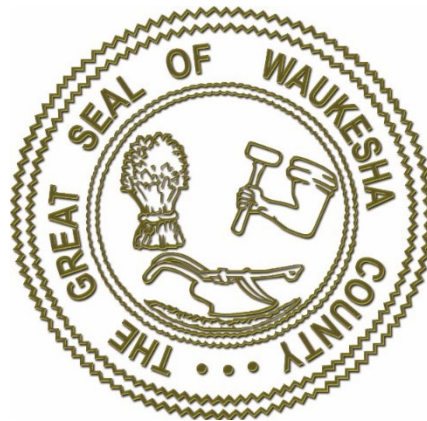


Waukesha County Department of Emergency Preparedness

Strategic Plan

2026 - 2028



“Our vision aims to strengthen the impact we make in public safety - today, tomorrow and into the future. Through this strategic plan, we set priorities and align resources that turn that vision to action – improving the delivery of emergency services to the Waukesha County community.”

-Gail Goodchild
Emergency Preparedness Director



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Reader's Guide: How to Read the Strategic Plan

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Thanks for reading Waukesha County Department of Emergency Preparedness' 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 **specific**, **measurable**, **attainable**, **realistic**, and **time-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?

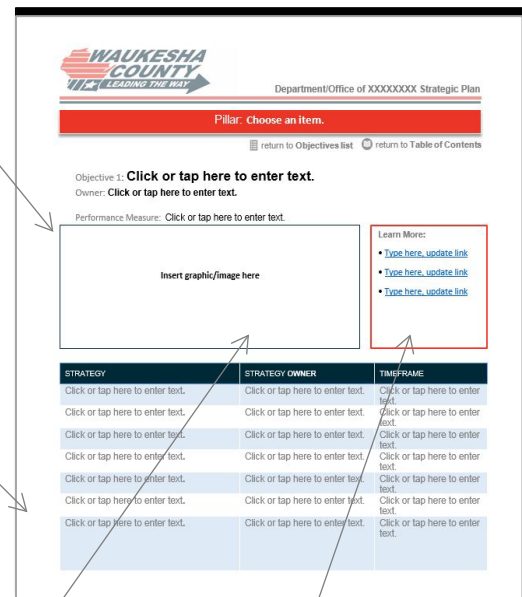
A company that sells fruit snacks may set an objective to "increase sales." One of their strategies is to pioneer new points of sale beyond supermarkets and vending machines, like commercial air travel, pizza delivery, and pro sporting events.

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.



Learn More:

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

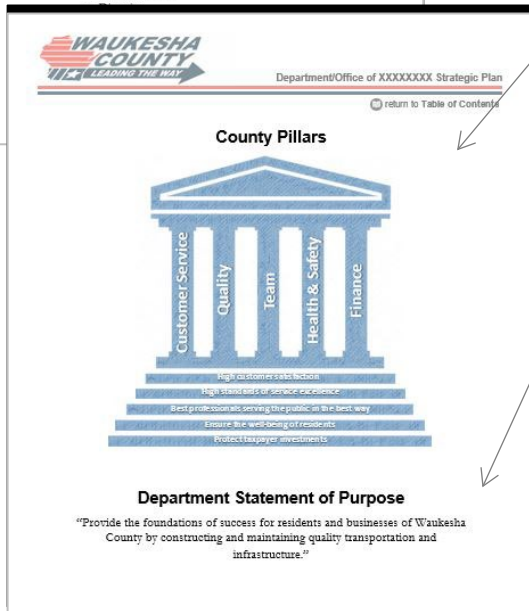
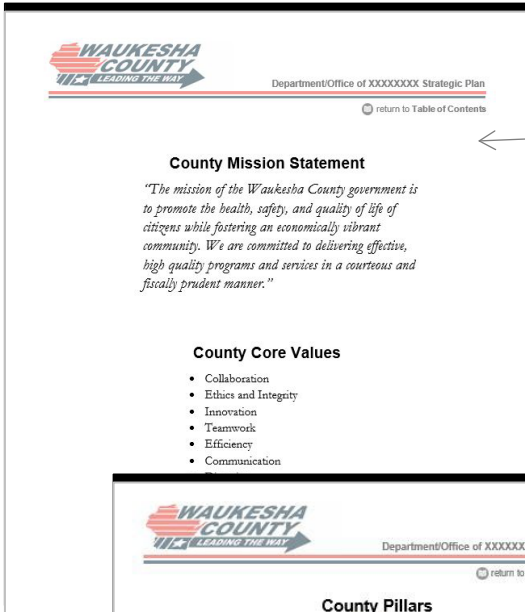
Reader's Guide Continued

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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.

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.”

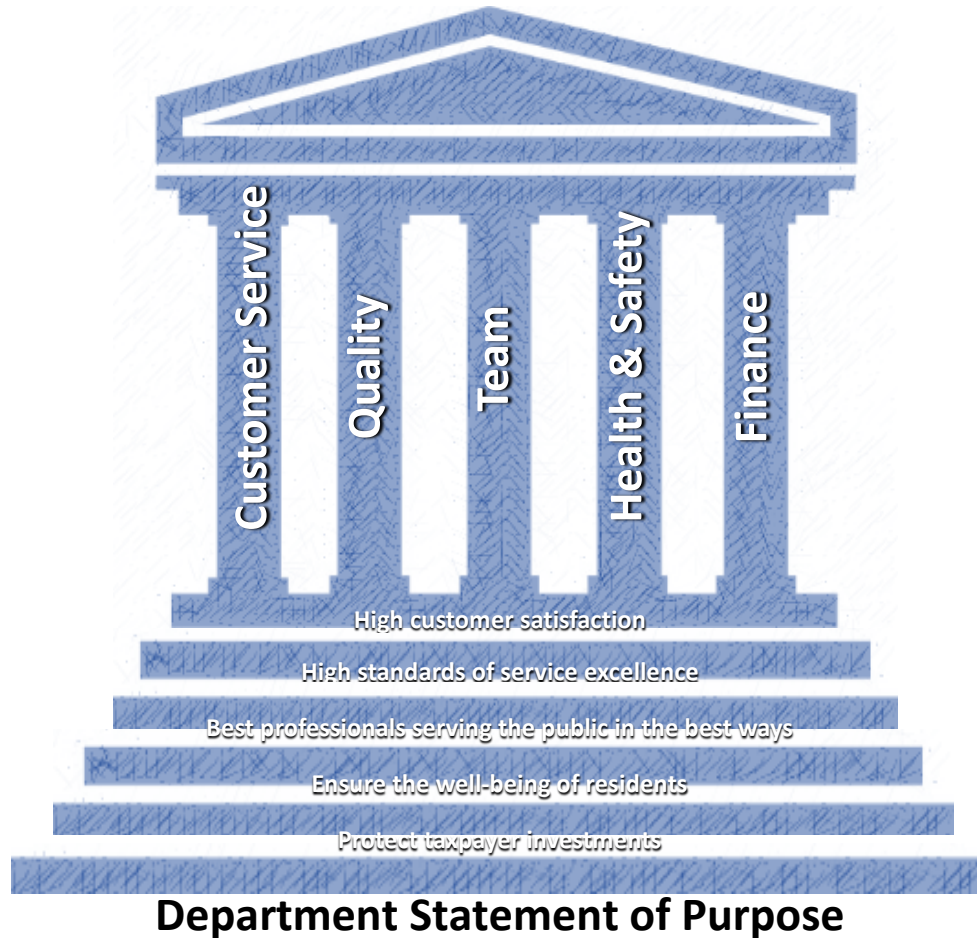
County Standards of Service Excellence

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

Executive Summary: County Pillars & Statement of Purpose

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County Pillars



Executive Summary: Overview & Strategic Objectives

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“Our purpose is to strengthen public safety, emergency response and community resilience by delivering exceptional communication systems and emergency management services.”

Department of Emergency Preparedness Strategic Objectives at a glance:

- Objective 1:** Modernize processes with technology and AI to reduce administrative burden, improve accuracy and responsiveness, exceed national call-taking standards, and redirect staff capacity toward mission-critical priorities by December 2026.

- Objective 2:** Refine and expand the organization’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to strengthen risk mitigation, ensure comprehensive preparedness and resilience, and sustain the delivery of essential services during and after disruptive events by December 2027.

- Objective 3:** Strengthen workforce stability by investing in hiring, development, leadership, wellness, and scheduling to reduce turnover and support a skilled, resilient team by December 2026.

- Objective 4:** Foster a supportive, high-trust workplace that strengthens teamwork, reduces burnout, and helps employees bring their best to every shift by December 2026.

- Objective 5:** Strengthen preparedness by expanding partnerships and leveraging innovation to maintain capabilities by December 2027.

- Objective 6:** Update and refresh countywide trunked radio system infrastructure by year end 2028 to improve reliability and performance, increase capacity, and access new features and capabilities.

County Pillar: Quality

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

Objective 1: Modernize processes with technology and AI to reduce administrative burden, improve accuracy and responsiveness, exceed national call-taking standards, and redirect staff capacity toward mission-critical priorities throughout performance period.

Owner: Director, Public Safety Systems Manager, WCC Operations Manager, EM Coordinator

Performance Measure: Track reductions in administrative workload, improvements in call-taking and processing performance, improvements in quality-assurance scores, and measurable increases in operational efficiency resulting from technology and AI adoption.

Strategy: Modernize key administrative and operational processes, reducing barriers and freeing staff time for higher-value work. By leveraging emerging technology and AI, the organization can improve accuracy, consistency, and responsiveness in day-to-day operations. These efficiencies support exceeding national standards for call taking, call processing, and improving upon quality assurance scores. Over time, the resulting performance gains help the organization better align its resources with strategic priorities and mission-critical activities.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Completion
Implement ASAP to PSAP.	Automated, rapid transfer of incident information from alarm monitoring companies or automated systems directly to the PSAP. This implementation streamlines data entry by fast, secure, and electron communication.	PSSA and WCC Operations Manager	December 2026
Continue to further develop Aurelian AI assisted call handling solution, to include the implementation of a CAD interface.	Enhance and expand the Aurelian AI system improving caller intent detection, faster information extraction, better prompts and interrogations while seamlessly integrating with CAD.	PSSA and WCC Operations Manager	December 2026
Implement advanced call handling solution.	A modernized system that uses NG911 features such as real-time location, multimedia intake, intelligent routing, automated CAD transfer as well as decision-support tools.	Public Safety Systems Administrator, IT PM, WCC Operations Manager	May 2028
Deploy PowerDMS to improve SOP training and management.	Centralize, update, distribute, and track SOPs, ensuring staff receive the latest policies, information,	WCC Supervisors	September 2026

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Completion
Develop and implement Workday invoicing Solution.	Streamline invoice process by creating and configuring how invoices are generated, approved, tracked and integrated with financial systems.	EM (with DOA-Accounting support)	December 2026
Convert division file sharing to SharePoint.	Migrate the division’s existing shared files and folders into SharePoint so teams can access documents in a centralized, secure, cloud-based platform.	EM (with DOA-IT support as needed)	January 2027
Develop and implement web-based EM service request solution.	Create and deploy an online platform to submit, track, and manage service requests digitally to improve visibility and reduce manual processes.	EM (with DOA-IT support)	September 2027
Replace cache radios in advance of countywide 2028 TDMA WiPSN update.	Replace cache radios to support the new TDMA WiPSN to ensure all radios remain compatible and fully functional when the county transitions.	EM (with Radio Services support for guidance + provisioning)	January 2028

County Pillar: Health & Safety

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

Objective 2: Refine and expand the organization’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to strengthen risk mitigation, ensure comprehensive preparedness and resilience, and sustain the delivery of essential services during and after disruptive events.

Owner: Director, WCC Operations Manager, Public Safety Systems Manager, EM Coordinator

Performance Measure: Completion of comprehensive COOP plan, compliance in executing COOP operations and implementation of security improvements.

Strategy:

Strengthens WCC’s ability to maintain critical public safety communications during disruptions, protecting continuity of service for the agencies and communities we support. By refining and expanding the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), the organization can better anticipate risks, clarify roles, and formalize procedures for maintaining operations under adverse conditions. A more comprehensive COOP enhances resilience to events such as technology failures, facility issues, or staffing shortages, reducing the likelihood and duration of service interruptions. Over time, this preparedness supports confidence among partner agencies, reinforces public trust, and safeguards the organization’s capacity to fulfill its mission in emergencies.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Completion
Prepare business continuity plan, create playbooks and train Leadership Team.	Develop a comprehensive COOP and develop scenario-specific playbooks. Train leaders to understand and execute COOP through guided instruction, scenario-based exercises, and communication practice.	Director, WCC Operations Manager, Public Safety Systems Manager	March 2027
Conduct unannounced drills.	Conduct emergency exercises without prior notice, allowing teams to demonstrate readiness, evaluate real-time responses, and identify gaps in procedures.	WCC Operations Manager, Public Safety Systems Manager	3 times annually through December 2028
Implement security improvements as recommended by CISA based on DHS standards.	Apply cybersecurity and physical security enhancements that align with DHS standards including but not limited to strengthening access controls, updating policies, and addressing identified vulnerabilities.	Director, WCC Operations Manager, EM Coordinator, Public Safety Systems Manager	December 2027

County Pillar: Team

 Return to Strategic Objectives

Objective 3: Strengthen employee retention to ensure a stable, skilled, and engaged workforce that is best positioned to drive the organization’s mission.

Owner: Director, Public Safety Systems Manager, WCC Operations Manager, EM Coordinator

Performance Measure: Reduction of regrettable turnover, higher employee satisfaction and engagement survey results, and greater workforce stability.

Strategy: This objective recognizes that retaining a stable, skilled, and experienced workforce is essential to reliably delivering high-quality public safety communications. By investing in our hiring process, training and development, leadership growth, wellness, and thoughtful scheduling practices, WCC supports employees’ professional growth and well-being, helping to reduce regrettable turnover. These efforts help preserve institutional knowledge and maintain team cohesion in a complex, high-stress operating environment. Over time, stronger retention ensures WCC remains well-staffed and prepared to meet its mission and the evolving needs of the agencies and communities it serves.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Completion
Provide professional/leadership development opportunities to staff.	Offer structured training opportunities, coaching, and growth experience to support long-term career development and retention.	WCC Operations Manager	Ongoing
Continue relationship with First Responder Psychological Services.	Maintain the organization’s ongoing partnership with FRPS to ensure staff have continued access to specialized mental health support and wellness resources.	WCC Operations Manager	Ongoing
Reestablish Peer Support Team.	Rebuild and organize trained employee to provide confidential peer-to-peer support, guidance, and resources.	WCC Supervisor and Dispatch Lead	December 2026
Explore and implement alternative options for mental health services.	Continue to assess available and meaningful mental health services proven successful in a dispatch environment.	Director and WCC Operations Manager	Ongoing
Evaluate staffing numbers and schedule to allow the use of earned benefit time, avoid staff burnout and other negative effects on personnel.	Assess impacts of programmatic changes on staffing needs due to call volume. Prioritize staff utilization of benefit time and un-patching as needed.	WCC Leadership Team	Annual

County Pillar: Team

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

Objective 4: Foster a healthy, inclusive workplace environment that consistently reflects and reinforces the organization’s values in how people work, interact, and are supported throughout performance period.

Owner: WCC Leadership Team and Dispatch Leads

Performance Measure: Tracked improvements in employee well-being, reductions in burnout indicators, and increases in trust, teamwork, and overall workplace satisfaction as the culture strengthens.

Strategy: This objective reflects WCC’s commitment to creating a workplace environment where employees feel valued, respected, and supported in the demanding work of public safety communications. A stronger culture of trust, open communication, and mutual accountability helps employees navigate stress, work effectively as a team, and bring their best to every shift. A positive environment also supports wellness and reduces burnout, which in turn helps sustain both employee well-being and high-quality performance.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Completion
Develop accountability culture to include feedback acceptance and encouraging a growth mindset.	Promote an environment where staff take responsibility for their actions, openly receive and apply constructive feedback, and embrace continuous learning and improvement, making an IMPACT part of everyday work.	WCC Leadership Team	Ongoing
Create and provide opportunities for staff engagement.	Develop and promote activities, team meetings, and communicate encouraging employees to participate, share ideas, collaborate and build connection to the organization.	WCC Leadership Team	Ongoing
Establish awards committee and annual recognition ceremony.	Develop a dedicated group responsible for selecting award categories and organizing a yearly recognition ceremony.	WCC Supervisor and Dispatch Leads	September 2026
Implement shift meetings and continue all staff meetings.	Establish regular check-ins at the shift level to improve communication and coordination. Continue organization-wide meetings to ensure consistency, transparency, and engagement across all staff.	WCC Leadership Team	Annual
Evaluate and update organizational structure.	Align positions to fulfill roles / responsibilities of leadership staff.	Director, EMC and Operations Manager	January 2028

County Pillar: Quality

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

Objective 5: Refine and implement a structured planning improvement program by the end of 2028, including an annual planning cycle, recurring stakeholder outreach, and a focus on continuous improvement.

Owner: Emergency Management Coordinator

Performance Measure: Increased collaborative partnerships, successful joint preparedness initiatives, and improved continuity of capabilities

Strategy: Due to the limitations of Emergency Management’s staff size, it is crucial to continually seek partnerships with SMEs in other departments and with external partners, including NGOs, to advance preparedness priorities. This in turn improves countywide integration and helps to safeguard against capabilities being impacted by federal grant and administrative changes. This Emergency Management strategic objective emphasizes continuous improvement in efficiency and planning at the division level, and is grounded in the importance of local integration and collaboration. This collaboration is increasingly important due to external uncertainty. The objective aligns with the Standards of Service Excellence: Teamwork/Collaboration, Efficiency/Cost Savings; and County Pillars: Quality, Health & Safety.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Completion
Develop and implement a formal biennial CEMP stakeholder review process.	Formalize the annual Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan review process with ESF Lead Agencies providing review and feedback on plan components at least every other year.	Emergency Management	December 2026
Develop and implement a strategic annual Integrated Preparedness Planning process.	Restructure the Integrated Preparedness Planning process to incorporate a formal timeline with performance benchmarks and a more robust stakeholder input and feedback collection component.	Emergency Management	December 2027

County Pillar: Health and Safety

 [Return to Strategic Objectives](#)

Objective 6: Update and refresh countywide trunked system infrastructure by year end 2028 to improve reliability and performance, increase capacity, and access new features and capabilities.


Performance Measure: Completion of radio system upgrade to include installation of all hardware and software to a state of readiness for cutover in 2029. This project improves interoperability, increases capacity and security of the system.

Strategy: Continue to coordinate with vendor to define scope of project detailing required system upgrades to include an updated traffic study evaluating capacity needs. Establish radio workgroup coordinating with subscribers to create an opportunity to purchase equipment at a discounted rate.

Note: These infrastructure related tasks will run concurrently with subscriber equipment selection, purchase, programming and deployment tasks.

Strategy	Strategy Details	Owner	Completion
Outreach to subscribers	Initiate outreach to inform subscribers of their responsibilities, what to expect, and improvements to be realized with the system upgrade.	DEP/WCRS with RAC support	December 2026
Determining infrastructure scale and configuration	Determine infrastructure scale and configuration (e.g. TDMA and encryption deployment), and the extent to which this will drive subscriber hardware needs.	DEP/WCRS with LE and FD/EMS agency support	December 2026
System finalization	Finalize system design and configuration. Determine deployment and cutover plan.	DEP/WCRS with vendor support	July 2027
Finalize contract(s)	Negotiate contract, Acceptance Test Plan, any required WiPSN contract modifications, delivery, schedule.	DEP/WCRS, Purchasing, Corporation Counsel, vendor	December 2027
Delivery and deployment	Delivery of equipment, deployment and installation at sites, ATP grid tests.	DEP/WCRS, vendor	December 2028

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.

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.

