements. These changes have allowed the department to fill positions with less experience than traditionally was required for consideration. There is currently no official tracking of this data. The department should continue to track instances and causes of failed recruitment and work with Human Resources to explore potential ways to increase successful recruitments.

**2025 Environmental Scan: DPW Benchmarks by Division**

**Facilities division performance measures**

<u>Standard</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>County Sqft</u>	<u>#employee/SqFt</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
<u>National</u>	<u>IFMA</u>	<u>1,877,000</u>	<u>1/49,000 sqft</u>	<u>Recommends 38</u>
<u>County</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>1,877,000</u>	<u>1/75,000 sqft</u>	<u>Staff 25</u>
<u>Standard</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>County Sqft</u>	<u>kWH/Sqft</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
<u>National</u>	<u>USEIA</u>	<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>22.5</u>	<u>Standard Efficiency</u>
<u>County</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>9.5</u>	<u>Exceeds Standard</u>

- Latest number account for courthouse step 2 expansion and closing of old UWW
- IFMA = International Facility Management Association
- USEIA = U.S. Energy Information Administration

Highway Operations Division performance measures

Pillar	Performance Measure	Outcome
Customer Service	Route Optimization time per “round”	Road Category 1-3 @ 1.5 to 2.5 hours; Road Category 4-5 @ 2.5 hours
Customer Service	Bare Pavement for Snow Removal	Road Category 1-3 @ 4 hours; Road Category 4-5 @ 6 hours
Customer Service	Percentage of County potholes and vegetation requests responded to within three workdays	90%
Quality	Percentage of County centerline miles re-striped: Within the last three years and within the last five years	2 yr @ 100%

Engineering Services Division performance measures

Team	Percentage of Projects Completed on Schedule vs. Latest Capital Project Form Schedule	90%
Finance	Percentage of Projects Completed within Budget vs. Latest Capital Project Form Budget	90%
Finance	Percentage of Projected Revenue Realized	100%
Finance	Change Orders as percent of Project Cost	< 5% for change orders that are not due to scope

### Waukesha County Engineering benchmarks

- **Bridge Condition and Inspection Program**
    - Bridge Condition is determined by the lowest rating of National Bridge Inventory (NBI) condition ratings for Item 58 (Deck), Item 59 (Superstructure), Item 60 (Substructure), or Item 62 (Culvert). If the lowest rating is greater than or equal to 7, the bridge is classified as Good; if it is less than or equal to 4, the classification is Poor. Bridges rated 5 or 6 are classified as Fair.
    - Inspected at least every two years with poor condition bridges annually
    - Maintained in Bridge Inventory database by WisDOT
    - **Benchmark – 90% of all bridges rated Fair or Good Condition (WisDOT benchmark)**
    - **Current value (based on 2025 inspection) is 95%**
  
  - **Small Structure (6'-20') Condition and Inspection Program**
    - Bridge Condition is determined by the lowest rating of National Bridge Inventory (NBI) condition ratings for Item 58 (Deck), Item 59 (Superstructure), Item 60 (Substructure), or Item 62 (Culvert). If the lowest rating is greater than or equal to 7, the bridge is classified as Good; if it is less than or equal to 4, the classification is Poor. Bridges rated 5 or 6 are classified as Fair.
    - Inspected at least every four years
    - Maintained in Bridge Inventory database by WisDOT
    - **Benchmark – 90% of all bridges rated Fair or Good Condition (WisDOT benchmark)**
    - **Current value (based on 2025 inspection) is TBD (January 1, 2026)**
  
  - **Pavement Condition and Inspection Program**
    - Pavement Rating Scale (Failed to Good)
    - Pavement Condition Index (PCI) between 0 – 100
    - PCI 70 equates to high side of Fair, Low side of Satisfactory
    - Inspected every 3 years (full system)
    - **Benchmark #1- 93% of all pavements in Fair or Good Condition (WisDOT benchmark)**
    - **Current value (based on 2025 inspection) is 81%**
    - **Benchmark #2 PCI 70 (Waukesha County benchmark)**
    - **Current value (based on 2025 inspection) is 70**
  
  - **Traffic Signal Operations (WisDOT benchmarks)**
    - Review of signal timing performance every 3 years
    - Retiming of signals in coordination every 3 years
    - Retiming of non-coordinated signals every 5 years
  
