



# State of Jefferson County

July 24, 2025

Michael Luckey, Jefferson County Administrator



**EXPLORE. THRIVE. BELONG.**



Diverse Housing Options



Highly Regarded Quality of Life

## Jefferson County Strategic Priorities



Intentional Economic Growth



Transformative Government

# Jefferson County Statistics

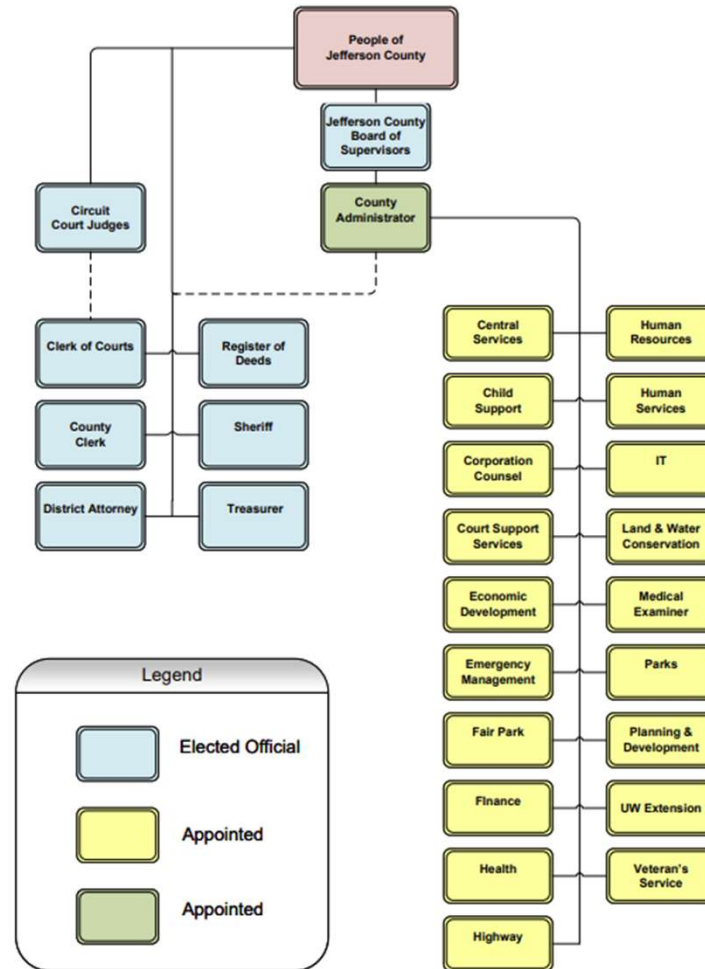
- Population: 86,855
- Area: 583 sq. mi
- Total Cropped Acreage: 218,210
- Cropped Acreage Percentage of Total Land: 61.3%
- Average Acres Per Farm: 210
- County Center Lane Miles: 256.3
- Students: 14,692
- County Parks Acreage: 1,180 (22 County Parks)
- 11 Law Enforcement Departments
- 19 Fire and/or EMS Departments
- Total Labor Force: 47,589
- Unemployment Rate (May '25): 3%
- Labor Basin (people within a 45-minute drive time): 1,377,592
  - Median Age: 38.8
  - Households: 586,885
  - Median Household Income: \$89,568
  - High School/GED and Higher: 95.15%
  - Total Workforce: 781,505
- Healthy Communities Designation: Gold
  - Ranked 196<sup>th</sup> of over 3,000 nationwide (improvement from 200<sup>th</sup> in 2023/24)