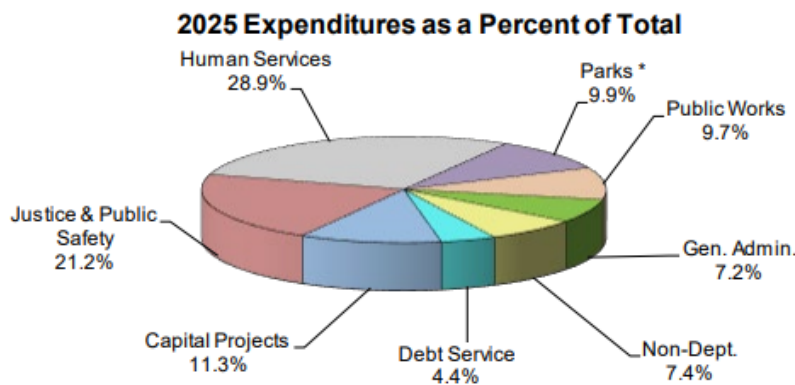
Household/Family

- In 2024 there were 167,392 households in Waukesha County. The number is expected to increase about 3% every 5 years. The average persons 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 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



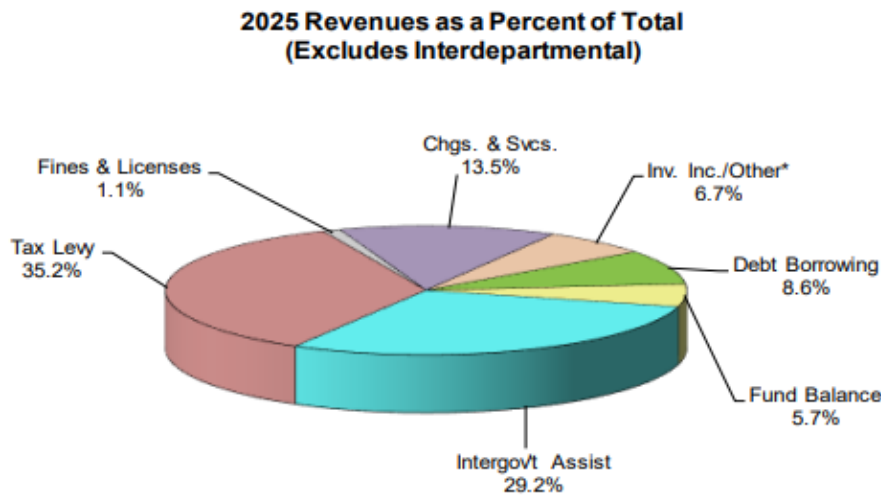
* Includes Parks, Environment, Education and Land Use

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.

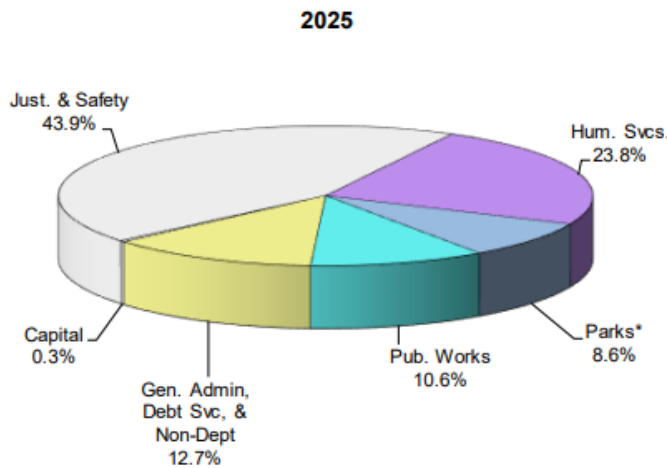
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding will officially end on December 31, 2026, eliminating the county’s allocation from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program.

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 of 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.

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)

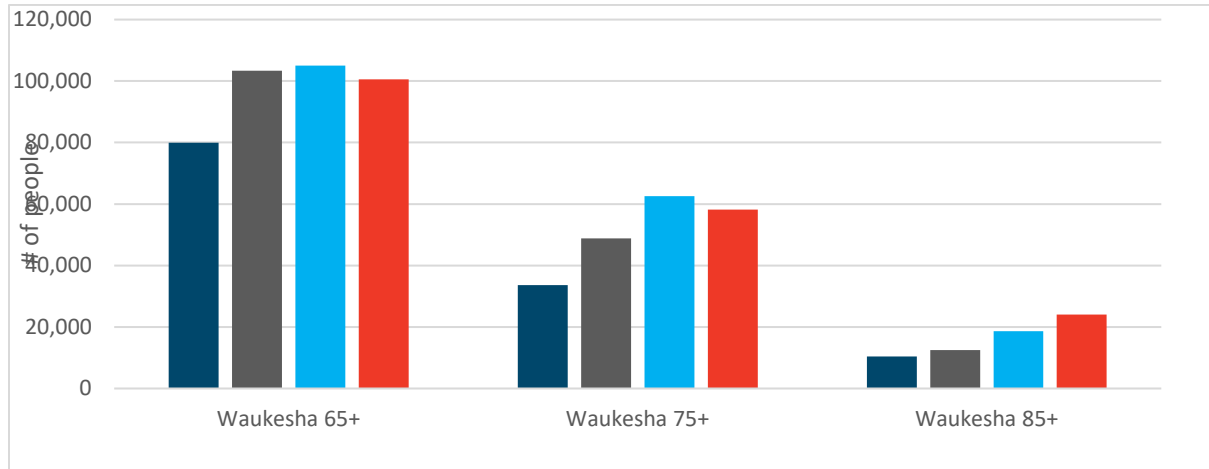
Healthy Aging: An Emerging Priority

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 supports.

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.

In the 911 dispatch environment, mental health issues create unique and additional difficulties for both call takers, police/EMS dispatchers, and field responders.

Starting January 1st, 2025, until October 11th, 2025, WCC took 476 calls involving mental health concerns that rose to the level of utilizing the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) protocol specific for calls involving mental health concerns that may require an EMS response directly at dispatch, however not all calls involving mental health rise to this level.

Calls for service involving individuals with mental health issues, or those in direct mental health crisis, in which field responders have direct contact with, are proportionately more dangerous than dealing with individuals without mental health issues or those in direct mental health crisis.

While not physically present with a caller with a mental health issue, or in direct mental health crisis, telecommunicators also face additional challenges. Mission critical factors like the true location of the emergency, or caller, along with the true nature of the issue at hand, can be incredibly difficult to ascertain from a caller that is either unable or not willing to provide the information requested. The nature of these calls can also lead to an increased amount of stress and/or vicarious trauma to telecommunicators, at a rate higher than a standard call for service. For example, in 2024, a telecommunicator took a call from a caller in crisis that advised they had ingested chemicals with the intention of suicide, and due to the safety issues inherent with that, fire staged, and police did not make immediate contact until additional units arrived on scene, so the call taker could not do much beyond updating the notes of the call while the caller succumbed to the lethality of what they ingested.

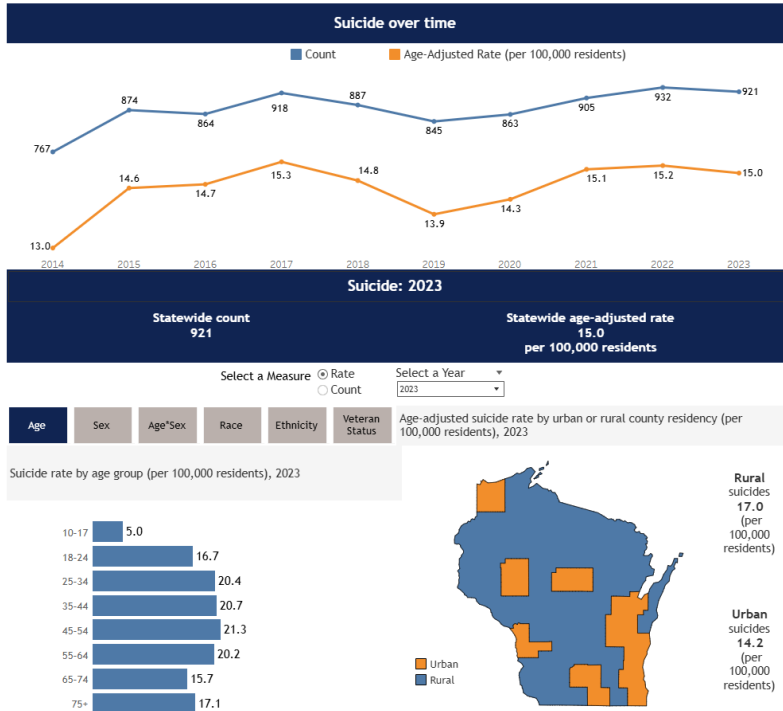
A situation like what is described above, is even more reason for a focus on integrating mental health professionals via the embedded crisis program as well as a focus on mental health of telecommunicators, and easy access to resources such as peer support, EAP, and contracted services like First Responder Psychological Services.

According to data collected for US Bill H.R. 2502, which calls for the amendment of " Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to authorize a grant program for law enforcement agencies and corrections agencies to obtain behavioral health crisis response training for law enforcement officers and corrections officers, and for other purposes", as many as 1 in every 10 calls for police response involve a person suffering from a mental illness, 1 in every 4 people killed by police suffer from a mental health problem, and 1 in 3 people transported to a hospital emergency room for psychiatric reasons are taken by the police (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2502/text>).

A significant challenge in the 911 environment, especially for younger generations going through mental health crisis, is the utilization of social media, which can then trigger friends, family, or others, to call in to report the issue, often with no information on the location of the person in question. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, even Fortnite and Roblox are platforms in which people can communicate their mental health issues and/or thoughts of self-harm or suicide. Often this requires a tremendous amount

of effort to gather further information that may lead to finding information ‘in-house’, using LEO specific information channels, 3rd party programs, or exigent circumstance pings, in order to determine where help needs to be sent.

Data from DHS Wisconsin for the year 2023 shows suicide from ages as young as 10 years old, with an even spread across almost each age bracket:



<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/prevent-suicide/data.htm>

WCC is somewhat unique in the country, however, as one of a small number of PSAPs that utilize embedded’ crisis workers from Waukesha County Mental Health/Crisis that work directly alongside 911 call takers and dispatchers. This grant funded program currently includes two clinicians that share duties of coverage 5 days a week, 10am to 5pm. While the program is still in its pilot stage, an end goal is to create a consistent workflow to identify and divert calls for service which currently involves a law enforcement response to instead be handled directly by a Waukesha County Mental Health/Crisis worker in the field. By doing so, it addresses the resource allocation of field responders such as Police or FIRE/EMS, that if available, may be better suited for different calls for service.

Another added benefit of the embedded crisis workers is their ability to not only actively monitor current calls and calls for service at WCC, but they are also able to proactively reach out to our field responders with valuable information on known subjects. Even more, should a WCC call taker be on the line with a 1st party caller in crisis, or a 2nd or 3rd party looking for resources, the WCC call taker can bring the embedded crisis worker into the call in real-time to provide assistance and information. Additional plans and workflows are being refined to utilize 211 and 988 when there is no embedded crisis workers present.

IAED Protocol 41 – “Caller in Crisis” directly addresses instances where a caller is reporting a mental health concern and provides clear delineation, per the protocol, to determine a response that includes solely crisis workers, or crisis workers in conjunction with responders.

Work continues between WCC and HHS/Mental Health/Embedded Crisis to refine this process due to the impact of these types of calls to WCC operations, a strong forward focus.

As stated, not all 1st party callers with mental health concerns rise to the level of needing EMS. Some create calls for service that may include a LEO to place a call back to the initial caller to discuss their concern (and not necessitating a physical response by the responder to a specific location).

Some callers call frequently and are known to WCC personnel both by their name and the issues they report. One individual, who commonly calls in to report either disproven or unfounded claims, called 182 times in a 10-month period in 2025. While every caller concern must be assumed real until proven otherwise, assuming an average call length of 3 minutes per each of those 182 calls, that equals 9.1 hours spent by WCC on one specific individual in Waukesha County with mental health concerns and for unfounded claims. Unfortunately, instances like these are not unique.

As stated, however, it is the duty of WCC personnel to assume all information is valid until proven otherwise, and to treat callers with mental health concerns, or those in direct crisis, with the same care, compassion, and sense of urgency to provide the appropriate PD and/or FIRE/EMS response as any other callers.

Substance Use: A Complex and Evolving Landscape

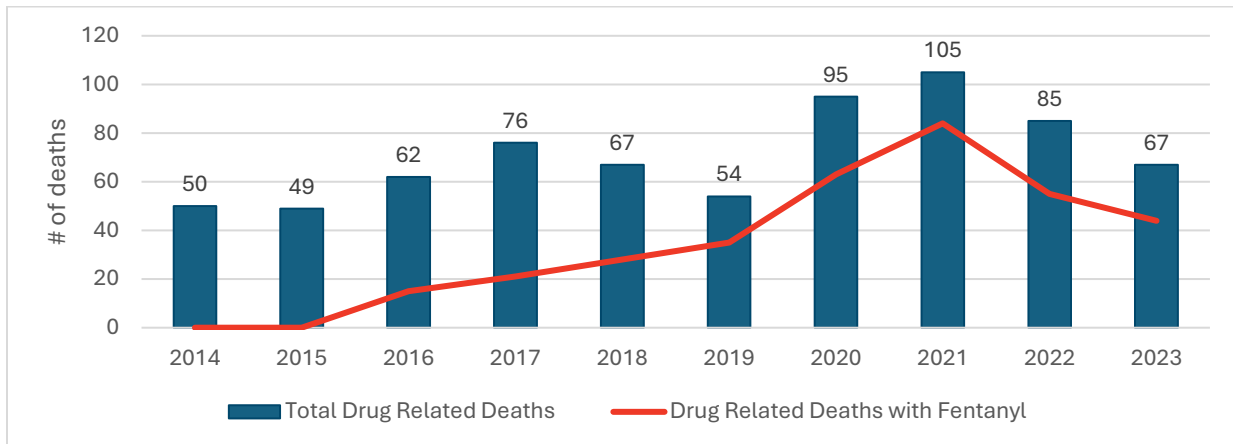
Substance use in Waukesha County is a complex and evolving public health issue. The Community Health Improvement Plan prioritizes opioids, particularly fentanyl, due to their immediate lethality and significant local impact.

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)

From January 1st, 2025, until October 11th, 2025, WCC took 227 calls processed as an “Overdose”, requiring both a PD and FIRE/EMS response. Of those 227, only 25 included a caller directly advising the overdose because of a “narcotic”, and only 7 included a caller directly advising the possible presence of Fentanyl. At the dispatch level, no data exists showing the true number of these 227 calls that accurately identify use of an opioid, which is potentially a direct result of the stigma associated with opioids.

Unfortunately, there are many times where callers report a subject that is not conscious and not breathing but either withhold, deny, or outright lie about the involvement of drugs/narcotics, so the above numbers are very likely an underreporting of true calls involving overdose and are instead processed as a “Sudden Cardiac or Respiratory Arrest”. Callers can often be scared to advise or “admit” to drug use which led to a call that may be an overdose, and, afraid of repercussions, therefore leaving out valuable information for responders enroute.

One redeeming factor, however, is that the presence of the opioid epidemic gives reason for our responders to utilize Narcan/Naloxone in the presence of what could be an overdose and empowers some callers to be very clear that Narcan/Naloxone is needed.

WCC, in utilizing the IAED protocol specific to overdose, has verbatim instructions on how to aid callers in the use of Narcan/Naloxone in many of its different forms, allowing for the administration of that to occur prior to responders arriving on scene. Because of the inherent danger involved with an overdose, calls require a significant PD and FIRE/EMS response.

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.

In the period of January 1st, 2025, through October 11th, 2025, dispatch data shows our responders processed an astounding 733 OAWI (Operating Auto While Intoxicated) calls. This number includes arrests for suspicion of OAWI, however, and does not relate to those found guilty in a court of law for the charge.

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 regulations 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	Accidents (unintentional injuries)	1009	8.5%	Includes Falls (57%) and Accidental Drug Overdoses (23%)
5	Covid-19	661	5.6%	
→ 6	Cerebrovascular diseases	648	5.4%	
7	Alzheimer's disease	538	4.5%	
8	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	374	3.1%	
→ 9	Diabetes mellitus	249	2.1%	
10	Parkinson's disease	197	1.7%	
→ 11	Chronic liver disease & cirrhosis	172	1.4%	Includes Alcoholic Liver Disease (75%)
12	Nutritional deficiencies	155	1.3%	
13	Intentional self-harm (suicide)	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.

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.

Politics Specific to DEP

An incoming Sheriff may change their departmental operations, including how calls are processed and units are dispatched. If changes are made, WCC procedures related to the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department may need to be updated and staff trained.

Gubernatorial Election

There is increased uncertainty with incumbent Governor Evers not seeking a third term and will be the first open seat election since 2010 when Republican Scott Walker won the election. Candidates on all sides of the political spectrum have emerged, but there are not as of yet any identified front runners.

Public safety continues to be a forward-facing issue for the election, so there is potential for sweeping changes to how things like crime, policing, and gun violence will be addressed by the Wisconsin Executive Branch.

Uncertainties of FEMA's Future and Emergency Management Funding

President Trump states he wants individual states to take on more responsibility for responding to and preparing for extreme weather and disasters. FEMA currently works with individual state governments.

It is important to note that the severe flooding experienced in Southeast Wisconsin in August of 2025 led to FEMA providing Individual Assistance of over \$15 million to flood survivors in Waukesha County. How individual disaster assistance would be made available to community members in the event of FEMA's dissolution, should it occur, is unknown. (

While only Congress can fully eliminate FEMA, the Executive Branch can act on its own to restructure or reduce the size of the agency. A current bi-partisan bill, "Fixing Emergency Management for Americans (FEMA) Act of 2025", has been proposed and includes, among other things, making FEMA a cabinet-level agency once again and directly accountable to the President (<https://transportation.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=408626>).

The restructuring of FEMA and the responsibilities assigned to the organization may have a direct impact on local emergency management programs particularly as it relates to disaster response. Federal grants tied to emergency management such as the Emergency Management Performance Grant may also be impacted as a result. We have seen other FEMA grant programs which supported local emergency preparedness efforts, such as the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant, abruptly discontinued, as well as terms for eligibility modified for existing grants by the current administration.

Political Unrest & ICE

ICE arrests in 2025 are up 22% over last year for the same time period in Wisconsin, however this is less than the overall national average. (<https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2025/09/22/wisconsin-ice-arrests-up-20-increase-largely-from-people-charged-but-not-convicted-of-crimes/>).

President Trump's focus on illegal immigration and deportation has resulted in ICE and National Guard deployments in several major cities throughout the US. These actions invoke emotional responses which have led to civil unrest in these cities. Though Southeast Wisconsin has not been impacted yet, the potential exists for these operations to take place locally. Widespread civil unrest would stress DEP resources.

ECONOMICS

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).

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

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

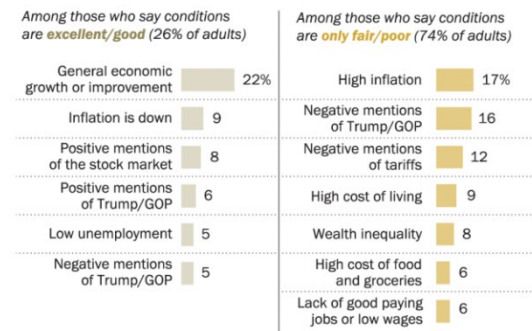
- 53% are looking for industry-specific skilled labor
 - 32% are looking for marketing/sales
 - 30% are looking for administrative
 - 26% are looking for engineering
 - 13% are looking for business services (Finance/Legal/HR)
- Top skills organizations are looking to develop in employees include project 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

WCC Specific

With Pew Research showing a recent poll that 74% of polled adults view the current economy as fair to poor (26% viewed it as good to excellent), there are growing concerns on how financial issues for individuals can correlate to increased crime and theft, leading to additional calls into WCC as well as calls for service for our agency partners (<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/10/03/most-americans-continue-to-rate-the-us-economy-negatively-as-partisan-gap-widens/>).

What are the reasons Americans cite for their views of national economic conditions?

Why did you rate national economic conditions the way you did? (%) [open-end]



Note: Researchers coded up to three response options. Only response options that made up to 5% or more of responses are shown here. Refer to topline for full question wording and response list.