  - **Traffic Signal Equipment Replacement (WisDOT benchmarks)**
-

Equipment	Lifecycle (Years)
Cabinet	20
LED Modules	10
Malfunction Management Unit (MMU)	15
Non-Intrusive Detection Camera	12
Pole and Arms	25
Power Supply	18
Signal Housing/Heads	22
<b>Overall Signal System</b>	<b>25</b>

**Waukesha County Central Fleet benchmarks**

Vendor	Brand	In Shop	Service Truck
Miller Bradford	Case	\$ 161.00	\$ 179.00
Proven Power	John Deere	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00
Hartford Ford	Ford	\$ 190.00	\$ 200.00
Truck Country	Freightliner	\$ 232.00	\$ 250.00
Reinders	Toro	\$ 160.00	\$ 180.00
Zamboni	Zamboni	\$ 145.00	\$ 185.00
Zamboni 24 Hour Service	Zamboni	\$ 217.50	\$ 277.50
Cummins	Cummins	\$ 202.00	\$ 212.00
Fabick	CAT	\$ 170.00	\$ 180.00
Vendor Average		\$ 179.72	\$ 200.39
Central Fleet Rate 2025		\$ 93.83	\$ 108.78
<b>Percent Savings Fleet vs. Vendor</b>		<b>47.80%</b>	<b>45.70%</b>

Central Fleet benchmarks for labor compared to outside vendors representing OEM manufacturers. Benchmark comparison on cost differences based on in-house repairs along with comparable mobile service truck repairs. Comparison between Fleet and private sector vendors shows savings of 47 and 45 percent respectively.

Benchmark Task	Flat Rate	Central Fleet	% Change
Tahoe PPV Front Brakes	1.5 hours	1.5 hours	0%
Tahoe PPV Rear Brakes	1.5 hours	1.5 hours	0%
Interceptor PPV Front Brakes	1.5 hours	1.5 hours	0%
Interceptor PPV Rear Brakes	1.7 hours	1.5 hours	11%
A Service PM	.5 hours	.5 hours	0%
B Service PM	1.4 hours	1.5 hours	-7%
Squad setup changeover only	40 hours	40 hours	0%
Squad set up new system wiring	45 hours	48 hours	-6%

Central Fleet utilizes software for estimated standard repair times. Repairs chosen for benchmark included by quantity and commonality across county equipment. Software estimates allow for additional time related to road tests, but not indirect labor tasks like work area cleanup. Standard repair times are averaged and graded annually as part of technician performance reviews.

#### **Waukesha County Airport benchmarks**

- **Total annual aircraft operations:** Tracking growth or decline from year-to-year and identifying other airports of similar size for further study
- **Bird Strikes:** Internal and external benchmarking with other airports having similar habitat and wildlife populations
- **Customer satisfaction:** Surveys provide feedback from customers and vendors
- **Reduce the manhours per storm by 10%** through improved tactics and efficient use of airport snow removal equipment.
  - As a baseline, we are using the following average data from the 2023-2024 snow season:
  - Under 1 inch of accumulation = 41.4 man hours
  - 1 to 3 inches = 48.6 man hours
  - 3 to 6 inches = 111.8 man hours
  - Over 6 inches = 153.8 man hours

#### **2025 Environmental Scan: SWOT Analysis**

DPW's SWOT Analysis was a combination of survey questions sent out to our municipal partners and subsequent listening / feedback session in combination with our annual DPW Forum. DPW also performed its own internal SWOT analysis with feedback within our strategic planning team on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025. The compiled list includes feedback from both listening sessions with eight identified priorities for SMART goal development.

List of DPW **Strengths** Identified:

Leadership  
Employee training  
Staff are helpful  
Good interdepartmental communication  
Responsiveness to Facilities work orders and requests  
Snow Operations / Plowing  
Quality of vehicles and equipment  
Quality of tools and equipment  
Quick repair turnaround  
Experienced staff with good technical expertise  
Teamwork  
Responsiveness to external customers  
Administrative team cooperation and support

Diverse expertise in areas like engineering  
Leadership in relation to culture and training  
Customer service for way finding during courthouse project  
Coworker approachability for new staff  
Good relationship with HR, DOA, and Corp Counsel  
Build infrastructure to last  
Good project management  
Good use of data to prioritize projects and work  
Good problem solvers including technical information  
Working within budget constraints  
Good advocates for system improvement  
Flexibility with changes

List of DPW **Weaknesses** identified:

Age of equipment at airport  
Unclear expectations and inefficient prioritizing  
Lack of SOP's  
Reduced mowing and vegetation removal  
Availability of supervisors and managers  
Work planning  
Contracted housekeeping services  
Some staff are resistant to try new things  
Lingering negativity about pay and benefits  
Inconsistent onboarding procedures  
Lack of personal introductions for new employees  
Lack of list of contacts by topic for new staff  
Lack of onboarding success checkpoints  
Lack of budget flexibility to help other departments free of charge  
Explaining the "why" in our decision making  
Lack of priority / decision making matrix for customers  
Organization of electronic filing

List of DPW **Opportunities** identified:

Budget understanding  
Better contracted work oversight  
More in-person training  
Communication within the department and local government  
New software  
Investment in new equipment to reduce costs  
Grants and raising external revenue  
More robust recruiting efforts  
Establishment of SOP's

Potential for standardization of bidding for projects  
More organized discussions on training and leadership  
More after action reviews  
More project progress updates with customers  
Increased in-house maintenance training to reduce contractor reliance  
Explore how new software would improve efficiency  
Explore emerging technology to increase efficiency  
Inventory of traffic signal maintenance and future needs  
Increased opportunity to share our story with the public  
Prepare multi-year cost cutting plan and impact to public

List of DPW **Threats** identified:

Staffing levels, recruitment, and turnover  
Burnout  
Lower level of service on roads – painting, mowing, sweeping, drainage, plowing  
Budget uncertainty and rising costs  
Levy not keeping up with cost to continue  
Citizens desire more services and less taxes  
Declining state and federal funding for transportation  
Emerging technology can reduce revenue and safety and increase costs  
Tariffs  
Increasing state and federal mandates  
Uncertain political climate and impact of policies  
Fleet losing customers / revenue to other vendors  
Increasing reliance on earning revenues over completing county work  
Reliance on state / federal funding for capital projects – less flexibility  
Increase competition for airport grant funding

SWOT Analysis priorities to serve as basis for SMART goal development:

Highest Priorities

1. Better onboarding process with SOPs for each department
2. Software including Workday and asset management software
3. Interdepartmental SOP's
4. Multiyear cost cutting
5. Traffic signals maintenance and inventory
6. Emerging tech and AI
7. Address public desire for more mowing
8. Increased opportunity to share our story with public