## Organizational Chart and Structure

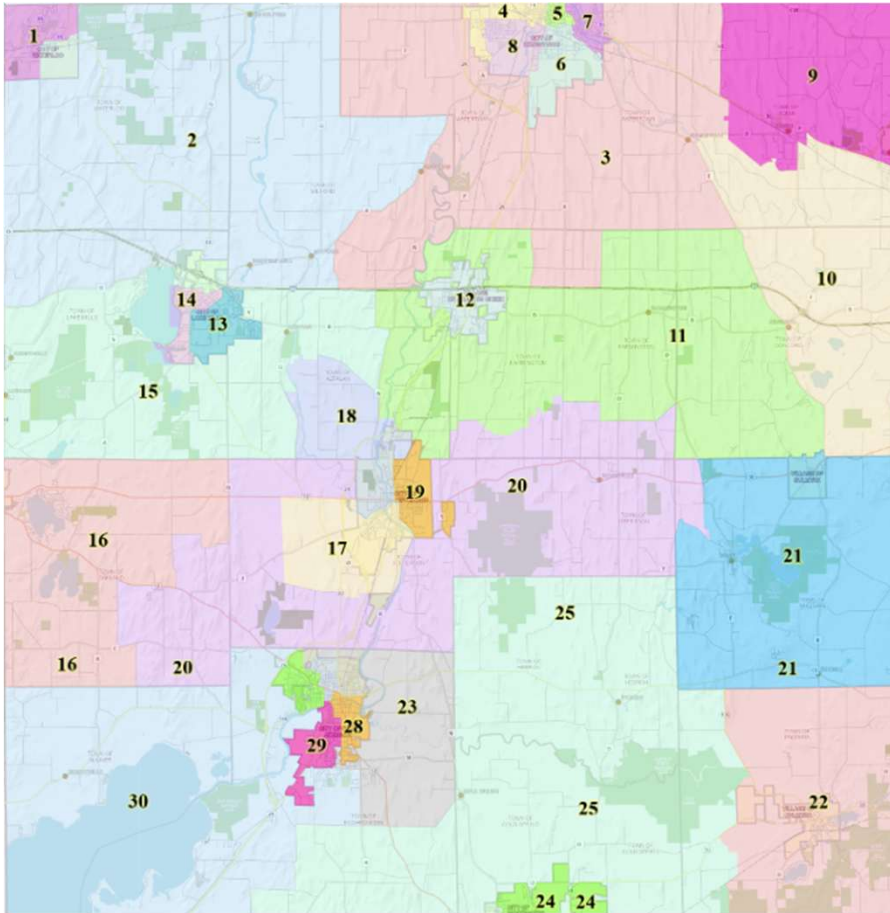
- Blend of local government and responsibilities as “arm of the state”
- 26 Departments, overseen by elected or appointed officials
  - 680.86 County & State funded positions

Jefferson County Government Organizational Chart





# Jefferson County Board of Supervisors



Steve Nass  
*Chair*



Michael Wineke  
*1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair*



Blane Poulson  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair*

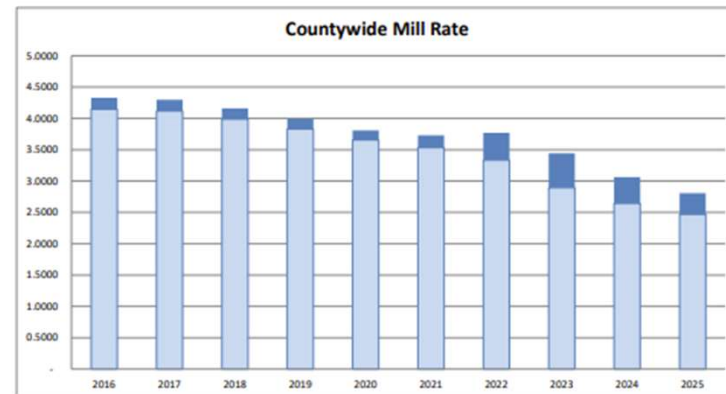
- 30 Supervisors elected to two-year terms
- 39 Committees, Boards, Commissions, and Other Bodies



# Budget and Financial Information

- \$109.6 million budget
  - Total Tax Levy: \$32.7 million (29.8%)
- 2025 Mill Rate: 2.8049
- Nine of past ten years had Mill Rate decrease
- Two consecutive years of reduction in Levy and Mill Rate
- Maintain Aa2 Bond Rating
- Priority-Based Budgeting