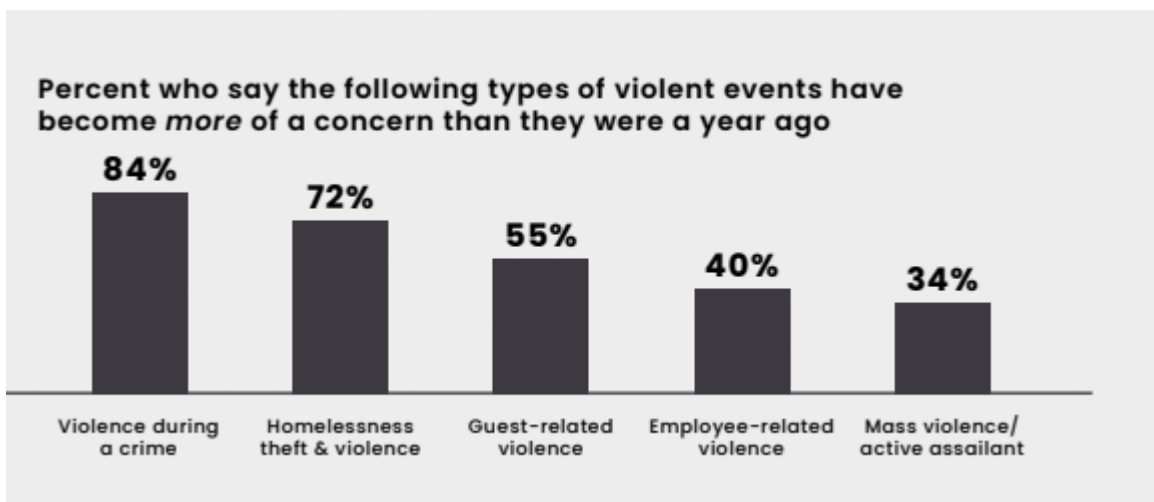
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 22-28, 2025.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Additionally, industry reports show that organized retail theft spikes during times of economic uncertainty. While a good portion of our county is rural, areas like the City of Oconomowoc, downtown City of Delafield, Pewaukee, Sussex, Waukesha, Menomonee Falls, City and Town of Brookfield, and the City of New Berlin, all have fairly dense commercial areas including retail stores where this could potentially lead to an increase in calls for service for retail thefts (<https://nrf.com/research/the-impact-of-retail-theft-violence-2024>).

According to the National Retail Federation (NRF), retailers reported a 93% increase in the average number of shoplifting incidents per year in 2023 versus 2019 (https://297051953189d612da9e-1e2a7931911c2abaf913026fb7c64860.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/Research/Retail%20Theft%20%26%20Violence/NRF_ImpactofRetailTheftViolence_2024.pdf).

In addition to potential additional calls for service, data from the NRF suggests that “in addition to increased frequency in shoplifting events and the change in the types of shoplifting, retailers are also dealing with growing threats of violence, with 73% of those surveyed saying that shoplifters are exhibiting more violence and aggression than they were a year ago and 84% say that violence during a crime has become more of a concern.



https://297051953189d612da9e-1e2a7931911c2abaf913026fb7c64860.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/Research/Retail%20Theft%20%26%20Violence/NRF_ImpactofRetailTheftViolence_2024.pdf

Combined with potential for increased retail theft, the potential for increased officer safety concerns means not only the potential for more calls for service, but more resources used per call for service when the suspect(s) are still on scene. This may have a cascading effect of more calls for service pending, which could lead to lower caller satisfaction as a result of officers dealing with an increase of retail thefts.

Social

For DEP, primarily WCC and EM, community engagement is important. WCC, EM, and many of our agency partners utilize social media not only to interact with customers, but to share important and timely information with the community.

WCC's social media team posts impactful messaging to garner community engagement which has led to a growing following over the past few years. Currently, WCC Facebook has 6.4K followers while LinkedIn has 149 followers (12.6% engagement rate) and continues to grow.

Continuing to foster this type of engagement can help not only educate our community, but foster enhanced trust in, and visibility of, WCC telecommunicators and 911.

With upcoming changes to WCC, such as an AI-assisted call handling solution for non-emergency calls (Aurelian), WCC can "soft launch" these changes to the public prior to their implementation, with the hopes of getting ahead of concerns and misconceptions. Strong messaging, including the "why" behind this force multiplier of AI, can also assist in community buy-in rather than trepidation or push-back.

Technology

The technology used 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.

Technology Specific to DEP

With the emergence of new technologies specific to 911, WCC anticipates significant changes over the period of the upcoming Strategic Plan 2026-2028 timeline.

At the forefront of emerging technology specific to operations at WCC is an AI software solution to handle non-emergency calls for service called Aurelian (<https://www.aurelian.com/>). Aurelian offers a catered solution specific to WCC’s nature/event types and develops specific paths in order to both gather from, and provide data to, those who call in on our non-emergency lines. Aurelian has been implemented in another county PSAP in Wisconsin, where they estimate it has provided up to 60% reduction in human “hands on” call processing. As of October 2025, WCC is still working with Aurelian to finalize the build out of the software prior to Aurelian providing direct, hands-on training to WCC staff before implementation.

Once fully implemented, Aurelian may allow for opportunities to re-focus duties and efforts of telecommunicators to be more readily available for true “emergency”/911 calls, and/or allow for looking at potential re-organization of functions, duties, or organizational chart in the department.

Next Gen 911/ESInet

Next Gen 911 (also known as NG911), is an umbrella term for emerging technology available to be utilized beyond the antiquated transmission of data via traditional phone lines and cellular towers. Through increased bandwidth, there is the ability for a PSAP to receive data through video, real time text (RTT) messages, photos, and other multimedia via the ESInet (Emergency Services Internet Protocol (<https://nga911.com/blogs/post/ng911-esinet-comprehensive-introduction>)).

NENA (National Emergency Number Association) played a key part in the standards upon which ESInet was developed with a consideration for scalability, reliability, security, failover/redundancy, interoperability, compliance with standards, flexibility, and the medium in which data is transferred, such as Fiber, LTE, Cellular, etc.

Another benefit of ESInet is the capability of geo-spatial call routing for 911 calls/texts. Rather than utilizing cellular towers, ESInet utilizes an IP transport, pulling from the “internet of things”, similar to apps like UBER and POKEMON GO. Whereas PHASE 2 cellular data from 911 calls/texts can provide a fairly small radius for a call location, IP based information is much more accurate and includes z-axis data to show the caller’s elevation or potential location within a multistory building

As each PSAP in the county migrates onto our individual “ESInets”, an end goal will be for each individual PSAP to receive their own native cellular calls. In the recent past, WCC, being the primary PSAP in the county, received all wireless 911 calls and therefore had to transfer calls meant for the Village of Elm Grove, City of Muskego, Town and Village of Mukwonago (PD only), and City of Waukesha.

Theoretically, upon completion of all “ESInets” where those municipalities are receiving all of their own native calls, it will fundamentally reduce the number of 911 calls received by WCC, allowing WCC to

focus on the calls we have jurisdiction over as well as eliminating any potential delays caused by needing to transfer a call for service to a secondary PSAP.

Video to 911

A specific matter of note that comes with Next Gen 911/ESInet capabilities is the possibility for “video to 911”. There are currently solutions available that provide video from the 911 caller to the dispatch center. WCC does not currently receive any data other than voice calls and text messages from 911 callers through our phone system.

Some listed benefits of Video to 911 are potentially improved situational awareness, faster and more efficient decision making and/or resource allocation, and verification of “facts” rather than going off the word of the caller(s).

The flipside is that with video to 911 being new, data is limited on the potential negative impacts it can have on telecommunicators, such as increased vicarious trauma i.e.: “seeing it” versus just hearing about it. With mental health and well-being a focus of the organization (and 911 as a whole), the lack of data and established industry practices create a challenge for WCC to prevent, address, and mitigate those negative effects to mental health and wellbeing. Additional training, policy development and resources would be necessary prior to and during the implementation of video to 911 should WCC move forward with utilizing that technology.

(<https://nga911.com/blogs/post/improving-public-safety-ng911-role-real-time-video-911-emergency-calls#:~:text=to%20the%20scene.-,Advantages%20of%20Real%2DTime%20Video,visible%20condition%20of%20the%20patient>).

The state Senate and Assembly passed Assembly Bill 182 which provides grant funding as part of a pilot program through the WI Dept of Military Affairs for PSAPs to implement real-time video and multimedia communications applications. This bill currently sits on the Governor’s desk for approval.

Cybersecurity Specific to Public Safety

Cybersecurity remains a big focus, with concerns of both domestic and foreign actors potentially utilizing cyber-attacks to disrupt functions of local, state, and federal governments, including but not limited to 911 and other aspects of Public Safety and critical infrastructure.

According to the Institute of Defense and Business, the top 5 cyber threats facing the public sector are State Sponsored Cyberattacks, Ransomware, Phishing, “Hacktivists” (those who hack a computer system as a form of social or political activism), and Improper Usage and/or Internal Attacks.

(<https://www.idb.org/top-5-cyberthreats-facing-the-public-sector/>)

While Next Gen 911 has a multitude of benefits allowing for process improvements, the department of Homeland Security states that due to the required standardized identity management and credentialing across systems can potentially allow attacks to escalate and/or proliferate quickly, as well as allow for new forms of attacks. (<https://www.911.gov/assets/Cyber-Risks-to-Next-Generation-911.pdf>)

Due to this, it is imperative that both at the County level as well as the DEP specific level, that all actors, whether IT professionals or telecommunicators, EM staff, RADIO SERVICES staff, stay current with and utilize best practices including maintaining up to date security protocols to keep all systems safe.

Legal

WCC Specific

One of the biggest legal impacts to WCC operations is case law and the impact it has on how our agency partners respond to and handle calls for services.

A few recent cases of note:

State v. Wiskowski (2024)

Wisconsin Supreme Court limited the duration and scope of traffic stops initiated under the “community caretaker” exception (think a well-being check on a person driving that is pulled over to check on their wellbeing despite not having any traffic violations or criminal concerns).

State v. Blankenship (2024)

Wisconsin Court of Appeals ruling reaffirming the need for a legal basis beyond simple suspicion for administering standardized field sobriety tests.

Barnes v. Felix (2025)

US Supreme Court decision addressing when a police officer’s use of force is an unreasonable seizure under the Fourth Amendment, rejecting the prior doctrine of “moment of threat” (<https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/examining-the-moment-of-threat-doctrine-a-crucial-case-for-law-enforcement/>).

Oconomowoc Area School District v. Cota (2025)

Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that non-criminal municipal citations are considered “arrest records” under the Wisconsin Fair Employment Act (WFEA), with a direct impact on the decisions made by Police Departments on reporting certain information and provides clarity on what information employers can legally consider during the hiring process.

S.725 - Enhancing First Response Act

On an extremely positive note, bi-partisan bill S.725 - Enhancing First Response Act, includes framework for Next Gen 911 infrastructure, and also includes shifting telecommunicators on a federal level from classification of “clerical” to “protected service” (similar to police and fire employees). The bill passed the Senate vote unanimously and is on its way to a vote in the House of Representatives. If it passes there, it will then go onto the President where if it is not vetoed it will become a law (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/725/text>).

This is not only historic for the additional benefits that telecommunicators will receive, but also monumental in 911 telecommunicators receiving the recognition they deserve on a national level. This change may bring recognition to the 911 Telecommunicator as a more formal career path attracting more candidates in the hiring process.

Emergency Management Specific

Waukesha County Emergency Management authorities and responsibilities are governed in part by state law, e.g., Wis. Stats. 323, and federal law, e.g., the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) under SARA Title III. There are no major changes anticipated to the laws and regulations that directly relate to County Emergency Management, however, there remains uncertainty surrounding the aforementioned future of FEMA, related federal funding, and potential changes to federal law that could occur alongside administrative changes.

Environmental

The recent historic flooding in August of 2025 is a clear indicator that environmental and climate have an enormous impact on DEP. During the event, WCC was inundated with a significantly higher number of incoming calls. Many of these calls were critical in nature and potentially fatal, such as vehicles stuck in flood water, which WCC telecommunicators don't handle regularly and which require a significant response in the field. Emergency Management was impacted from the flooding leading to the EOC activated for 21 days (total, not consecutive) as well as hundreds of hours of staff time devoted to response, damage assessment, and recovery coordination.

Talk of "100-year floods" can be misunderstood, with individuals thinking that such historic flooding can only happen every 100 years, however that is incorrect. Per USGS, "Statistical techniques, through a process called frequency analysis, are used to estimate the probability of the occurrence of a given precipitation event. The recurrence interval is based on the probability that the given event will be equaled or exceeded in any given year.

For example, assume there is a 1 in 50 chance that 6.60 inches of rain will fall in a certain area in a 24-hour period during any given year. Thus, a rainfall total of 6.60 inches in a consecutive 24-hour period is said to have a "50-year" recurrence." All to say, just because Waukesha County experienced a "100-year" flood in 2025, statistically we could also experience similar conditions in 2026 (<https://www.usgs.gov/water-science-school/science/100-year-flood>).

Below are stats for a 24-hour period during intense rain and flooding from August 9th through 10th of this year, which were posted to our WCC social media for community awareness.

WAUKESHA COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

DID YOU KNOW?

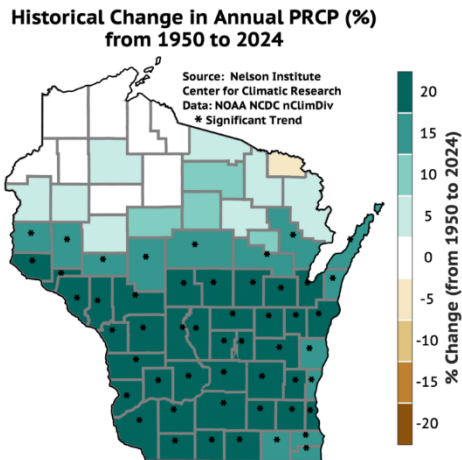
In 24 Hours, we made over 550 calls and answered 1,897 calls!

Burglary Alarms	49	Property Damage Accidents	20
Disabled Vehicles	92	Sinking Vehicles	28
Electrical Hazards	65	Structure Fires	15
Fire Alarms	55	Traffic Hazards	145
Fire Service Calls	216	Unknown / Injury Accidents	12
		Vehicles in the Ditch	15

Our 9-1-1 Dispatchers Are Awesome!

Statistics collected from WICCI, the “Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts” show studies that have findings that predict for the following decades, Wisconsin will be “warmer” and “wetter”, with “average temperatures more like those currently experienced in states hundreds of miles to our south” (<https://wicci.wisc.edu/wisconsin-climate-trends-and-projections/>).

In data for the annual precipitation from 1950 to 2024, Waukesha county is listed as a location with significant increase, in this case of 20%, over that timeframe.



Future projections based on CMIP6 data show that this will most likely continue to trend upwards.

<https://confluence.ecmwf.int/display/CKB/CMIP6%3A+Global+climate+projections#CMIP6:Globalclimateprojections-CMIP6>

Per the USGS, “with increasing global surface temperatures the possibility of more droughts and increased intensity of storms will likely occur. As more water vapor is evaporated into the atmosphere it becomes fuel for more powerful storms to develop” (<https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/how-can-climate-change-affect-natural-disasters>).

Waukesha County’s Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan also identifies flooding as the number one natural hazard in relation to the frequency and level of impact to Waukesha County residents. Projects recommended in the plan could reduce the risks associated with flooding. However, funding cuts at the federal level undermines the ability to maintain such a plan and fund mitigation projects having a direct correlation with the risks and their consequences we see locally.

With severe weather, often in the form of severe thunderstorms, tornados, and/or severe snowstorms having such a large impact on both WCC operations during the storm, as well as EM for response and recovery afterward, early awareness of potentially devastating storms are vital for DEP to properly anticipate, staff accordingly, and be ready to handle both ‘day of’ for WCC and manage the after affects for EM.

WCC Dispatch Specific Information

WCC Telecommunicator Employment – Years of Service

- Median: 3 years
- Mean: 6.85 years
- Mode: 2 years

WCC has worked hard to rebuild staffing after the COVID and post-COVID years of 2020-2023. As a result of significant turnover during that time, and the need to hire those vacancies, half of WCC telecommunicators have less than 3 years of WCC experience. On the opposite end, the 5 most tenured telecommunicators have an average of 22.8 years of experience. As our most experienced and tenured staff eventually make their way toward retirement, it is imperative that WCC work to transition that wealth of knowledge, skills, and abilities to the new generation of dispatchers.

Especially for our more tenured staff who are considered Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) on specific and unique topics, building a more formal Mentor/Mentee program to assure that transition of knowledge is something that should be developed and followed through with.

WCC Dispatch Onboarding, Initial Training, and Training Hour Data for Benchmarks

Due to the amount of knowledge, skills, and abilities required, along with striving for higher standards than average in the industry, initial telecommunicator training is lengthy and time consuming.

Upon hire, new Telecommunicators go through a 3-day orientation focusing on initial HR onboarding, WCC specific onboarding, completing required pre-requisite course work, and a focus on wellness specific to the telecommunicator.

Following this is a 1-week Emergency Medical (EMD) and Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD) training, utilizing the protocols of IAED (International Academy of Emergency Dispatch), with instructors provided by the Academy.

After this required certification, the telecommunicators will take part in a structured, 3-week WCC specific academic classroom, led by a primary instructor from the WCC Training Team. The goal is to provide a solid foundation of geography, CAD, call-taking, 911 technology, and police and fire radio knowledge to set them up for success when they begin their true on-the-job (OJT) training with an assigned trainer. While data is still being collected, recent changes to the lesson plan for the academic classroom are showing positive results of decreasing position sign off time.

It is a common best practice in 911 training programs to implement “benchmarks”. These benchmarks are divided into sections based on expected knowledge and skill level in relationship to total hours the individual has trained. WCC is currently still utilizing benchmark hours from approximately 2016, and since that time, countless changes that could affect these hours have occurred. Starting in 2020 with COVID, challenges, especially staffing, limited WCC’s ability to provide a consistent onboarding experience for new telecommunicators. Some received only orientation and initial EMD/EFD training, some received a partial classroom, and others a mix.

As staffing numbers improved around 2024, WCC has been able to provide a consistent experience of including orientation, EMD/EFD certification, and a full 3-week classroom for 4 groups of newly hired telecommunicators (however only 3 have yet yielded useful data, as our current group has not yet begun their OJT yet). Work is being done to create a robust data sample of hours per sign off per

position(s), including call-taking, first radio position, total training hours, separation to look at those with prior experience versus no experience, etc., to create new benchmark hours. Anticipating success for our 4 newest telecommunicators, there should be plentiful data for 4 hiring groups over 2 years to provide the basis of these new benchmark hours.

Having this data set accomplished a handful of things, including a consistent view of trainee performance. However, it also allows WCC leadership to look ahead to determine when a new hire will be able to “count” toward staffing and/or be fully signed off, which can be helpful in determining the next rotation to be utilized, and when.

Additionally, as new groups of telecommunicators are finding success, we are seeing a slight increase in those stepping up to take on the duties of training. WCC utilizes the NENA CTO model and plans on sending more telecommunicators through this course to provide them necessary knowledge and tools to be successful when training adult learners in the dispatch environment, with hopes to host the 3-day NENA CTO course in the first quarter of 2026.

WCC Dispatch Staffing Levels

As mentioned above, starting in 2020 and the onset of COVID, a multitude of factors (compounded by COVIDs side effect of limiting hiring groups) led to near catastrophic staffing levels. Starting in 2024, we began to see those levels rise again.

For the below, “Fully signed off” means that the telecommunicator has shown proficiency in all disciplines/positions to be worked as a telecommunicator in their daily duties, whereas “certified” means that they are not able to work all disciplines/positions, but they have shown proficiency in at least one position, allowing them to work in the capacity of a telecommunicator without the direct need of a trainer for that position, therefore “counting” toward minimum staffing numbers for their portion of the shift.

2022 -

- Fully signed off – 27 telecommunicators
- Certified – 2
- Total - 29

2023 -

- Fully signed off – 18 telecommunicators
- Certified – 5
- Phones Only – 5
- Total – 28

2024 -

- Fully signed off – 27 telecommunicators
- Certified – 5
- Total – 32

2025 -

- Fully Signed Off – 34
- ** Two telecommunicators promoted to Communications Center Supervisor

2026 -

- Fully Signed Off – 37.5
- Certified – 1
- Training – 4
- Total – 42.5

WCC staffing continues to trend towards a healthier space. A holistic, all-hands-on-deck approach was required to right-size telecommunicator numbers. Additionally, a change in the way the hiring process was conducted has led to a higher quality of new hires than WCC has traditionally seen in the past.

Due to the length of time required for a newly hired telecommunicator to “count” toward staffing numbers (ranging anywhere from 3-6 months from date of hire), increasing these numbers is a timely endeavor. Additionally, factors like termination, resignation, extended sick or FMLA leave, can directly affect staffing numbers negatively, far quicker than training a new hire.

WCC is currently looking at a spring 2026 hiring requisition for a potential start date of May 2026.

WCC Call Stats

Below is information on the prior three years’ data for incoming calls to WCC.

	911 (% of Total)	Non-E (% of Total)	Text-to-9-1-1 (% of Total)	Total Incoming Calls	Outbound
2024	78,633 (33.2%)	156,895 (66.2%)	1,221 (.6%)	236,749	64,832
2023	88,595 (35.2%)	162,034 (64.4%)	1,100 (.4%)	251,729	74,219
2022	82,411 (33.6%)	162,148 (66.2%)	482 (.2%)	245,041	72,468

The past 3 years have shown consistency in the total number of calls and the ratio of calls between 911 and non-emergency lines.

With the implementation of Aurelian assisting with incoming non-emergency/administrative calls and eliminating 40% of that workload conservatively, WCC could see a reduction of more than 63,000 calls which are currently being processed by human call takers¹.