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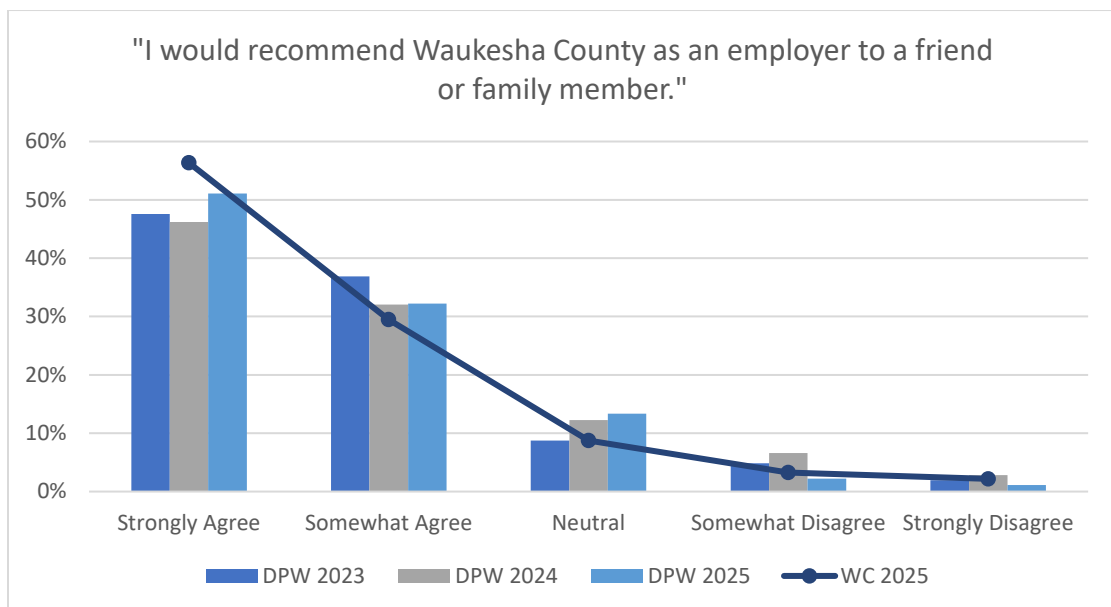
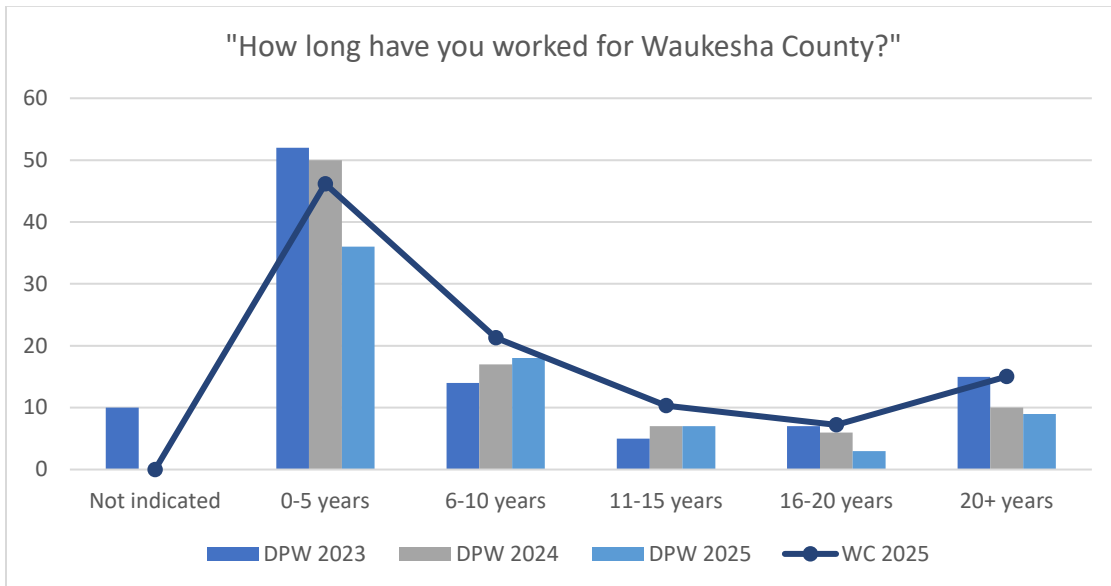
**Appendix B: Employee Feedback Groups**