Adopted Mill Rate Summary							
Countywide (total)	Year	Equalized Value	Tax Levy	Levy \$ Change	Chg from Pr Yr	Chg from Mill Rate Pr Yr	
	2016	6,177,155,800	26,743,522	232,631	0.88%	4.3294	-1.42%
	2017	6,299,618,300	27,068,827	325,305	1.22%	4.2969	-0.75%
	2018	6,575,416,500	27,357,982	289,155	1.07%	4.1606	-3.17%
	2019	6,923,882,000	27,636,322	278,340	1.02%	3.9914	-4.07%
	2020	7,363,259,200	28,045,222	408,900	1.48%	3.8088	-4.58%
	2021	7,789,414,400	29,051,683	1,006,461	3.59%	3.7296	-2.08%
	2022	8,324,422,600	31,392,371	2,340,688	8.06%	3.7711	1.11%
	2023	9,810,057,600	33,762,184	2,369,813	7.55%	3.4416	-8.74%
	2024	10,869,930,000	33,285,195	(476,989)	-1.41%	3.0621	-11.03%
2025	11,657,080,200	32,696,383	(588,812)	-1.77%	2.8049	-8.40%	



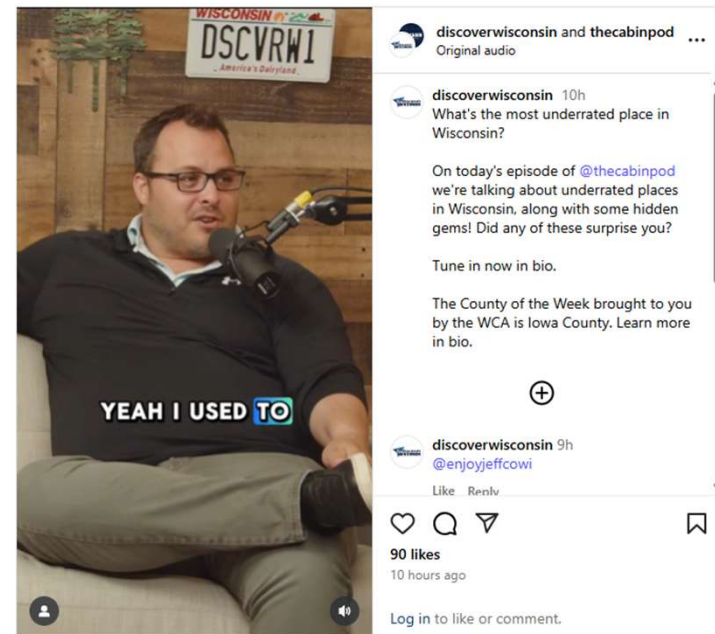
# Awards

- “Nurse of the Year” – Wisconsin Nursing Association & Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
  - Maria de la Luz Lira, Jefferson County Public Health Nurse
- Working Lands Preservation Award – Gathering Waters
  - Jefferson County Land & Water Conservation Department
- Distinguished Budget Presentation – Government Finance Officers Association
  - Jefferson County Finance Department
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting – Government Finance Officers Association
  - Jefferson County Finance Department
- “Notable Health Care Leader” – BizTimes Media
  - Elizabeth McGeary, Director/Health Officer of Jefferson County Health Department
- “Woman Executive of the Year” – BizTimes Media
  - Deb Reinbold, President/Executive Director, ThriveED and Jefferson County Economic Development



# Making a Name for Ourselves... and Word is Getting Around

- Hiring Process for Communications & Marketing Coordinator Position
  - Will support County Board, County Departments, and Communities Countywide in Tourism/Marketing Coordination
- The Cabin Podcast (this week!)
  - Jefferson County as one of Wisconsin's "hidden gems"





# Uniquely WISCONSIN



*How William Hoard Created the Dairy State | Jefferson County's Hoard's Dairyman*



*Lifeline for Youth | Jefferson County's Brand New Youth Stabilization Program*

*The Artists Behind Trek's Project One Bikes | Cycling in Waterloo*



# Podcasts

- “Going MadWaukee in Jefferson County”
  - The Upswing
- #LocalGovMatters
  - Wisconsin Counties Association



# “Jefferson County Connect” Newsletter



## Be in the Know — Join Your Community

Get the latest updates from Jefferson County delivered straight to your inbox — every quarter.