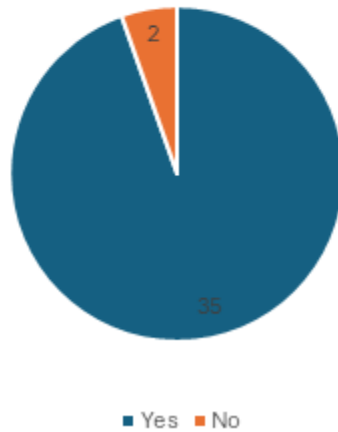
(¹ Using the above data, average 3 years of non-emergency calls of 158,393 multiplied by .25)

While potential staffing model and organizational chart change should still be considered as factors, the elimination of a significant portion of non-emergency calls potentially “frees up” telecommunicators to do more additional continuing education/trainings, be more available for incoming 911 calls, allow for staff to utilize benefit time, or allow more focus on tangential tasks such as utilization of new or emergent 911 technologies. This efficiency will also provide the opportunity to reevaluate the staffing model as we continue to aim for un-patching of the law enforcement radio talk groups.

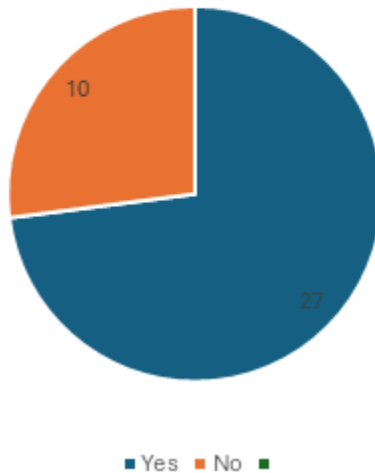
WCC Specific Survey Results - Internal

In a scope specific to WCC, surveys were sent out to telecommunicators. We reached out to 45 telecommunicators employed at WCC and had 37 participants.

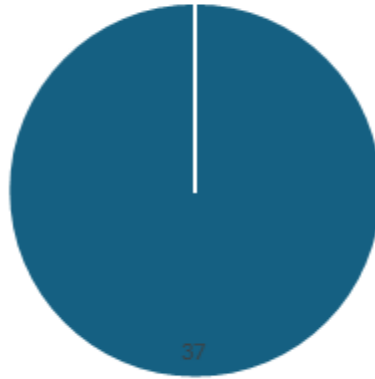
I feel that I can come to my direct supervisor or members of the leadership team with issues or concerns.



I feel empowered to bring ideas for change/process improvement to the leadership team.

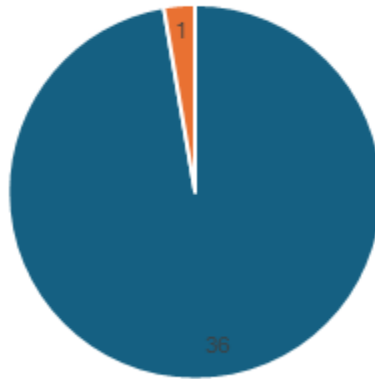


I feel supported by my direct supervisors and leadership team.



■ Yes ■ No ■

I am provided opportunities to further grow my knowledge, skills, and abilities.



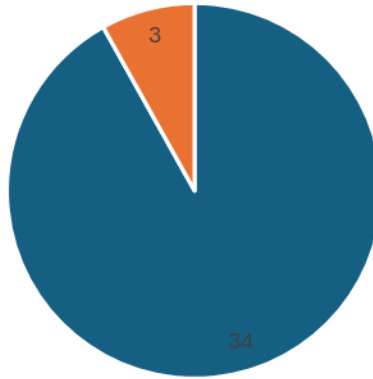
■ Yes ■ No ■

I find value in the ability to attend trainings outside of my work environment that provide new knowledge, skills, and abilities and/or reinforce existing knowledge, skills and abilities.



■ Yes ■ No

My direct supervisors meet with me, formally and/or informally, on a regular basis.



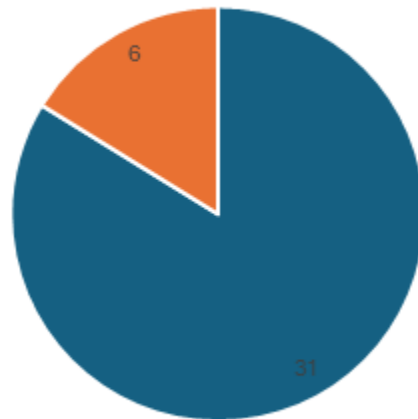
■ Yes ■ No

I understand how the work that I do contributes to the mission and vision of WCC and the overall goals of the department of emergency preparedness.



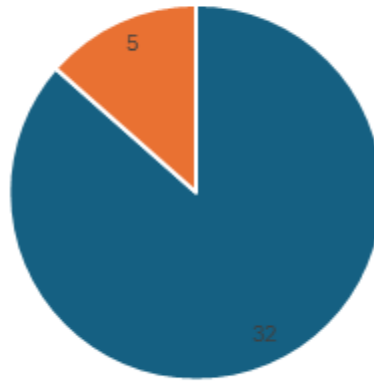
■ Yes ■ No

I feel valued by my department.



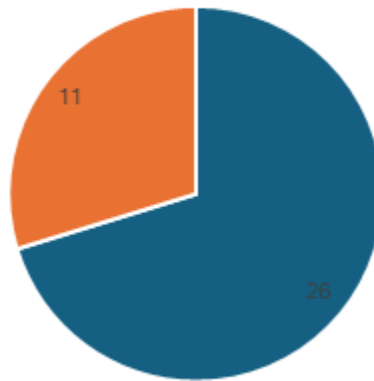
■ Yes ■ No

Information and knowledge are shared openly within my department.



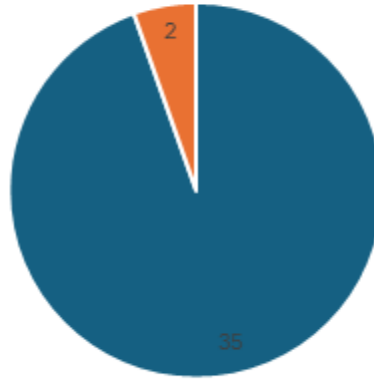
■ Yes ■ No

Information is shared in a timely manner, across all shifts.



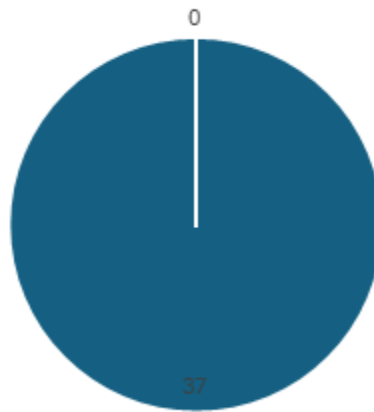
■ Yes ■ No

I feel supported with my mental health and overall wellbeing.



■ Yes ■ No

I would recommend WCC to someone interested in this field.



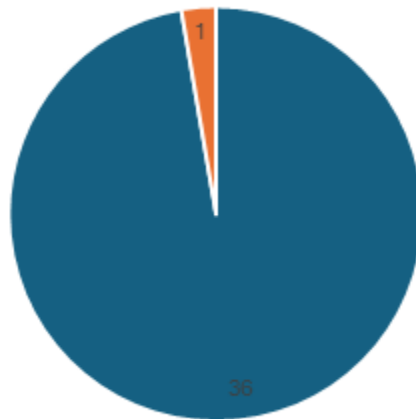
■ Yes ■ No

I feel respected by my peers during high and low stress situations.



■ Yes ■ No

I am proud to work at WCC.



■ Yes ■ No

Key takeaways:

- Room for improvement for WCC Leadership to encourage and empower telecommunicators to bring ideas for change/process improvements to the Leadership Team.
- The vast majority of telecommunicator staff:
 - Feel they can come to their direct supervisor or other members of the leadership team with concerns or issues.
 - Are provided opportunities to grow their knowledge, skills, and abilities.
 - Find value in the ability to attend trainings outside of WCC.
 - Feel that their direct supervisor meets with them either formally or informally on a regular basis
 - Understand how the work they do contributes to the mission and vision of the department.
 - Feel valued by the department.
 - That information and knowledge are shared openly within the department.
 - However approximately a 3rd of those asked state that information is not shared in a timely manner across all shifts.
 - Feel supported with their mental health and overall wellbeing.
- Given the nature of the work, there is room for improvement with 16% of participants answering NO to feeling respected by their peers during high and low stress situations.
- All participants answered YES to feeling “supported by my direct supervisors and leadership team”, a reassurance of the work that WCC Leadership Team has done to create a more supportive culture.
- All participants answered YES to recommending WCC to someone interested in this field.
- All but one participant answered YES to being proud to work at WCC

Telecommunicators were also asked open-ended questions. Like above, of 45 telecommunicators, 37 responses were received.

Three years from now what new and/or positive changes would you like to see at WCC? This can include culture, process improvement, or any other idea/concept you believe would improve the department.

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
Culture & Workplace	Addressing negativity, fostering respect, promoting teamwork	<p><i>“Culture changes, primarily attitude and disrespect issues from certain individuals...”</i></p> <p><i>“Make sure WCC has a healthy environment and not having a bunch of negative employees that bring others down.”</i></p> <p><i>“I love the culture here; everyone works well together.”</i></p>

<p>Consistency & Accountability</p>	<p>Uniform enforcement, fair standards, consistent leadership</p>	<p><i>“Expectations and accountability aren’t applied consistently across the team.”</i> <i>“I would like consistency when it comes to these questions.”</i> <i>“Consistency across all 3 shifts regarding uniform expectations...”</i></p>
<p>Training & CTO Development</p>	<p>More classroom time, CTO committee meetings, trainer prep</p>	<p><i>“Ensure CTOs are qualified and have more training before taking a trainee.”</i> <i>“I would really like to see the training/CTO committee have some meetings.”</i> <i>“More tools or practice/evaluation pieces for new trainers.”</i></p>
<p>Collaboration</p>	<p>Stronger relationships, shared briefings, protocol alignment</p>	<p><i>“More collaboration with PD and FD to improve our relationship.”</i> <i>“Inclusion on police/fire briefings after critical incidents.”</i> <i>“Full-time floor members as representatives in police and fire protocols.”</i></p>
<p>Communication & Leadership</p>	<p>Clear messaging, consistent supervision, open dialogue</p>	<p><i>“Better communication/understanding of topics by the leadership team.”</i> <i>“I would like to see more formal and regular briefings.”</i> <i>“More open communication and reciprocal respect between WCC and our partner agencies.”</i></p>
<p>Operational Improvements</p>	<p>CAD note quality, SUPP field usage, mapping tools, unpatching channels</p>	<p><i>“Consistency in execution of best practices... CAD notes, SUPP field, thoroughness.”</i> <i>“Use of Google Maps or RSOS implemented within the CAD system.”</i> <i>“Continue un-patching police channels.”</i></p>
<p>Scheduling & Time Off</p>	<p>Vacation flexibility, holidays, earned time usage</p>	<p><i>“Ability to use vacation/holiday time.”</i> <i>“More vacation time or flexibility with scheduling.”</i> <i>“Getting rid of the stigma and fear of using earned benefit time.”</i></p>
<p>Staffing & Stress Reduction</p>	<p>Lowering high-stress duration, realistic expectations</p>	<p><i>“Lowering the duration of high stress situations will be better for everyone.”</i> <i>“We are expected to know and do more... not know less and do less.”</i></p>
<p>Safety & Facility Access</p>	<p>Building security, emergency protocols, backup center training</p>	<p><i>“Too much open access to our building... anyone can walk in.”</i> <i>“Training on what to do if there was an active shooter incident or fire.”</i> <i>“Consistent schedule to get people to the backup center.”</i></p>
<p>Positive Outlook</p>	<p>Satisfaction with current state, hope for continued growth</p>	<p><i>“I feel like WCC is at a healthy place.”</i> <i>“I hope to be retired in 3 years... would like to see WCC continue to foster a good working environment.”</i></p>

What can the leadership team do to help you feel more supported in your role?

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
Leadership Support	Strong appreciation for supervisor presence, fairness, and encouragement	<p><i>"I truly feel like I am supported."</i></p> <p><i>"If there is a time where I feel there has been a misunderstanding... it has been discussed and rectified"</i></p> <p><i>"I already feel supported by leadership, you guys rock."</i></p> <p><i>"I have felt supported in my role since day one."</i></p>
Recognition & Accountability	Praise for balanced feedback, desire for consistent standards	<p><i>"Continue to be supportive, aware, and vocal about recognition and accountability... the way the leadership team balances the old school with the new is working amazingly well."</i></p> <p><i>"Recognition that holding people to the same standard... is powerful."</i></p>
Communication & Transparency	Desire for open dialogue, consistent messaging, and follow-through	<p><i>"Continue to work on more open communication with the floor."</i></p> <p><i>"LT meeting notes were happening, but they seem to have tailed off."</i></p> <p><i>"Keep showing up... follow through with absolute transparency."</i></p>
Shift Consistency	Uneven supervisor engagement across shifts, need for alignment	<p><i>"Maintain consistency across all 3 shifts."</i></p> <p><i>"There is a divide when it comes to supervisors... openness varies."</i></p>
Respect & Attitude	Concerns about favoritism, seniority bias, and peer behavior	<p><i>"Ensure attitude and disrespect issues are addressed sternly and not dismissed because of seniority."</i></p> <p><i>"There is a general lack of respect for newer personnel from a few of the dayshift floor employees."</i></p>
Training & Development	Support for training access, inclusion in decision-making	<p><i>"Supporting our interest in trainings... would go a long way in showing true investment."</i></p> <p><i>"Create committees or workgroups that include floor dispatchers in system rollouts or training design."</i></p>
Policy & Procedure	Need for consistent updates and simplified processes	<p><i>"Eliminate roll call and move towards email or another platform."</i></p> <p><i>"I feel I would benefit from consistent monthly meetings."</i></p> <p><i>"More initial guidance in some roles would be helpful."</i></p>
Supervisor Presence	Value placed on floor visibility and active engagement	<p><i>"Actually being on the floor ready to help vs in offices or doing multiple building checks."</i></p> <p><i>"Some supervisors stay at the desk and help... others are less visible."</i></p>

<p>Constructive Feedback Culture</p>	<p>Encouragement for honest conversations and respectful correction</p>	<p><i>"...I am afraid of the honest conversation that needs to happen but never does."</i> <i>"Take complaints and concerns seriously."</i></p>
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What specific areas of the department (WCC) should the leadership team put more focus on?
 (Examples include but are not limited to staffing/scheduling, training, culture, process improvement).

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
<p>Culture & Workplace Environment</p>	<p>Gossip, professionalism, noise levels, team morale</p>	<p><i>"Help with diminishing mean gossip..."</i> <i>"Culture first and foremost. There's a lot of negative talk and petty complaining..."</i> <i>"Being more mindful of your tone..."</i> <i>"Themed days are great for culture..."</i></p>
<p>Training & Development</p>	<p>Clear benchmarks and consistent training, hands-on learning, CTO support</p>	<p><i>"Training and making sure the newer trainees are brought up to the same level of quality..."</i> <i>"More rotation between positions..."</i> <i>"Monthly trainings... I feel I can forget how to do things..."</i> <i>"Training for CTOs... clearer guidelines..."</i></p>
<p>Scheduling & Staffing</p>	<p>Vacation flexibility, sick call policies, shift coverage</p>	<p><i>"Scheduling, more specifically vacation..."</i> <i>"Would like to get to a place again where it took 2 sick calls... to make you ordered."</i> <i>"Staffing/scheduling decisions that consider individuals..."</i></p>
<p>Leadership & Accountability</p>	<p>Fair standards, consistency, recognition, transparency</p>	<p><i>"All employees held to the same standards... favoritism by sups."</i> <i>"Consistency in enforcement of the little things..."</i> <i>"Continue to watch for positive things to recognize the floor..."</i></p>
<p>Process Improvement</p>	<p>SOP updates and clarity, call handling consistency</p>	<p><i>"Updating all the SOPs and shared documents..."</i> <i>"Make call processing a little more black and white..."</i></p>

Debriefing & Communication	Shift-level debriefs, sharing lessons learned, shoutouts	<p><i>“Shift level debriefs... discussion about the event.”</i></p> <p><i>“Give our newer dispatchers a chance to hear why the vets did what they did...”</i></p>
Retention & Support	Mental health, physical wellness, benefit time use	<p><i>“Culture and retention... making sure mistakes aren’t being slipped through the cracks.”</i></p> <p><i>“Include culture of mental health and physical health...”</i></p>
Equity & Consistency	Uniform enforcement, fairness across shifts and roles	<p><i>“Uniforms... not really enforced across the board.”</i></p> <p><i>“CO HWY calls between day shift and thirds... handled differently.”</i></p>

What are your thoughts on the utilization of new technologies in the 911 environment?

Category	Themes & Concerns	Participant Quotes
Excitement & Optimism	Enthusiasm for technology, desire to lead in industry	<p><i>“I love new tech and see it as a way to make us better at our job. Seeing the advanced options that RSOS can offer is awesome and I’d like to see us use them.”</i></p> <p><i>“I think new technology can only help us as 911 professionals to better serve our community.”</i></p> <p><i>“I’m excited moving forward with our 911 technology.”</i></p>
AI Hesitation & Skepticism	Concerns about Aurelian AI, reliability, caller frustration	<p><i>“I’m incredibly hesitant and disappointed in the Aurelian AI being used for non-emergency calls.”</i></p> <p><i>“I’ve had frustrating experiences with AI answering services not understanding me.”</i></p>
Video Calling Concerns	Mental health risks, trauma exposure, workload increase	<p><i>“I would not like to see video calling on 911 be utilized.”</i></p> <p><i>“I don’t want to see gore... it feels like one added thing I’d need to keep in the back of my mind.”</i></p> <p><i>“Implementing the ability to see traumas... would cause long term issues with mental health.”</i></p>

Training Preferences	Need for hands-on training, dislike of video-only instruction	<i>"It is more effective to have hands on training than watching a video." "I like how we get a lot of practice with the new technology before it goes into effect."</i>
Workflow Integration Issues	Glitches, poor implementation, lack of trust in systems	<i>"We are not able to trust the tech fully because of issues like these." "Addresses being garbled in the ani/ali, phone #'s showing up as the tower number... just because we CAN work around the problem, does not mean we should have to."</i>
Mixed Feelings & Caution	Excitement tempered by fear, desire for informative and strong rollout	<i>"I am both excited and nervous about new technology." "I'm cautiously optimistic... every addition should be critically reviewed against WCC's operations."</i>
Need for Transparency	Desire for more information, early staff involvement	<i>"Wanting more information on what is coming... having a little more "in the know" would be helpful." "Please include floor staff early on in the decision-making process to empower them and for their valuable input."</i>
Strategic Vision & Leadership	Interest in vendor shows, real-time crime center	<i>"I'd like to start going to some of the industry trade shows to see what new tech is coming." "Please implement a county real time crime center in WCC... it would be a game changer for all stakeholders."</i>
Resistance to Change	Fear of change, discomfort with new tools	<i>"Personally, I don't like a lot of the AI and other technologies." "Terrifying."</i>
General	Neutral or brief responses	<i>"They're fine." "They are nice." "I think improvement is always necessary."</i>

As WCC looks ahead at eventual upgrade or replacement of our consoles, what are features that would be important to you?

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
Height Adjustability	Sit/stand desks, adjustable keyboard trays, monitor height control	<i>"I still want to be able to move the consoles up and down..." "Height adjustments, keyboard desk tilting, screen movement..." "The ability to stand or sit depending on our mood."</i>
Heating & Cooling	Built-in heaters, movable heaters, fans with blades, temperature control	<i>"Built in heaters!" "Heaters that I can move where needed like my feet, hands, or core." "Fans! Fans! More fans!"</i>

Cable Management	Organized cords, cable walls, fewer dangling wires	“CORD MANAGEMENT, and less speakers.” “Cable management wall; would be wonderful not to get tangled...”
Ergonomics & Comfort	Foot bars, leg room, wrist angle adjustment, consistent chairs	“Comfort, functionality, adjustability...” “Foot space to put our feet up...” “More chairs that are flexible in moving.”
Keyboard & Mouse Consistency	Standardized input devices, ergonomic options	“Every keyboard and mouse at every position should be the same...” “Several keyboards are missing props or have sticky keys.”
Treadmill/Walking Consoles	Active workstations, treadmill desks	“Treadmill desk.” “It would be cool to have a couple of ‘walking consoles’...”
Lighting & Cleanliness	Better lighting, dust control, antimicrobial surfaces	“Better lighting at the consoles...” “Desks dusted.” “Materials that are naturally bacteria resistant...” “Tracks the monitors sit on... are disgusting and unhygienic.”
Speaker Quality	Standardized, reliable speakers	“Speakers that have a consistent and loud enough volume...”
Storage & Organization	Fixed storage, cubbies, reduced clutter	“Storage that can't be moved...” “More storage cubbies to decrease clutter on top.”
Technology & Integration	Login via badge, dark mode, CAD integration	“Login info attached to our name badge...” “Ability to have dark mode on the CAD.” “Auto-imported to Spillman...”
Room Layout & Communication	Improved dispatcher visibility, open layout	“Redesign of the center to improve communication...”
General	Current setup works, unsure of alternatives	“What we have works well for me.” “I honestly don't know what the latest console technology is...” “Nothing at this time.”
Staff Involvement	Early input from floor staff	“Please include floor staff early on in the project to empower them...” “I don't know what features are available so this is difficult...”