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Appendix B

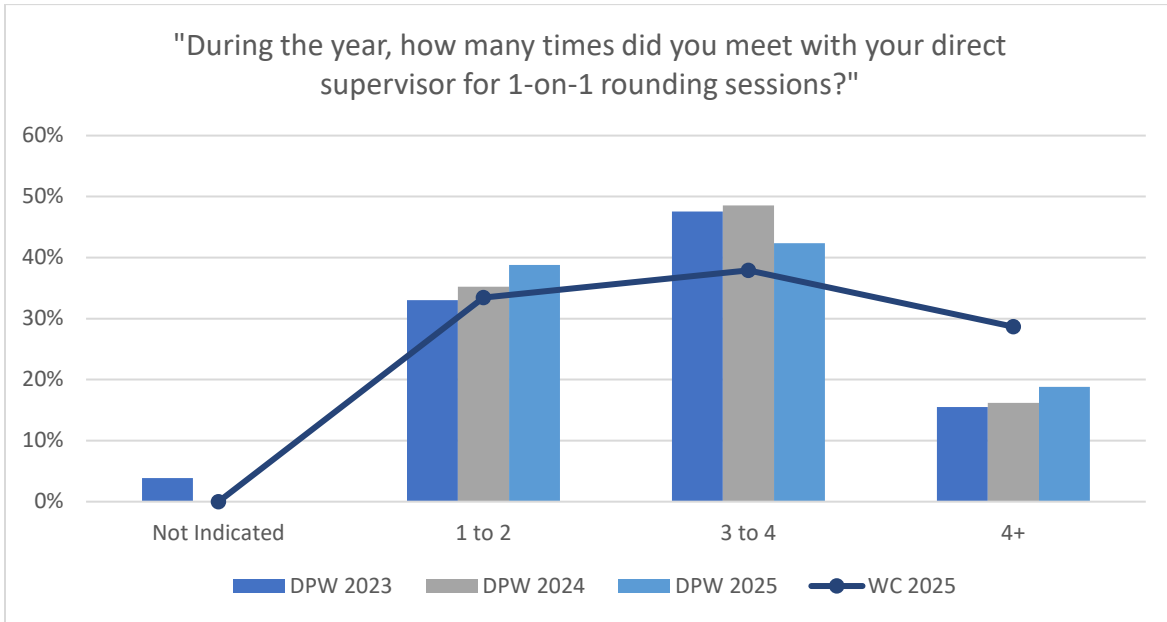
Employee Feedback Groups

**Waukesha County Annual Employee Survey 2023-25 – DPW Results**



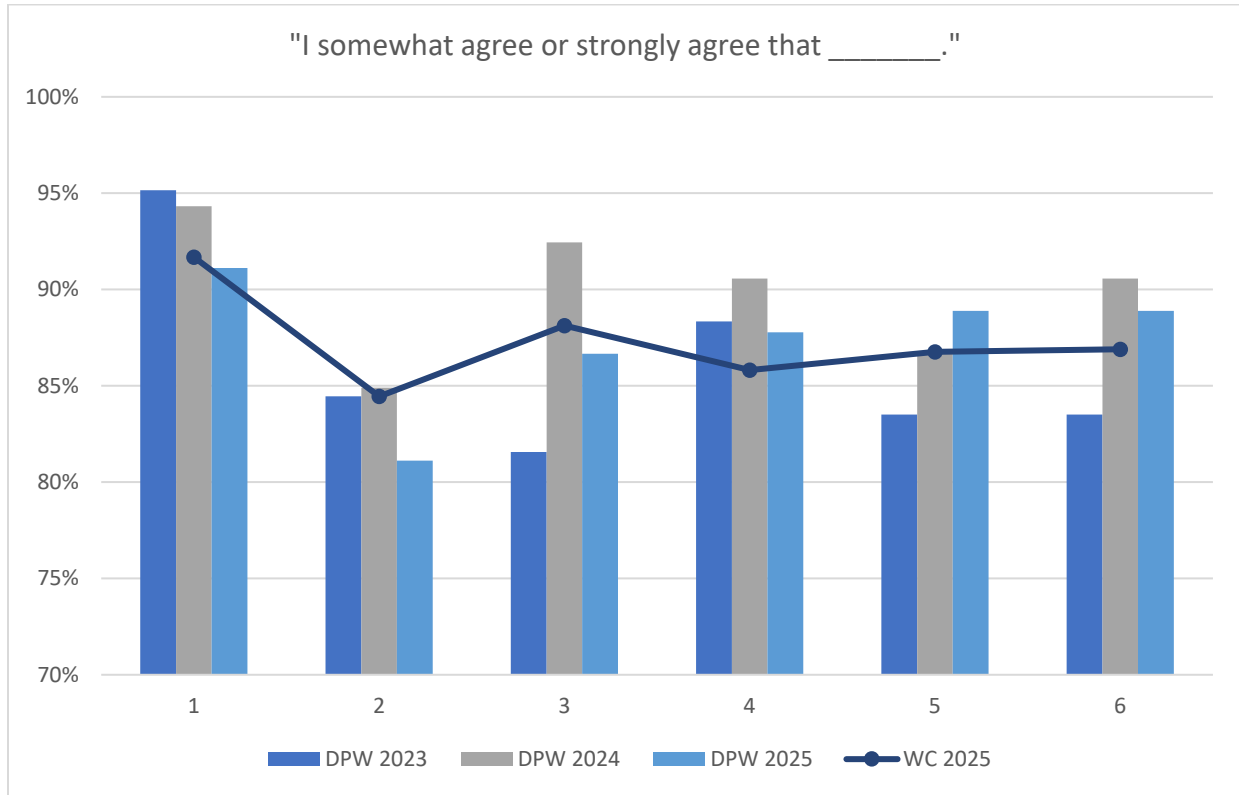
Appendix B

**Waukesha County Employee Survey – DPW Results continued**



Appendix B

**Waukesha County Employee Survey – DPW Results continued**



1. I understand how my work and assigned goals directly contribute to the overall success of the County in meeting its key strategic priorities.
2. Information and knowledge are shared openly within my department.
3. During my annual performance evaluation with my direct supervisor, I discussed my training needs and opportunities for professional development.
4. I understand that I can be recognized for extra effort while demonstrating the County's Standards of Service Excellence.
5. My supervisor/manager frequently asks my opinion on how to do things better.
6. I feel empowered by my supervisor/manager to make process improvement changes.