Our professionally curated newsletter keeps you informed about local news, county services, community events, and insights from the people leading positive change in our area. Whether you're looking for upcoming activities, important announcements, or behind-the-scenes leadership stories, this is your go-to resource.

- ✓ Highlights from the past three months
- ✓ Upcoming events and seasonal programs
- ✓ Leadership Spotlight featuring local voices
- ✓ Updates on county services and initiatives
- ✓ Featured blog content, videos, and more

We're proud to serve Jefferson County residents with reliable, timely, and relevant information. Sign up today and never miss an important update.

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STAY INFORMED. STAY CONNECTED.

## JEFFERSON COUNTY CONNECT

### Sign Up for the Official Jefferson County Quarterly Newsletter




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# “Intentional Economic Growth”

- “By embracing growth with intentionality, we will create a legacy of prosperity that respects our environment, celebrates our culture and offers opportunity to the residents and businesses that have chosen to call Jefferson County home.” – Jefferson County Strategic Plan
- Why is growth important?
  - Net New Construction/Equalized Value/Levy Limits
  - Cost and quality of services
  - School enrollment/school aids
  - General Transportation Aids
  - Sales Tax
  - Employment
  - Location of private sector services
- What do we mean by growth?
  - Urban service areas, transportation corridors, density & infill, both multi- and single-family residential, commercial, industrial
- Partnerships are key!



# How do you...

## Attract Industrial Growth?

- Land
- Utility capacity
- Zoning
- Workforce
- Housing

## Attract Residents?

- Housing availability
- Affordability
- Transportation
- Quality of Life
- Location, location, location!

## Attract Housing?

- Growing community
- Availability of Real Estate
- Ease of development
- Financials
- Balance of Supply/Demand
  - Type of housing and housing quality

## Attract Retail?

- Rooftops
- Wages



# Economic Development in 2025


# BizTimes Media: “MadWaukee 2050”

## Commentary: Jefferson County's time has arrived

By **Andrew Weiland**  
Apr 14, 2025 4:30 pm

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Next in line: Jefferson County positioned for growth, but will execution meet expectations?

# Onego Bio

## Finnish food tech company Onego Bio to invest up to \$300 million to build flagship plant in Jefferson



By **Ashley Smart**  
Mar 28, 2025 11:56 am

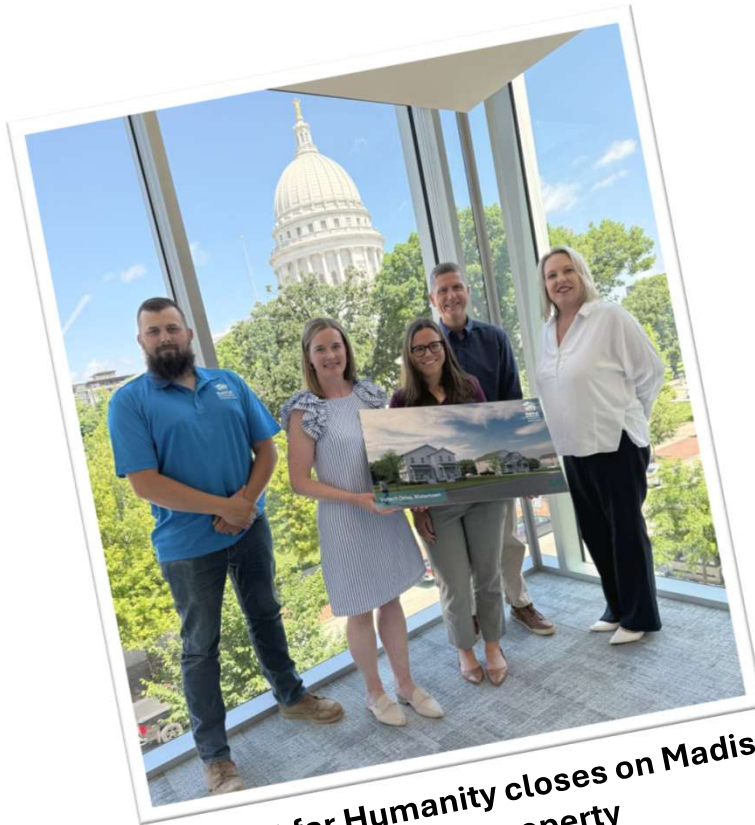
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# Making Headlines