As WCC looks ahead at eventual upgrade or replacement of our phone system, what are features that would be important to you?

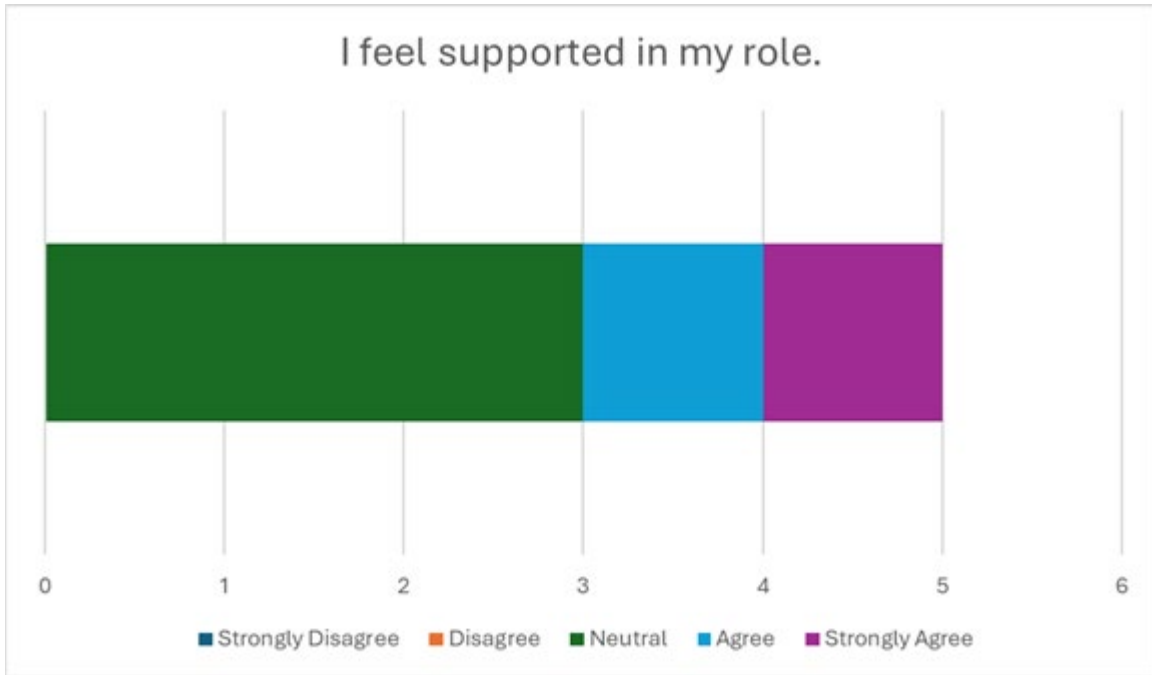
Category	Feature Requests	Participant Quotes
Audio & Call Quality	Volume boosting, silent monitoring, clear sound, cordless headsets	“Silent monitoring, audio clarity, most important: VOLUME BOOSTING... I utilize this a LOT.”

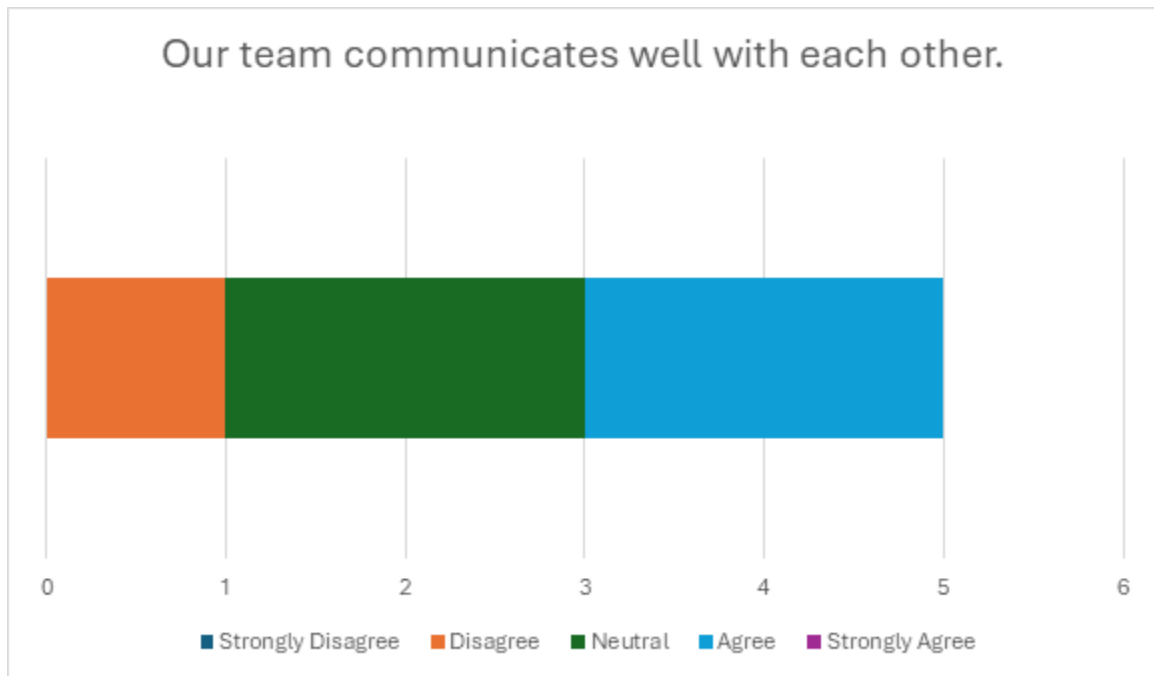
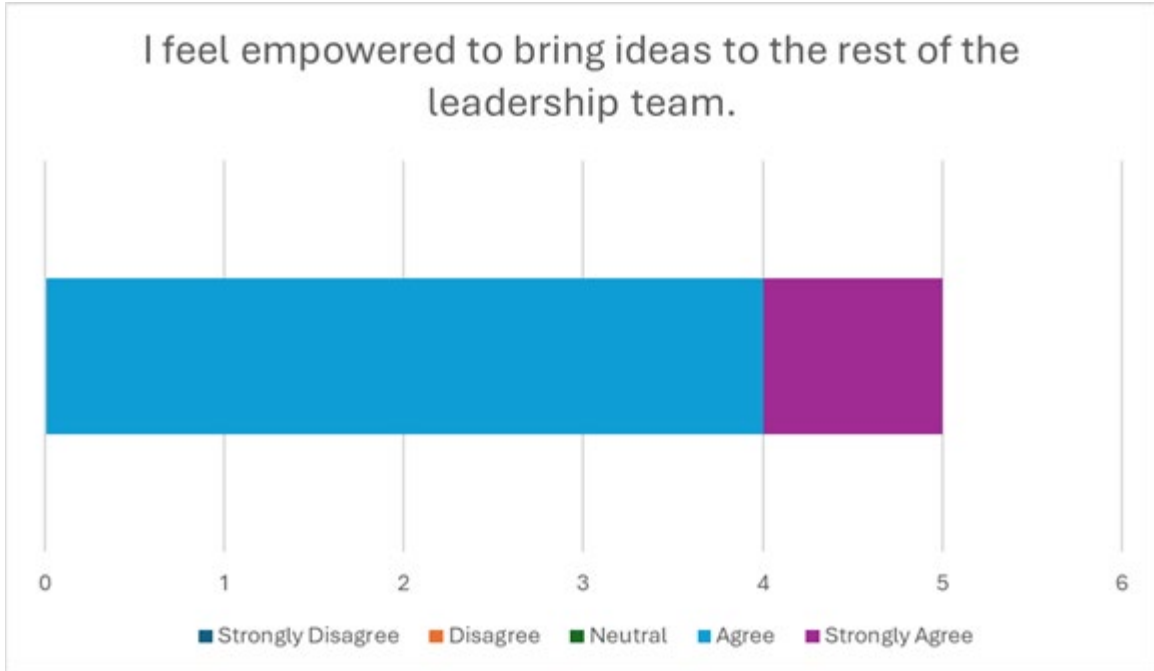
		<i>“Cordless headsets that aren't super touchy/static-y. More ear options.”</i>
Ease of Use & Interface	Font size control, touch screens, screen layout, user-friendly design	<i>“Ease of use. Ability to change the font size.” “Touch screens would be nice. Otherwise, the easier to use the happier I will be.” “User-friendly/simple to use...”</i>
Mapping & Location Accuracy	RapidSOS integration, CAD map alignment, caller info from cell phones	<i>“Integration with RapidSOS for location and additional caller details.” “Phones map more similar to the CAD map and having the jurisdictional colors match.” “Able to pull emergency information/caller information from cell phones...”</i>
Language Support	Translation, transcription, AI interpreters	<i>“The feature where it will take a foreign language and transcribe it to English.” “An integrated language transcribing service. Would shorten information gathering time.”</i>
Directory & Contact Tools	Updated directory, speed dial, hot keys, officer/squad lists	<i>“An updated directory... we waste more radio traffic to confirm numbers...” “Hot keys and a robust directory are vital.” “I like the directory feature and how easy it is to search phone numbers.”</i>
Customization & Personalization	Individual logins, quick links, recorded greetings	<i>“Since we all have our own log-ins, I'd like to see some end user customization ability.”</i>
Call Handling & Automation	Call distribution, silent ring, phone tree, redial button	<i>“Automatic call distribution is worth looking into.” “Silent ring/calls automatically distributed and drop into our ear.” “A phone tree would be extremely helpful...” “A redial button on the keypad.”</i>
Text-to-911 & CAD Integration	Copy/paste texts, CAD sync, ANI/ALI drop, IM during calls	<i>“Direct CAD integration for RapidSOS/Text to 911/Abandon 911.” “Being able to type an IM while on a phone call and have the message not disappear...”</i>
Reliability & Issue Resolution	Fixing transfer errors, landline grid drops, consistent operation	<i>“I just want the current issues with our phone system fixed as quickly as possible.” “Landline issue... dropping the grid addresses incorrectly...”</i>
Advanced Features & Integration	DOT camera access, media playback, grouped calls	<i>“Full access to DOT cameras...” “Group multiple 911 calls from the same phone number together...”</i>
Staff Involvement & Feedback	Early input, empowerment, transparency	<i>“Please include floor staff early on in the project to empower them and for their valuable input.” “I don't know what features are available...”</i>

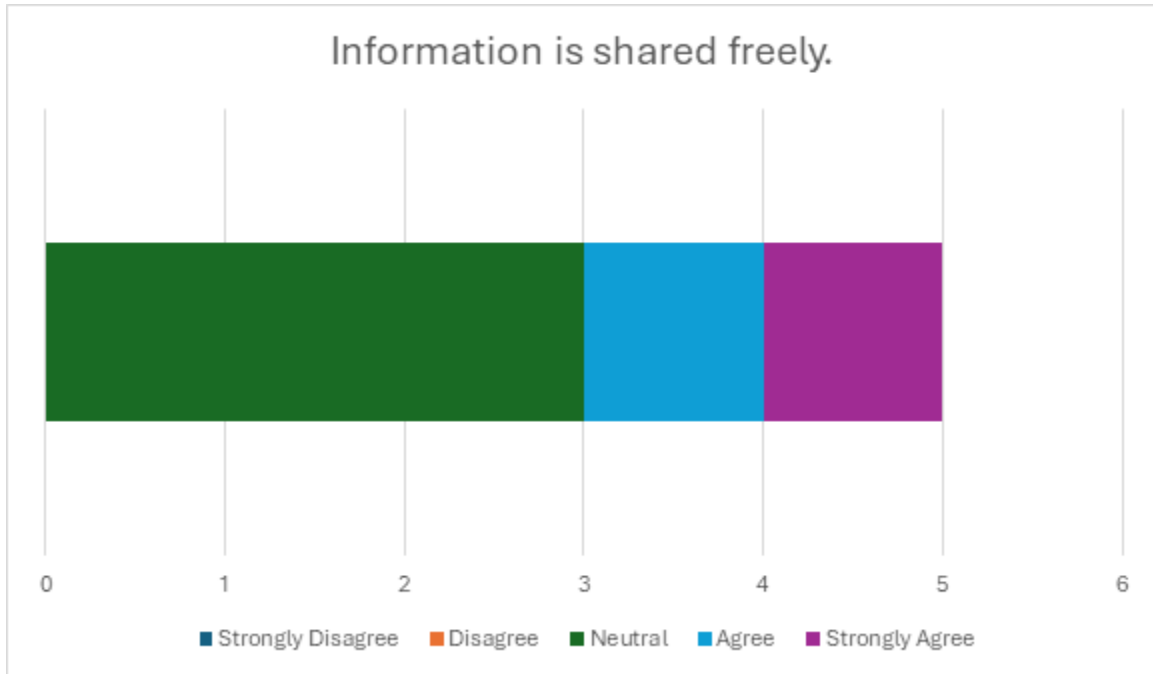
WCC Specific Survey Results – Leadership Team

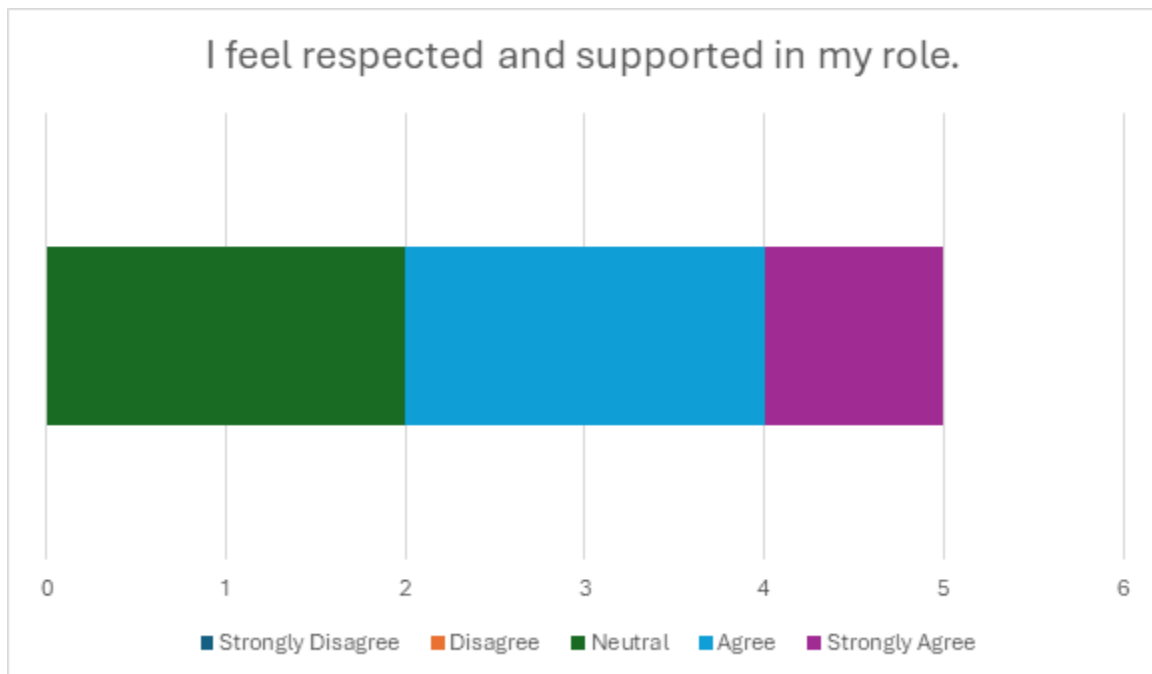
In a scope specific to WCC, surveys were sent out to members of the WCC Leadership Team which consists of 6 Comm Center Supervisors, 1 Executive Assistant, 1 Operations Manager, and the Director of DEP).

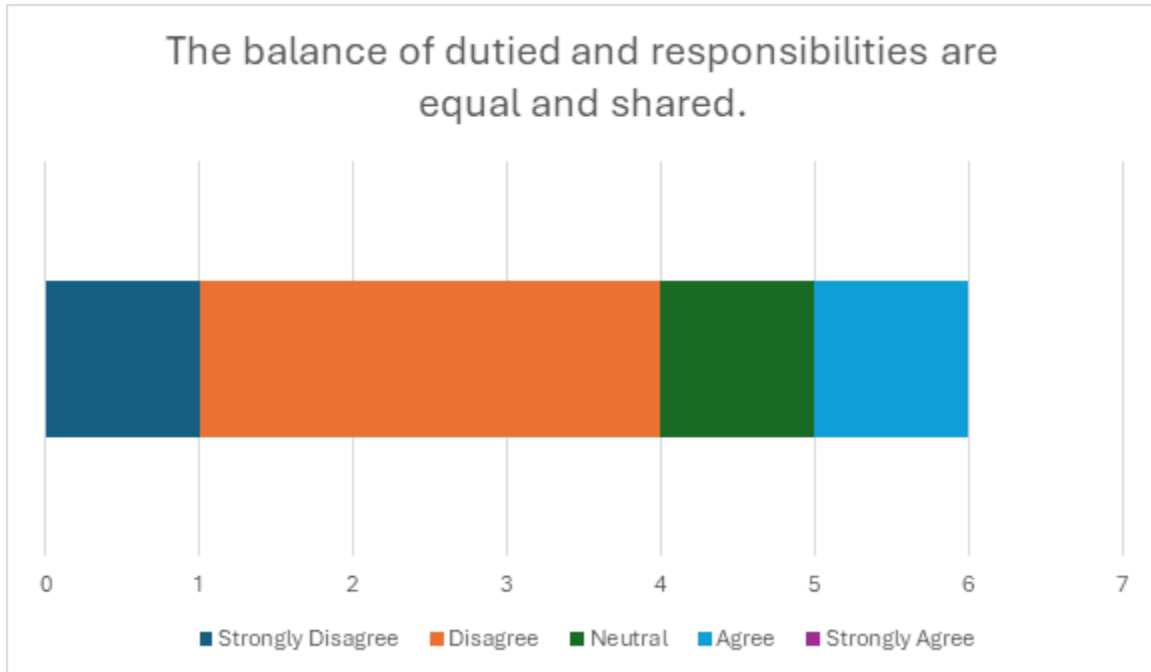
In reaching out to 9 members of the Leadership Team, we had 5 participants. The following questions were asked:











Leadership Team members were also asked open ended questions. Listed below are those questions, along with categories, identified themes, and specific participant quotes.

Like above, of 9 members, 5 responses were received.

Over the next three years, what positive changes would you like to see in the organization?

Survey Results - Summary

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology implementation to reduce admin workload • Integration between systems • Address hesitation around Aurelian • Upgrade to next-gen 911, improving CAD interfaces. 	<p><i>“Change is hard, but that hesitation can limit us from leveraging these technologies.”</i></p> <p><i>“Focus on technologies that will integrate/interface with existing or future solutions.”</i></p>
Leadership & Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined vision. • Accountability. • Better overall communication. 	<p><i>“More defined vision, accountability, and communication.”</i></p>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced Organization Chart • Balanced workload among supervisory group. • Decrease in non-dispatch related tasks being put on dispatch. 	<p><i>“Balancing Aurelian while not fully removing the ability for our people to get reps on non-e calls if and when Aurelian goes down.”</i></p>

Training & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased growth opportunities More access to external training/conferences Sit-ins for new deputies/officers 	<p><i>“A more balanced org chart.”</i></p> <p><i>“A more balanced workload among the supervisory group.”</i></p>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued focus on wellness Peer support and stress reduction initiatives Maintain professional yet fun culture. 	<p><i>“Continued focus on culture while maintaining professionalism -- “fun” culture is good, as long as it is not to the detriment of high-quality work being done.”</i></p>
Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhere to SMART goals 	<p><i>“...it went completely out of the window, including things that were not, directly or indirectly, affected by COVID.”</i></p>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balance automation with skill development 	<p><i>“...worry about a time when our people, especially new people, will be utterly unable to handle a basic 10-21 for theft that occurred yesterday because they have never had to deal with one.”</i></p>
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen relationships with Law Enforcement, Fire, EMS, and community partners. 	<p><i>“...would be cool to require sit ins for new deputies/officers, although I am not sure this is possible.”</i></p>

What are your personal top three goals/objectives currently?

Survey Results - Summary

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete policy project including PowerDMS Streamline outdated workflows and digitize processes 	<p><i>“Finish the policy project – including Power DMS.”</i></p> <p><i>“Continue to digitize and/or streamline processes or workflows that are outdated.”</i></p>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on positive culture change Retaining high-performing employees Rebuild teamwork standards 	<p><i>“Continue focus on positive culture change and retention of good employees.”</i></p> <p><i>“Re-establishing standards for teamwork on the floor.”</i></p>

Training & Onboarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve onboarding and classroom experience • Build a consistent group of NENA-certified trainers • Standardized CTO practices 	<p><i>“Continue to improve the initial onboarding and classroom experience.”</i></p> <p><i>“Create consistency with that group via mandatory CTO meetings.”</i></p>
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop supervisor peer support training • Share leadership models • Present at professional conferences 	<p><i>“To continue to develop internal supervisor peer support training.”</i></p> <p><i>“I would like to share my leadership training/talk M.A.G.I.C at a conference.”</i></p>
Performance & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support staff growth • Raise standards for lower performers • Reduce stress over uncontrollable factors 	<p><i>“Continue to support staff in learning and growing each day at WCC.”</i></p> <p><i>“Find a way to bring the lower performers standards up.”</i></p>
Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on personal development • Gain deeper understanding of leadership roles • Pursue certifications and special projects 	<p><i>“One of my personal goals... is to complete my ENP certification.”</i></p> <p><i>“I want to take on more responsibilities, be involved in special projects.”</i></p>
Team Morale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen team performance • Provide regular feedback • Recognize accomplishments and address challenges 	<p><i>“Strengthen team performance and morale... provide regular feedback, recognize accomplishments, address challenges proactively.”</i></p>

What ideas do you have to help continue to foster and grow our relationships with our agency partners?

Survey Results - Summary

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
Emergency Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue regular protocol meetings • Conduct tabletop and functional exercises with agency partners • Test COOP (Continuity of Operations Plan) 	<p><i>“Continued regular protocols meetings, tabletop exercises which include agency partners to test our COOP.”</i></p> <p><i>“Functional exercises for the same purpose.”</i></p>
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase two-way visits between dispatch and partner agencies 	<p><i>“More two-way visits — we go visit their departments; they come visit in dispatch.”</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage sit-ins and ride-alongs for leadership and staff Host open houses 	<p><i>“Inviting them in to sit in, ideally as a part of their training.”</i></p>
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand cross-training with police and fire personnel Use drills like MABAS to improve coordination Explore new joint training scenarios 	<p><i>“Cross-training opportunities are one of the most effective ways to strengthen our relationships.”</i></p> <p><i>“I really enjoy the MABAS drills... they’re a great example of practical, scenario-based training.”</i></p>
Relationship Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold meetings between dispatch LTs and agency LTs Focus on shared shift dynamics and mutual wins/challenges Build stronger relationships with floor staff 	<p><i>“Meetings with our LT and their LTs... to help build relationships that will ultimately help build relationship with our floor staff.”</i></p> <p><i>“Inviting police and fire personnel to sit in with our dispatchers allows them to see how our center operates, ask questions in real time, and gain a deeper understanding of the complexity and pace of our daily work.”</i></p>
Public Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase social media with partner agencies Share positive stories and achievements Create “get to know your leadership” content for external audiences 	<p><i>“...get to know your leadership team at dispatch” -- Similar too, but for a more professional external audience, of what I do for our new hires. This way they can put a face to a name of all the supervisors and learn a little bit more about us as individuals.”</i></p>

What ideas do you have to help continue to foster and grow our relationships with our leadership team?

Survey Results - Summary

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue all-day meetings monthly Include team-building activities in LT meetings Encourage idea-sharing for meeting content 	<p><i>“Continued all-day meetings, would like this to be a monthly thing next year.”</i></p> <p><i>“I would like to spend 15 mins of any and all LT meetings engaging in some sort of team building activity.”</i></p>
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all voices are heard Prevent dominant voices from overshadowing others 	<p><i>“Try to foster an environment where everyone’s voice can be heard, and some voices aren’t drowned out by others.”</i></p>

<p>Leadership Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address barriers from “5 Dysfunctions of a Team • Build trust, accountability, and commitment 	<p><i>“I definitely see times where these become roadblocks and can potentially harm the growth of our team.”</i></p>
<p>Communication & Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen consistent communication • Build mutual trust and shared accountability • Improve understanding of goals and expectations 	<p><i>“Communication and Trust need to be built.”</i> <i>“Open consistent communication is important especially for those of us who don’t overlap often.”</i></p>
<p>Participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase supervisor involvement in decision-making • Encourage participation in special projects • Empower supervisors to shape the center’s future 	<p><i>“Getting involved in special projects or tasks builds respect and gives supervisors a voice in shaping the center’s future.”</i></p>

What ideas do you have to help continue to foster and grow our relationships with our leadership team?

Survey Results - Summary

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
<p>Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain focus on positive workplace culture • Continue team-building activities across shifts • Address unwanted behaviors promptly 	<p><i>“Continued focus on positive culture.”</i> <i>“Confront unwanted behaviors in the moment, across all three shifts.”</i> <i>“Second shift culture days, mindbender Wednesdays, etc.”</i></p>
<p>Vision & Transparency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share clear short- and long-term goals • Provide roadmap for organizational direction • Host all-hands meetings to align vision 	<p><i>“Provide the floor clear information on upcoming and long plan vision.”</i> <i>“More all hands on deck meetings to align that vision.”</i></p>
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of promises • Lead with heart and visibility • Avoid gossip and be present for staff 	<p><i>“Continue to deliver what I promise.”</i> <i>“Support them, avoid gossip, be visible and available to the staff.”</i></p>
<p>Accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up on concerns and suggestions • Maintain fair and consistent standards • Reinforce credibility through action 	<p><i>“Following through on things and accountability... builds credibility.”</i></p>

		<i>“Holding everyone to fair and consistent standards reinforces a culture of accountability and respect.”</i>
Team Morale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue recognizing staff achievements Use positive reinforcement to boost morale 	<i>“I think our team did an excellent job this year on recognizing those for their hard work.”</i> <i>“Recognition and positive reinforcement goes a long way.”</i>
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve physical workspace (e.g., chairs) 	<i>“More chairs in good working order (sorry had to add it!)”</i>

What type of training would benefit you as an individual?

Survey Results - Summary

Category	Key Themes & Suggestions	Representative Quotes
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursuing higher-level leadership courses Share center’s progress at conferences Continue attending county-led programs Explore HR/legal aspects of supervision Develop skills in coaching, mentoring, and conflict resolution. 	<i>“I am going to continue to lean into higher level leadership courses.”</i> <i>”I enjoyed the county’s leadership program class this year.”</i> <i>“CMCP, presenting, HR/Legalese of management roles.”</i> <i>“Structured training on topics like conflict resolution, effective supervision, coaching and mentoring.”</i>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking training to improve radio knowledge Identify gaps in available radio education 	<i>“Radio knowledge is a known weak spot of mine.”</i> <i>“Even after asking Radio Services... they were kind of at a loss.”</i>
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and present at industry conferences Prioritize tech/operational topics over repeated wellness content 	<i>“I felt that last year’s BTD conference was just kind of a re-hash of ideas.”</i> <i>“In 2026 I would like to do a conference that is more on the tech/operational side of things.”</i>
Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing wellness-focused training Build peer support and stress management skills to better support staff 	<i>“Mental Health and/or Peer Support Training... would help me be a more supportive and responsive supervisor.”</i>

What type of training(s) would benefit the leadership team as a whole?

Survey Results - Summary

Category	Themes	Participant Quotes
<p>Leadership Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend higher-level leadership courses Promote consistent leadership messaging across the team Encourage ENP certification for all staff Expand knowledge of current and future 911 technology Promote NENA CTO course for shared understanding Provide training on working across generations and conducting evaluations 	<p><i>“Higher level leadership/supervision training.”</i></p> <p><i>“Team Leadership Training, one we all attend to get the same message.”</i></p> <p><i>“I think it would benefit us all to be ENP certified by the end of the strategic plan.”</i></p> <p><i>“ENP training! I have gained so much confidence since having obtained that.”</i></p> <p><i>“I think it would benefit us all to go through the NENA CTO course.”</i></p> <p><i>“CTO, working with different generations, in depth training on evals.”</i></p>
<p>Emergency Preparedness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct tabletop exercises to test COOP plans Improve readiness for critical incidents 	<p><i>“Tabletop exercises to test our COOP plans and ensure better understanding for everyone.”</i></p>
<p>Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus training on building and maintaining positive culture Strengthen collaboration and communication styles 	<p><i>“Training focused on driving and maintaining positive culture.”</i></p> <p><i>“Anything with emotional intelligence or team dynamic based... would help us better understand each other’s communication styles.”</i></p>

Key takeaways:

The survey responses reveal a strong focus on advancing leadership development, enhancing communication, and reinforcing a positive, accountable workplace culture. Members of the leadership team expressed a desire for continued education and development including CMCP and ENP certification, as well as structured learning in supervision, emotional intelligence, and team dynamics.

There’s a clear call for improved communication, both in terms of transparency around organizational goals and fostering communication where all voices are heard.

Many emphasized the importance of following through on concerns, holding everyone to consistent standards, and recognizing staff contributions to build trust and morale.

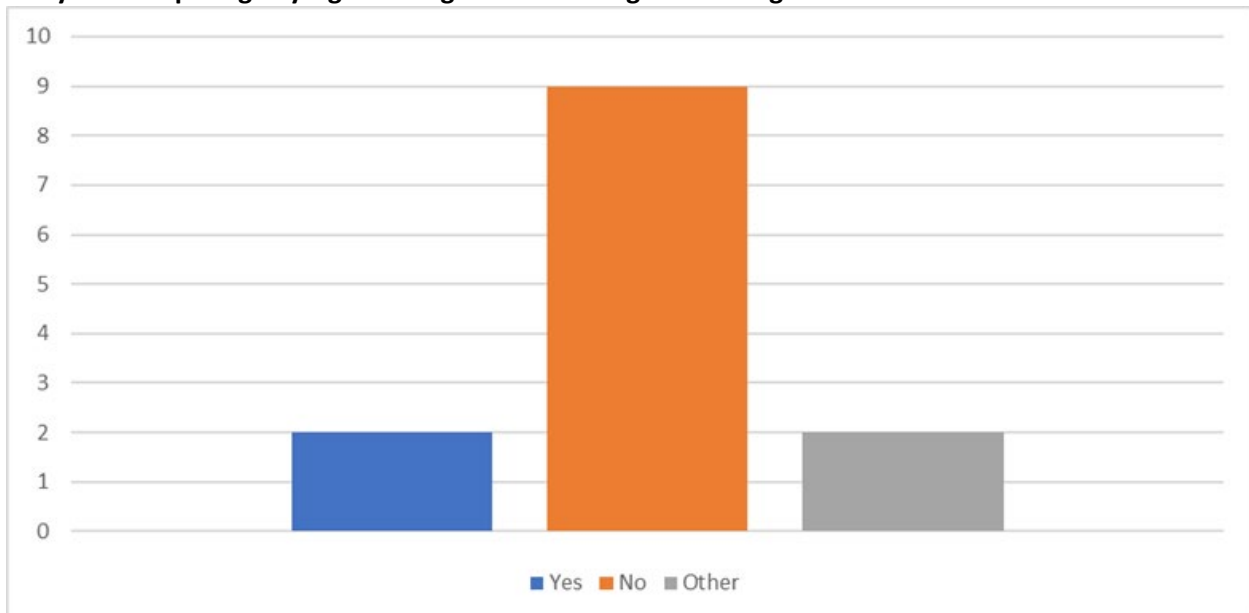
Operationally, respondents want to see more tabletop exercises to test COOP plans, better onboarding overall and CTO consistency. There is a desire for more collaboration with partner agencies through ride-alongs and continued exercises.

Culture remains a central theme, with support for team-building activities, visible leadership, and maintaining a fun yet professional environment. Overall, the feedback emphasizes a commitment to growth, connection, and shared accountability across all levels of the organization.

WCC Specific Survey Results – External Agency Partners

In reaching out to external agency partners, we had 13 participants.

Are you anticipating any significant growth or change in staffing model?



While most external partners indicated that they did not anticipate any significant growth or change in their internal staffing model, others indicated reasons and necessities for change or growth. Some communities have identified and are preparing for significant growth over the next decade, with plans to expand from their current population of 12,000 to nearly 18,000 residents. This development includes

numerous residential and commercial construction projects slated for the coming year. As the area evolves, local leadership will evaluate whether the existing staffing model can adequately support the anticipated increase in service calls. Additionally, there may be consideration of contracting or consolidating with nearby agencies to better meet future demands.

The following summary captures key strategic priorities. These insights reflect a shared commitment to building a resilient, well-prepared, and efficiently staffed community. By analyzing the responses, several recurring themes emerged that highlight the collective focus on transparency, public safety, staffing, service delivery, emergency preparedness and collaboration. Below is a breakdown of these priorities:

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness	Many responses emphasized the need to build a safer community through transparency, ensure quick and effective emergency response, and prepare both city staff and residents for large scale crises and disasters.
Staffing	A strong focus was placed on maintaining full staffing levels, developing younger personnel, and implementing creative retention strategies to preserve institutional knowledge and reflect a healthy organizational culture.
Service Delivery & Efficiency	Several comments highlighted the importance of continuing to deliver high-quality services to residents, maintaining current service levels, and doing so with the same or reduced costs.
Infrastructure & Resources	Some responses called for investments in facilities and technology, such as building a new training center and upgrading the police department to support operational effectiveness.
Collaboration & Transparency	A few responses stressed the value of collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, including dispatch and mutual aid partners, and the role of transparency in fostering community trust.

Are there current trends in your discipling that may impact dispatch operations such as service delivery or types of services offered?

While many respondents reported no immediate concerns, others identified specific areas requiring attention. The following summary captures trends in survey responses regarding technology needs, operational challenges, environmental changes, staffing, and coordination. These insights offer a snapshot of current priorities and potential future developments across departments:

Technology Needs	Some responses highlighted the need for improved tech tools, such as AI-assisted call monitoring and iPad capabilities for CAD systems.
Operational Challenges	A few mentioned potential disruptions, including impacts from facility remodeling and the strain caused by street takeovers.
Environmental & Crime Trends	One response noted rising concerns about severe weather events, cybercrime, and reduced community investment in preparedness.
Staffing & Growth	A single response emphasized the importance of scaling staffing levels to match population growth and an increased call volume.

Interagency Coordination	Another respondent pointed to the effects of fire department mergers and consolidations, which may require more collaboration across agencies.
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Are there any major changes planned for your department in the next three years?

46% of the respondents indicated that major changes have been planned in the next three years. External partners indicated their department’s ongoing efforts to expand facilities, modernize technology, and enhance staffing. Each item highlights a specific area of focus that will shape the department’s capabilities and readiness in the coming years.

Department Expansion/Facility Upgrade	2-year building expansion; temporary relocation required. Joint Police and Fire Training center with a EOC site within it.
Radio System Upgrade	Mobile and portable radios to ensure compliance with the Phase 2 upgrade to the County’s radio system.
CAD System Change	Transitioning to a new CAD vendor and may depend on budget.
New Records Management System	Some replacing and/or upgrading to a new system.
Staffing Increase	Plans to grow staff to meet operational needs.
Staff Turnover	Ongoing turnover issues and loss of institutional knowledge.

What are ways that WCC can assist you to better understand how dispatch works, to better support your operations?

The following summary highlight’s themes in terms of praise and room for improvement amongst the following: communication & transparency, onboarding & engagement, operational support, and process improvement. While many respondents acknowledged effective practices already in place such as monthly meetings and protocol updates, others offered ideas to enhance transparency, support new staff, and streamline interagency processes.

Communication & Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol meetings are seen as effective • Communication continues to improve but leaders must explain the “why” behind issues or changes. • Would like to see monthly reports or flyers to departments and advance notice in changes in fees, technology, operations. • Transparency from operations manager is valued.
Onboarding & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New officers should have onboarding experience that includes time in dispatch to better understand operations. • Tours recommended building familiarity and connection.
Operational Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WCC praised for doing an excellent job with limited resources. • Continued use of police and fire protocols is appreciated.
Process Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests were made for a clearer understanding of how dispatch works with those that have their own centers and how to streamline that process.

What are ways that WCC can work with your department to better understand how your department operates so we can better work together?

The survey responses reveal a range of ideas and perspectives on how to strengthen collaboration and communication between departments and WCC. While some participants had no specific suggestions, others emphasized the value of in-person engagement. Communication and collaboration were recurring themes, with respondents highlighting the importance of direct conversations, shared updates, and ongoing interagency discussions. Additional feedback touched on onboarding practices, operational challenges like CAD system delays, and the need for broader access to data.

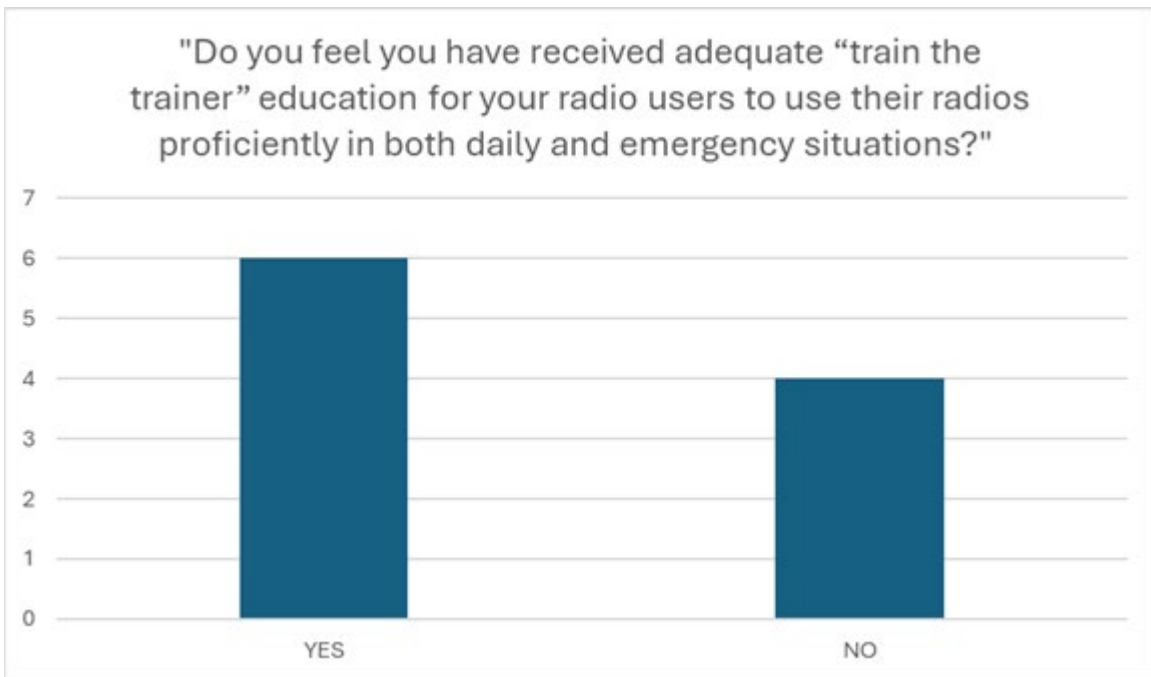
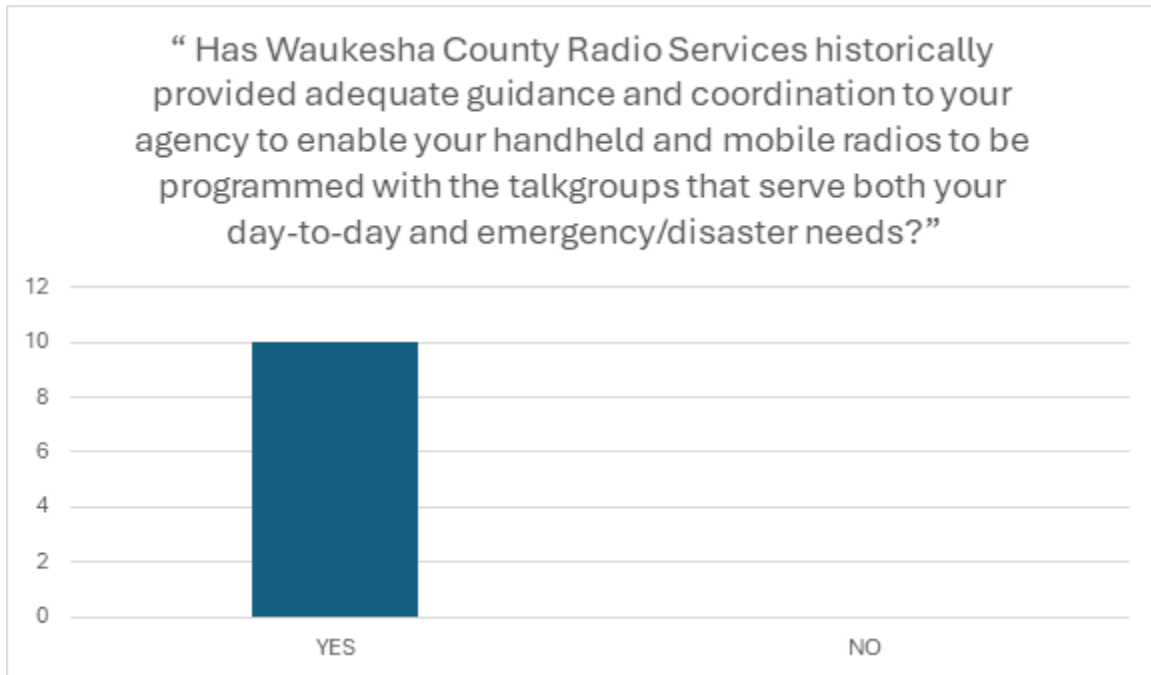
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual department meetings • Annual Leadership Meeting
Onboarding & Ride-Alongs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispatch and ECO ride-alongs within first year to improve understanding of field operations
Service Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countywide Protocol Discussions
Technology Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to databases for analysis would be helpful • Delay in software in terms of CAD
Communication & Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to communicate • An external agency partner mentioned that WCC continues to keep their department updated, enhancing their communication within. • Discussion on our external communication process to help streamline the process