**Habitat for Humanity closes on Madison College property**



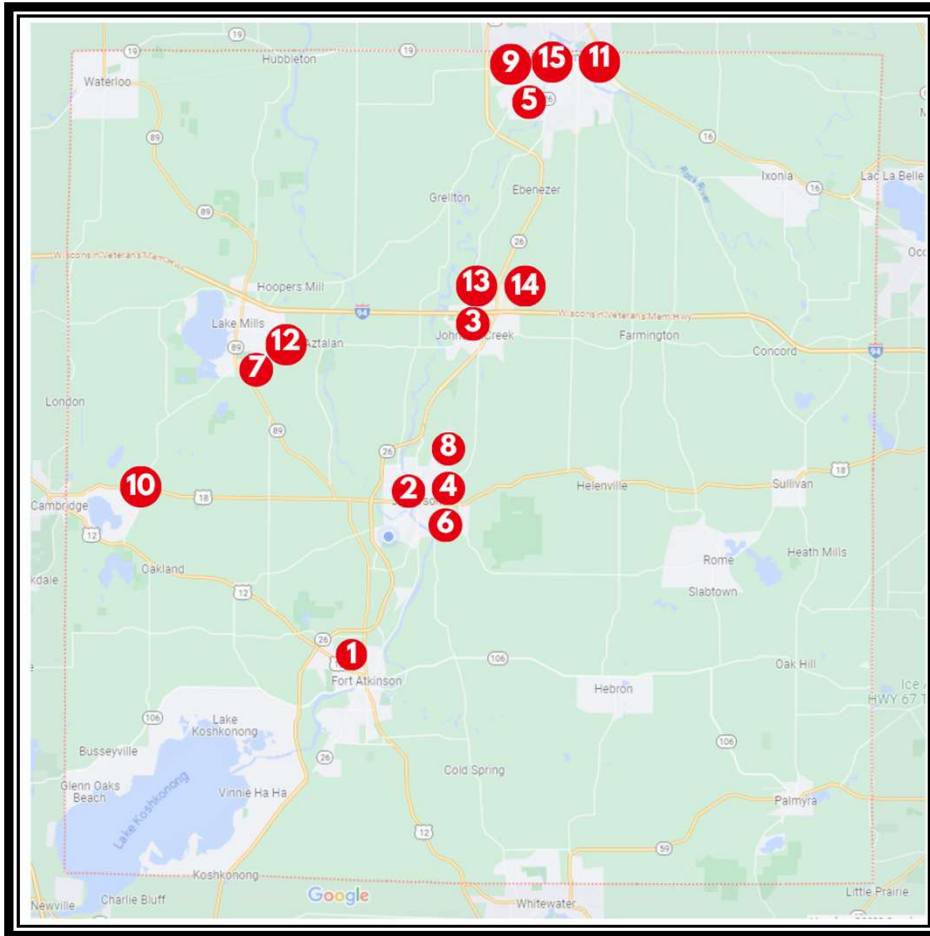
**Major Industrial Development to Break Ground in Fort Atkinson's Klement Business Park**