Key Take- Aways

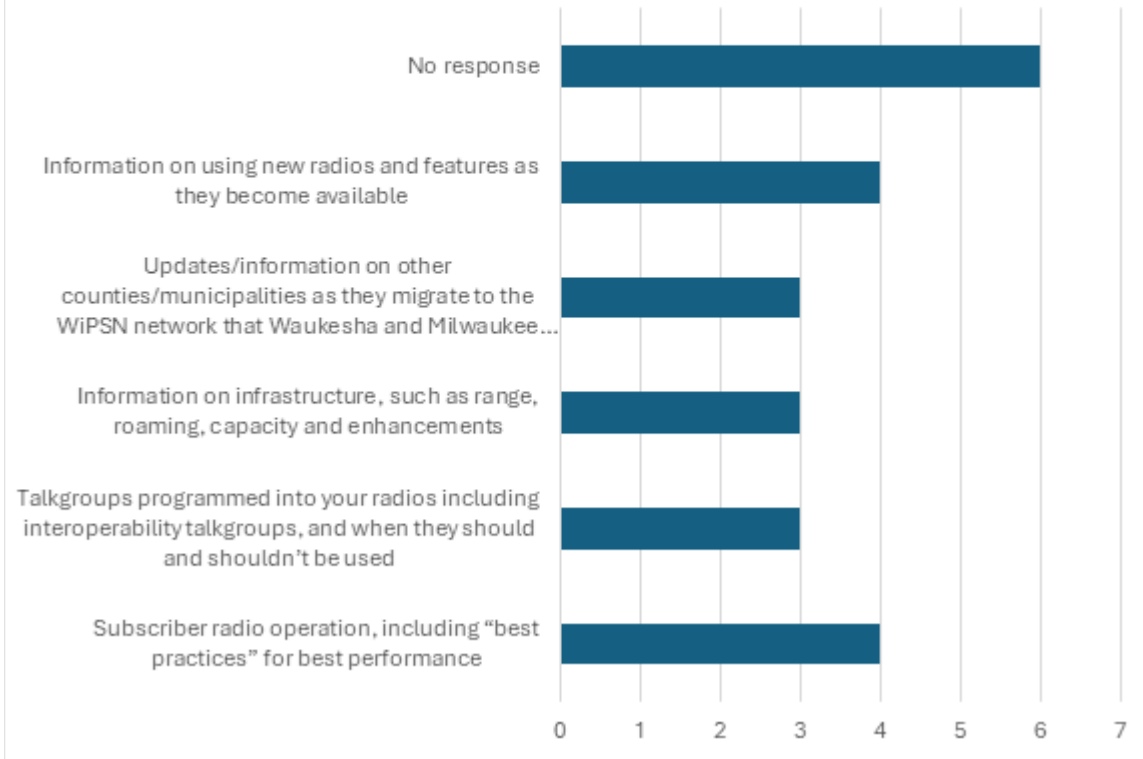
The feedback collected from our external agency partners offers valuable insight of current strengths and areas for growth across WCC operations. Key themes point to a desire for more structured and proactive communication, deeper in-person engagement, and enhanced onboarding practices that foster mutual understanding. Technology upgrades and staffing developments are underway, but challenges like CAD delays and staff turnover remain top of mind. Overall responses reflect appreciation for WCC’s performance and a shared commitment to improving collaboration, transparency, and service delivery throughout the county.

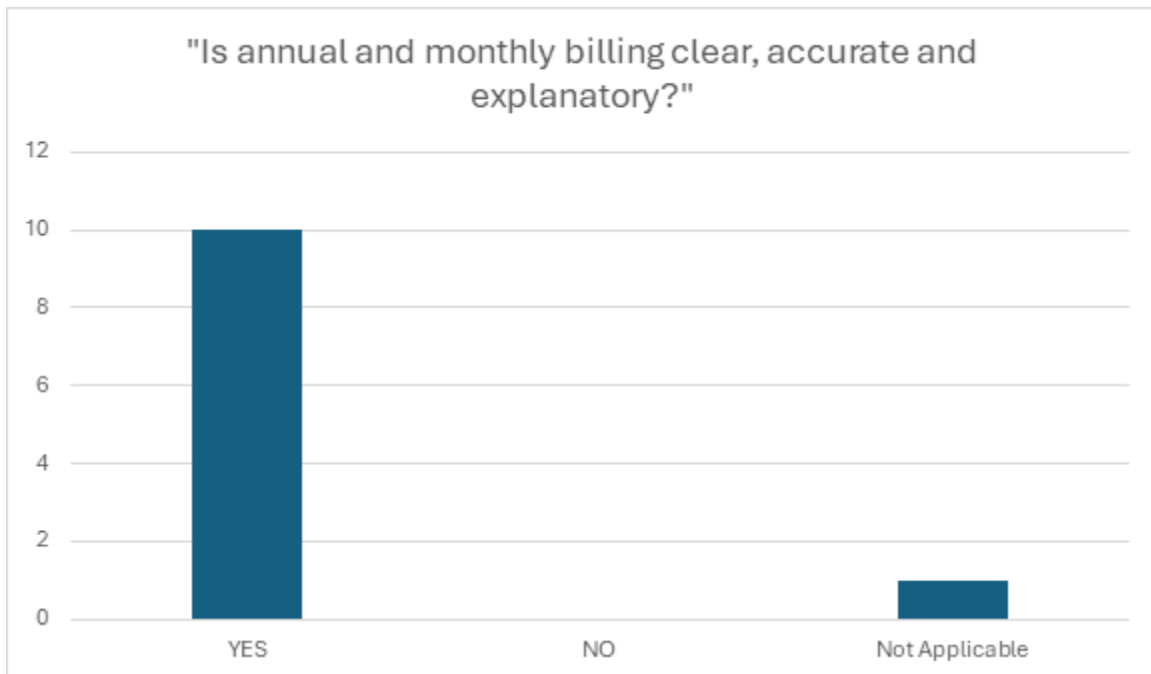
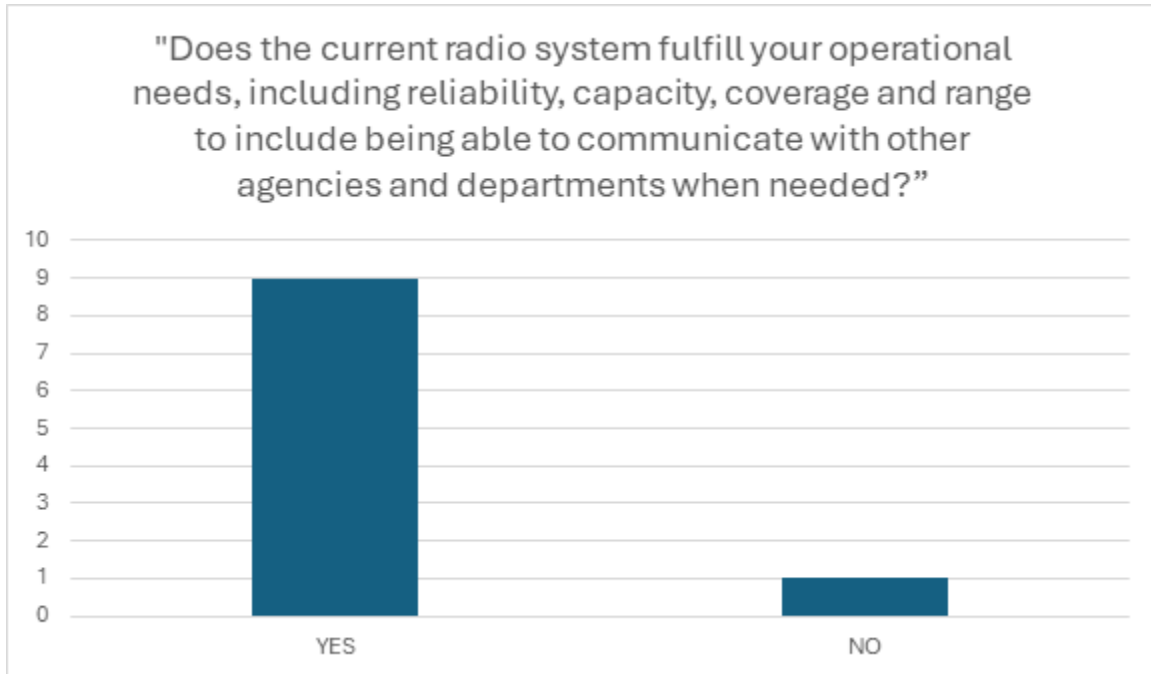
Radio Services Specific Survey Results

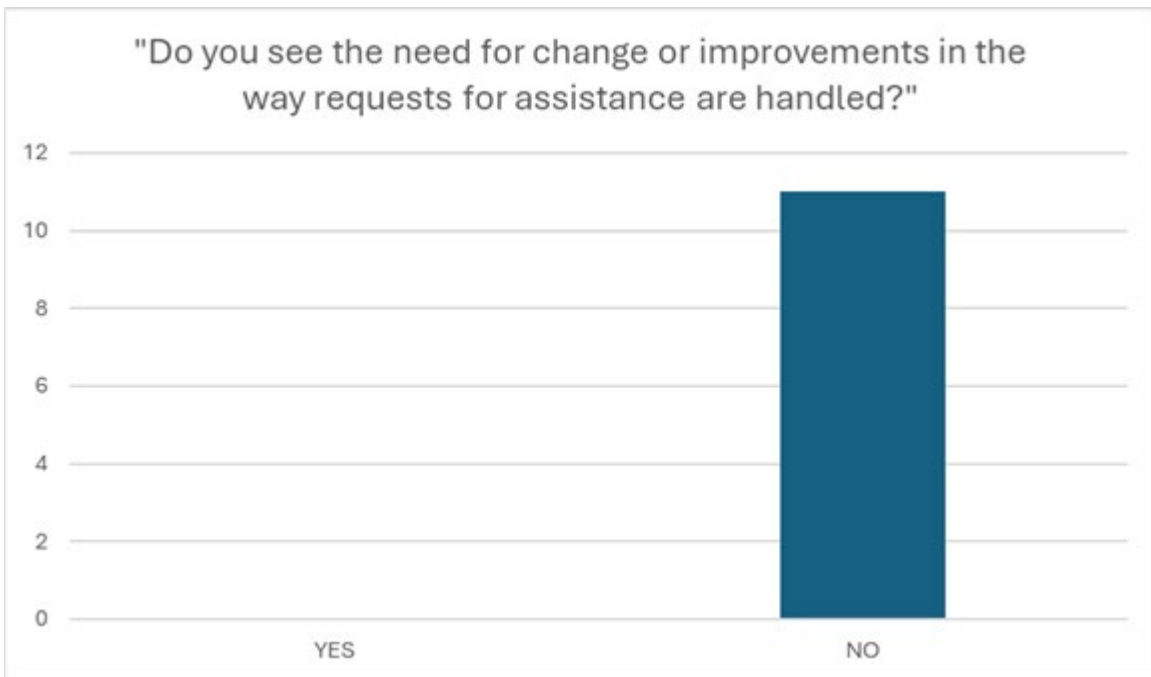
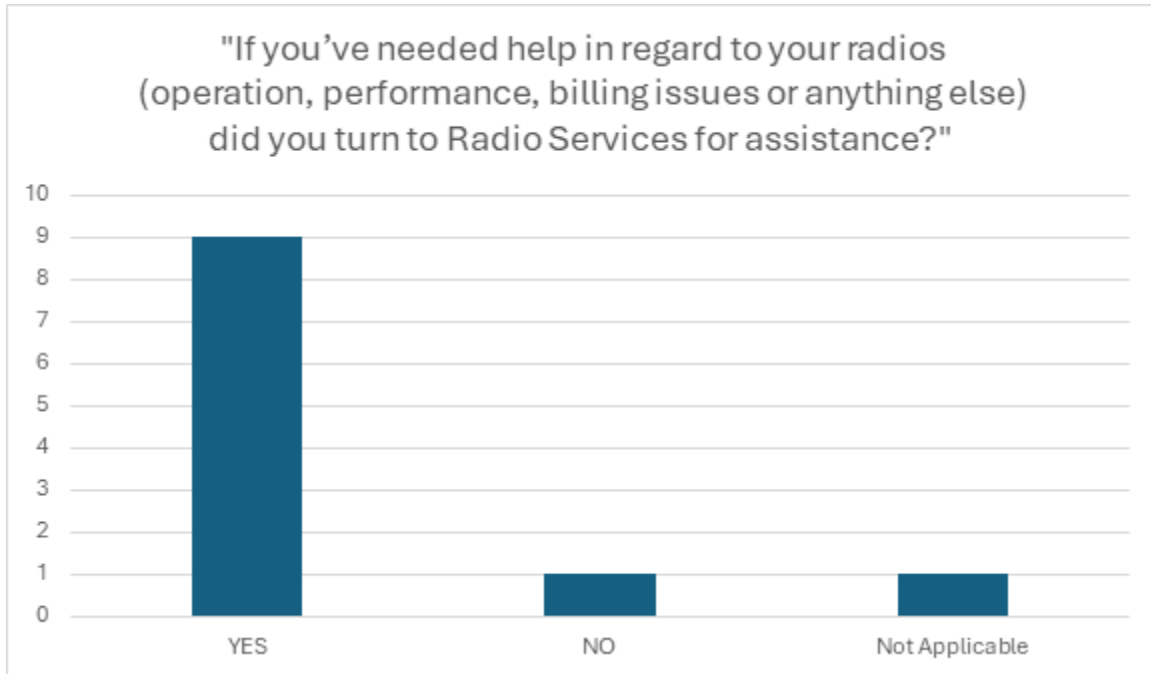
In reaching out to stakeholders, 10 responses were received for the following questions.



If you feel you need additional training or information, what areas would be most helpful?
(Participants allowed to pick multiple options)





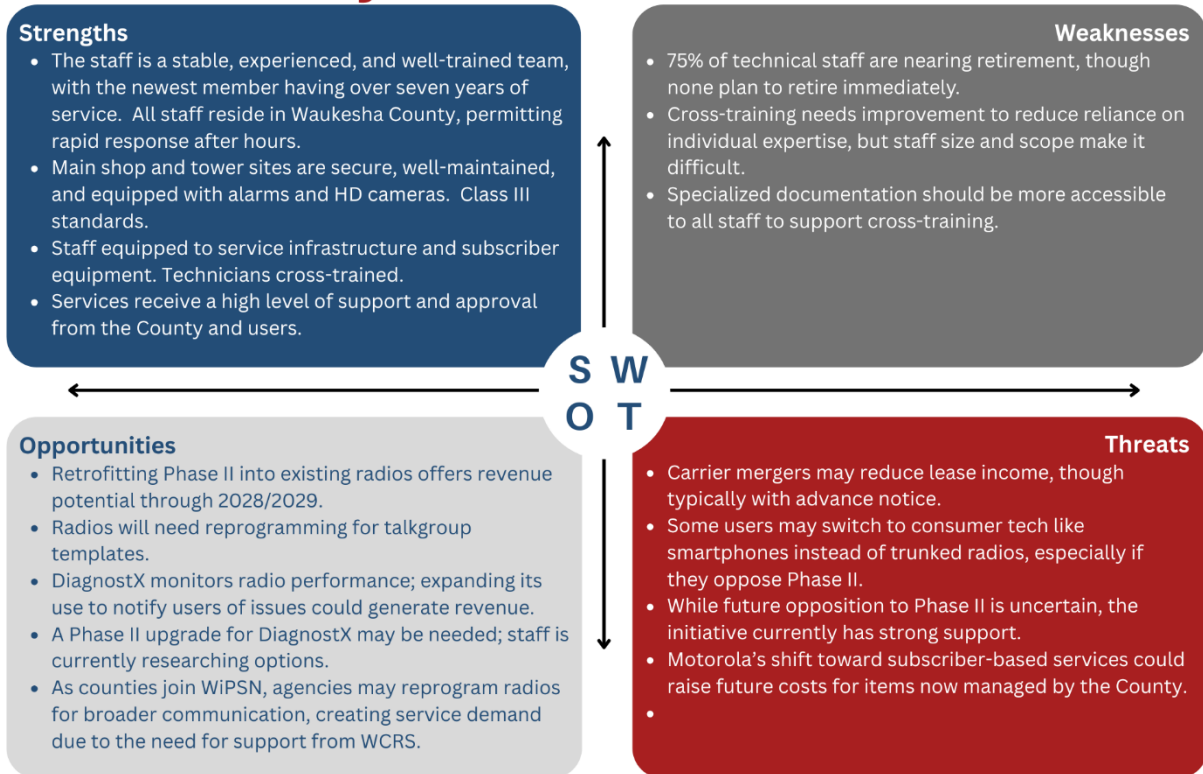


Key takeaways:

- All those responding stated that Radio Services
 - Provide adequate guidance and coordination to their agencies for their day-to-day as well emergency/disaster mobile and handheld radio needs
 - Find annual and monthly billing clear and accurate
 - See no immediate need for change or improvement on the way that requests for assistance are handled.
- Nearly all respondents advised they go to Radio Services for help in regard to operation, performance, billing issues, or anything else
- 90% of respondents advised the current radio system fulfils their operational needs
- 60% of respondents stated they do not need additional training or information from Radio Services
 - Of the 40% that were looking for additional training or information from Radio Services, there was a fairly even spread between the listed options.

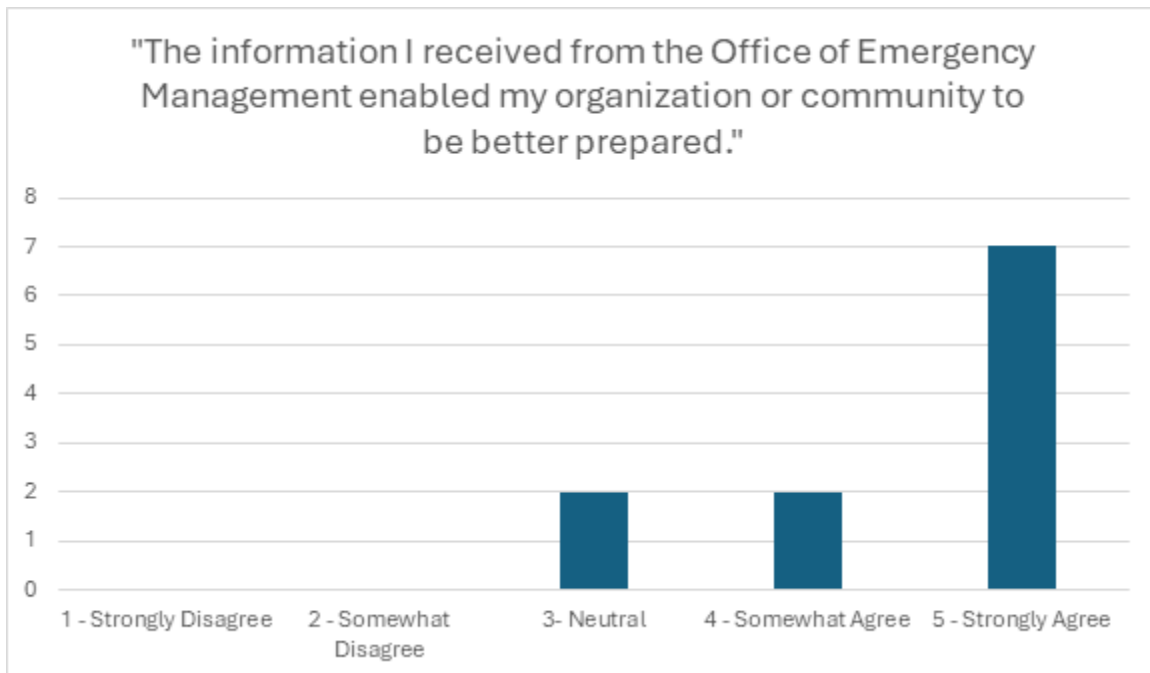
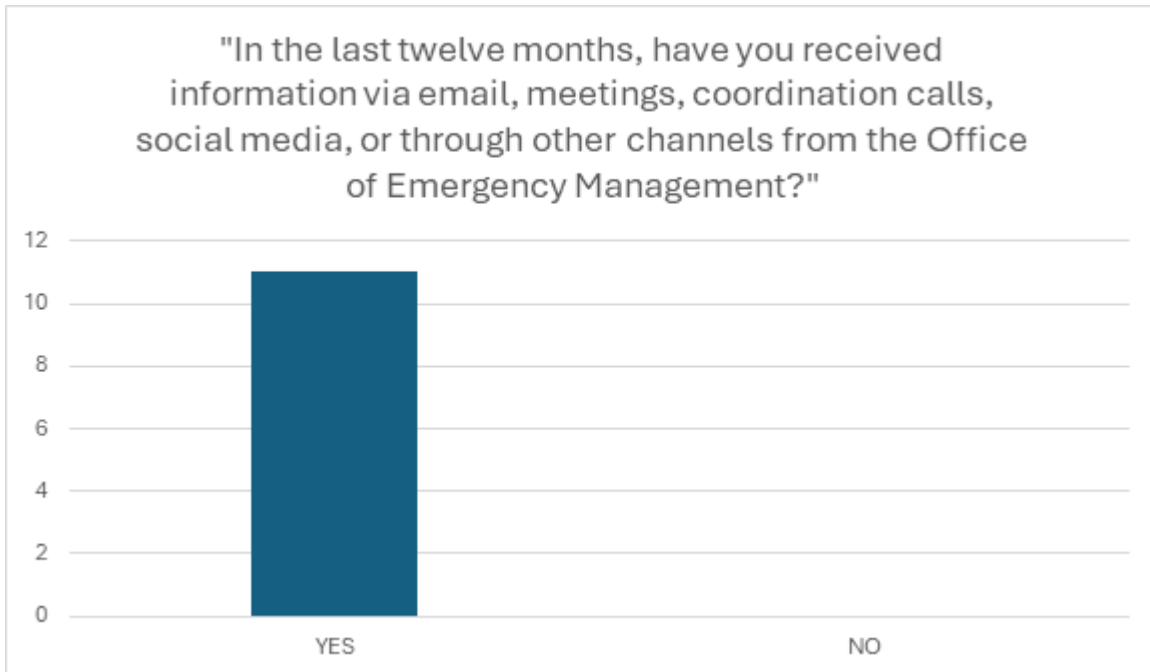
SWOT Analysis

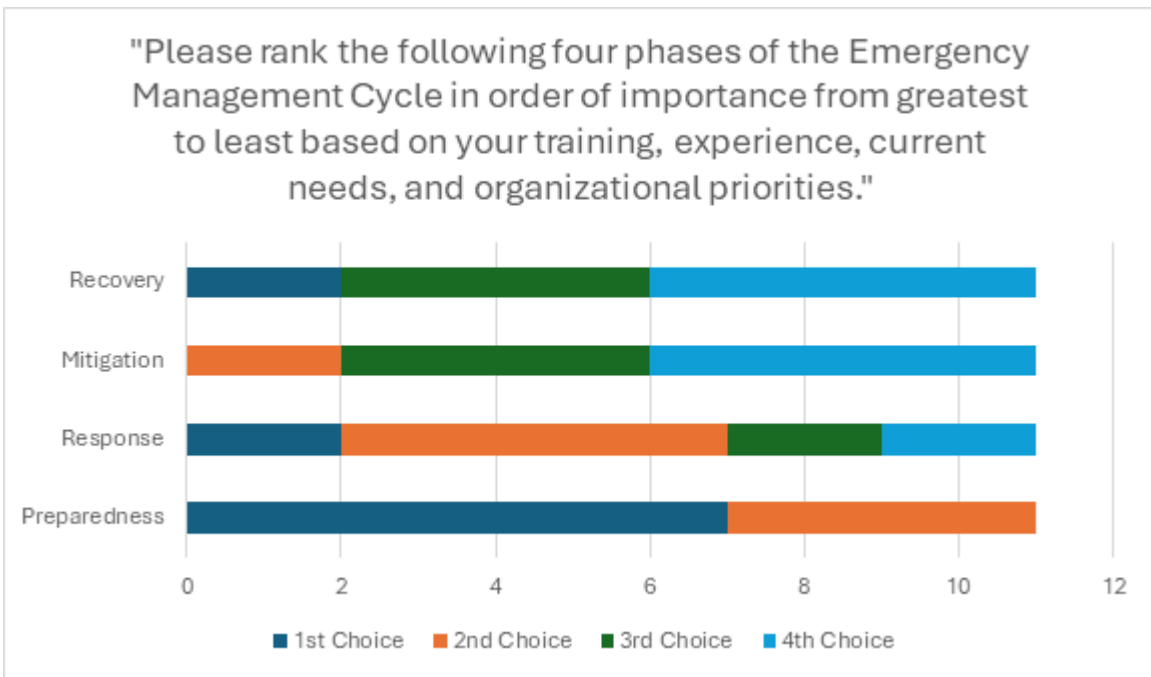
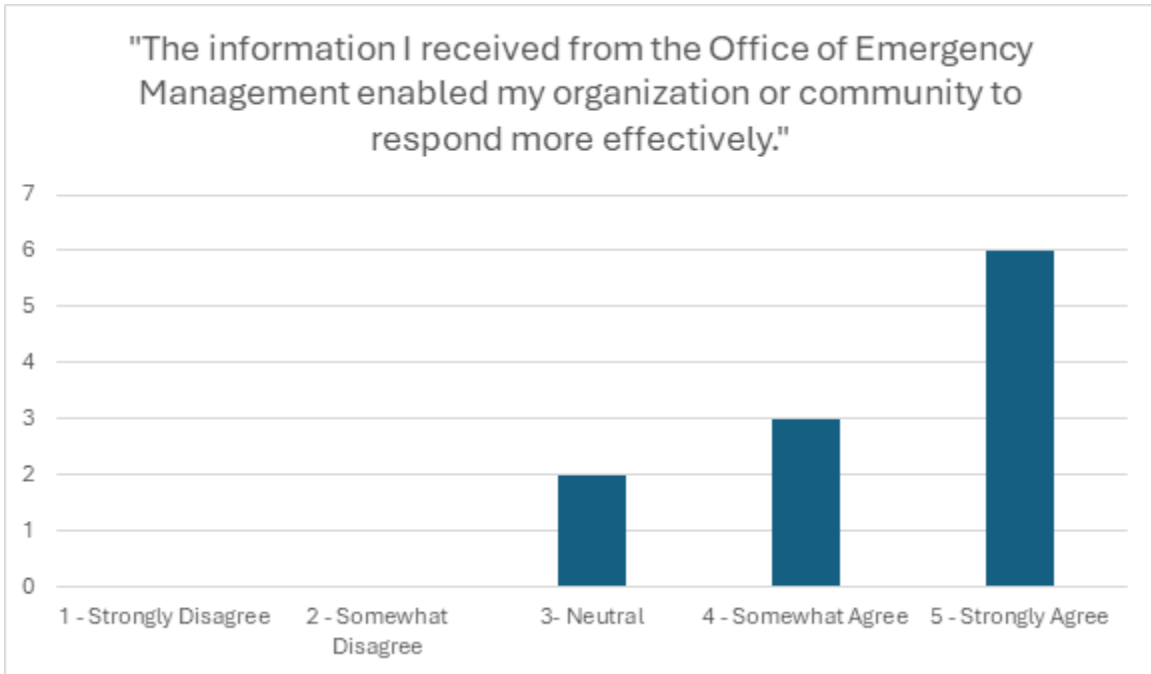
Radio Services



Emergency Management Specific Survey Results

In reaching out to stakeholders, 11 responses were received for the following questions:





Participants were asked the following open-ended questions:

How can the Office of Emergency Management better support your organization’s or your community’s efforts in the highest ranked phase above?

“Possibly build individual municipality preparedness plans that incorporate OEM.”

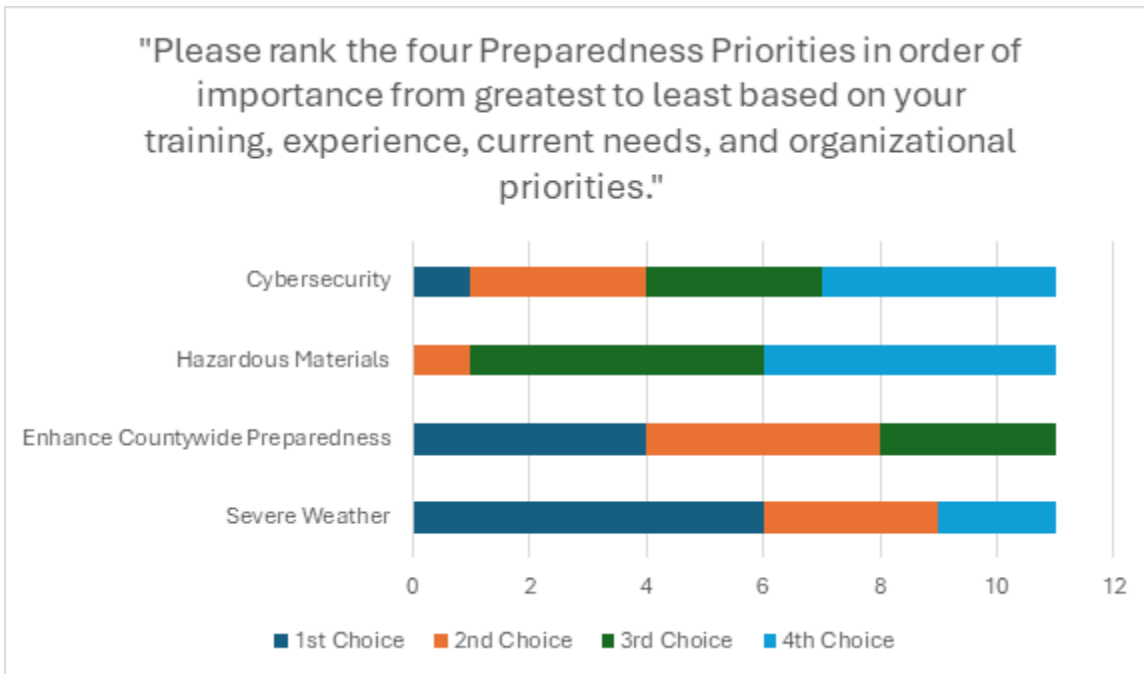
“Keep offering the support and training to local governments that the County has demonstrated they can offer during the recent flood emergency.”

“Continued education and training opportunities”

“Continue to work with the state and FEMA on IA and if authorized PA. If HM is provided to the State, fight for as much HM coming to the communities in Waukesha Co most effected by the flooding.”

“I continue to be complimentary of Waukesha EM and their past and on-going efforts with the floods of August 2025. I have always been appreciative of their efforts, and the floods were a perfect example of their teamwork.”

“I believe that all members of the Office of Emergency Management do a fantastic job. They communicate very effectively with the local Emergency Managers and Fire Chiefs.”



“When considering the needs of, and potential Preparedness Priorities for, your own community or organization, what would you describe as the top priority over the next four years?”

“To have better severe weather power outage preparedness for the elderly.”

“Setting up a proper EOC in the City of Oconomowoc with all equipment needed.”

“General preparedness for the City of Brookfield, including identifying roles and responsibilities, a facility to serve as a functional emergency operations center, training for those serving in these capacities.”

“Cybersecurity.”

“City department-wide cyber training, drills, exercises, preparedness and cyber emergency response plan/planning.”

“Cybersecurity will continue to be a priority as we become more reliant on technology.”

“Over the next couple of years, we plan to enhance our local Emergency Operations Center's facilities now that we can generate power for the entire public safety building. This improvement will enable us to function more effectively in the event that our EOC needs to be opened and activated.”

“What local departmental or community-level changes do you foresee in the next four-year period that will significantly influence organizational or community preparedness and/or resilience, if any.”

“Increased population to support when EOC activated.”

“Based on retirement timelines and restructuring of responsibilities there will be significant role reassignment in our community over the next few years.”

“Funding.”

“Staff turnover, retirement and reductions. Budget restraints.”

“Our community is continuing to grow and is planning for full development over the next 10 years. This growth will increase our population from the current 12,000 residents to almost 18,000. Numerous residential and commercial construction projects are set to take place in the coming year, and we need to ensure that we are prepared to respond to all emergencies as necessary.”

Key Takeaways:

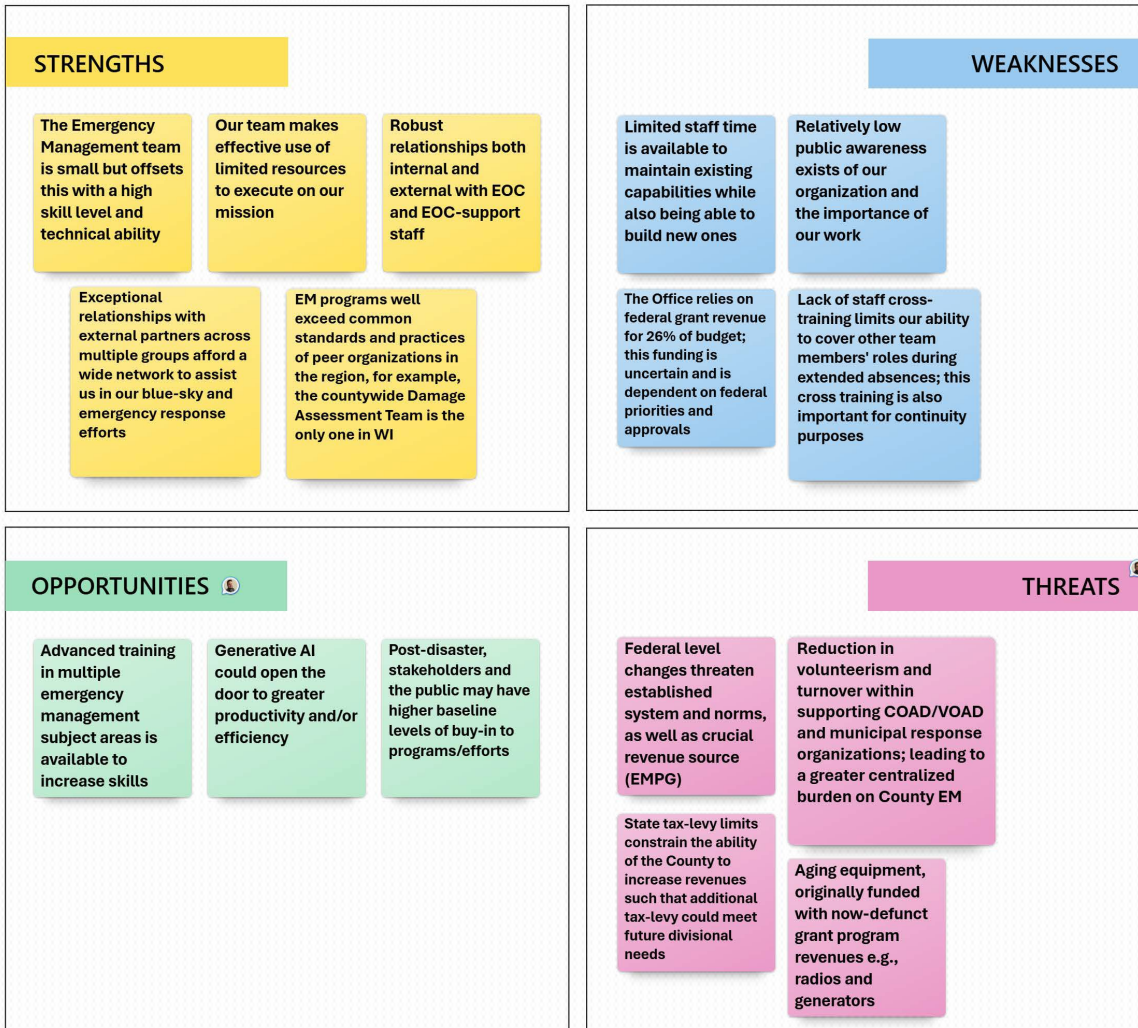
- All those responding have had direct contact or interactions with Waukesha County Emergency Management in the last 12 months.
- 63% of respondents state they strongly agree that information received by Waukesha County Emergency Management enabled their organization or community to be better prepared.
 - 18% stated they somewhat agree
 - 18% listed “neutral”
 - 0% listed strongly or somewhat agree
- Of the options provided (Preparedness, Mitigation, Response, Recovery), Preparedness was by far the most listed regarding the level of importance from those who responded.
 - Response came in second, Recovery and Mitigation were evenly split
- Between Severe weather, Enhancing Countywide Preparedness, Hazardous Materials, and Cyber security, Severe weather is overwhelmingly the highest priority to those who responded.
 - While survey results may be skewed by recency bias as a result of the August flooding disaster, severe weather is consistently the greatest threat to Waukesha County communities from an emergency management perspective.
- Sentiments toward the efforts and assistance provided by respondents regarding Waukesha County Emergency Management are overwhelmingly positive.
 - Specific focus mentioned being their response and efforts after the August 2025 floods, their communication, and consistent support and training to local governments
- Common themes in anticipated changes or challenges in the next four years per the respondents focus on staffing, funding, and anticipated organizational changes and population increase.

EM SWOT Analysis 2025

This analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats is being conducted to inform the Countywide 2025-2026 Strategic Planning Cycle. Analysis should be **concise** with 4-5 items per category max; **actionable** to enable goal-setting; **significant** in the sense that they substantially impact the division's operations or efficacy; and **authentic** rather than wishful thinking.



Strategy



ADDITIONAL SOURCES

SEWRPC "The Economy of Southeastern Wisconsin":

<https://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPCFiles/Publications/TechRep/tr-010-5th-ed-economy-se-wisc.pdf>

SEWRPC Performance Monitoring

SOCIOECONOMICS | Regional Performance Monitoring

United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year estimates
<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/table-and-geography-changes/2023/1-year.html>

United States Census: Waukesha County QuickFacts
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/waukeshacountywisconsin>

Wisconsin Department of Administration
DOA Population Projections, produced in 2024, based from 2020 Census

Wisconsin Public Radio, January 7, 2025
Wisconsin's population expected to decline by nearly 200K residents come 2050 - WPR

Wisconsin Counties Association Green Book 2025:
<https://www.forward-analytics.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-County-Fact-Book.pdf>

Community Health Sources:

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<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/08b8b7825f7bc12d2c79261fd7641c88/ltss%20risks%20financing%202022.pdf>

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Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center. (2024). *Population projections, vintage 2024*. Wisconsin Department of Health Services. https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/collection/p-00138a?order=field_title&sort=desc

Wisconsin Department of Health Services. (2024, September 27). Derived psychoactive cannabis products: Delta-8 THC and related substances. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/scaoda/derived-psychoactive-cannabis-products-report-9-27-24.pdf>

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Wisconsin Department of Health Services. (2025, January 17). Tobacco use and exposure. Wisconsin Environmental Public Health Tracking Program. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/epht/tobacco.htm>

Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH) data query system: Injury-related emergency department visits module. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/index.htm>

Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Informatics. (2025). *Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH) data query system: Mortality module*. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/index.htm>

SEWRPC Vision 2050 (Updated 2024): Land Use and Transportation Data <https://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPCFiles/Vision2050/2020UpdateReportFinal.PDF>