**Sausage Company to Expand in Watertown**



# Building Homes



**Developments shown here represent more than 1,500 new housing units in Jefferson County**



# Housing Studies

- Housing Summit on May 18, 2023
- “Residential Market Analysis” study by Tracy Cross & Associates published May 20, 2025
- Thorough investigation of Jefferson County and surrounding areas to identify factors expected to impact residential potentials going forward
- Detailed analysis of all relevant employment, demographic, and residential trends/statistics
- Thorough assessment of both the rental apartment and for sale/ownership sectors of the Jefferson County housing market
- Demand forecast for residential development in Jefferson County over the next 5+ years



# Residential Market Analysis

- “First and foremost, current conditions in the residential marketplace lend full support for the demand/need for *new* residential development...”
- “As it relates to the ownership sector of the market, supply-side constraints are also apparent, especially for moderately priced mainstream product.”
- “...growth in the county remains positive, which, too, bodes well for future housing initiatives.”

## Residential Market Analysis (cont'd)

- “Fostered by a stable economy, and on the heels of expected positive household growth, construction requirements for new housing in Jefferson County will average a minimum of 385 units annually...”
- “This market reality represents an opportunity for housing initiatives across the county.”
- “[Beyond *derived demand*], the overall base of residential construction requirements could actually be *higher* during any given year where properly positioned supply is made available.”



# Planning for New Housing

- Full market study available on ThriveED website
- Economic and demographic forecasts call for a mixture of housing types and housing price points
- Strategic Plans from ThriveED and Jefferson County echo these forecasts, with intentionality
- Commercial and personal housing assistance, such as *Live Local Development Fund* and HUD Counseling
- Increased advocacy, education, partnerships



# Jefferson County Initiatives







**LIVE LOCAL**  
**DEVELOPMENT FUND**



- \$9.5 million fund
- Loans up to \$25,000 per unit for a negotiated term at or below market rates



## Jefferson County Financial Empowerment Center

*Free One-on-One  
Financial Counseling*



### decrease debt

We help you build a personalized plan to break the cycle of debt and take steps toward lasting financial freedom.



### increase credit

We'll help you review your credit report and understand the steps to build—and keep—a stronger credit score.



### increase savings

Start small and build up. We'll work with you to set achievable savings goals and build habits that last.



### safe banking

Get connected to a secure, low-cost bank account. Learn how to use it confidently to manage your money and reach your goals.

## Launching this summer!

- Free, professional, client-led, one-on-one financial counseling
- Open to all Jefferson County residents or employees of Jefferson County businesses



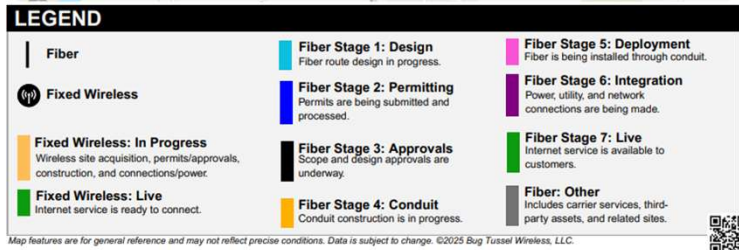
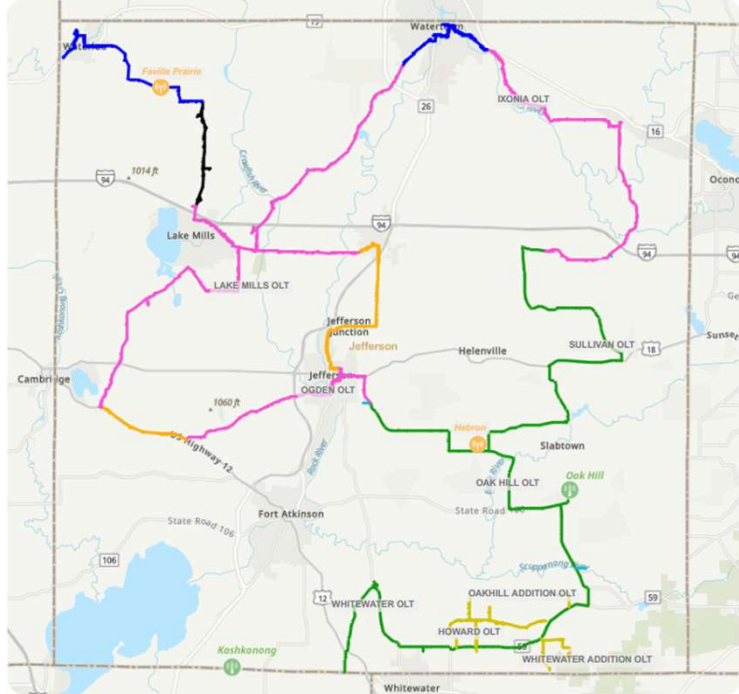
# Broadband Planning

Project Update  
Q2 2025

bugtussel

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Updated 7/17/25

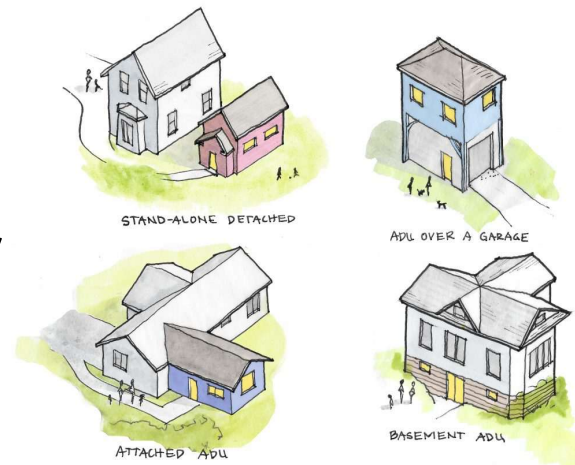


- Bug Tussel fiber loop live in many locations
- Spectrum announces launch of “internet, mobile, TV and voice services to over 4,200 homes in Jefferson County”
- Federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program undergoing changes but application process has re-opened

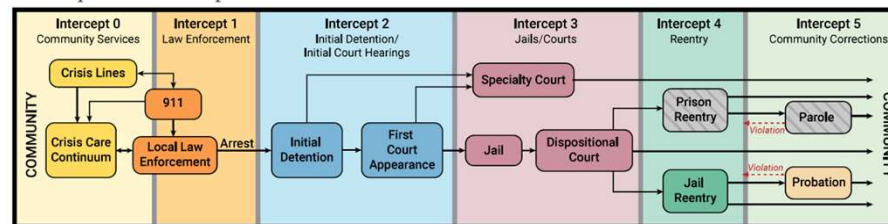


# In the Works

- Continuation/Expansion of HUD Counseling
- EMS Working Group
  - Representatives from Town, Village, and City governments, Sheriff, County Board Supervisors, Fire Chiefs, Medical Director
  - Examining ways to strengthen Emergency Medical Services countywide
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) Mapping Workshop



The Sequential Intercept Model



# Department/County Highlights



# New Faces

New Department Heads/Elected Officials since last State of the County address



Sean Heaslip  
*Highway Commissioner*



Travis Maze  
*Sheriff*



Jerry Haferman  
*Undersheriff*



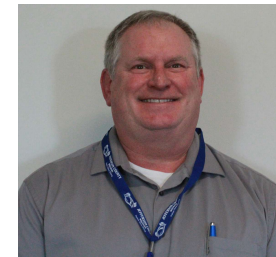
Theresa Beck  
*Judge, Circuit Court Branch 2*



Tracy Hameau  
*Emergency Management Director*



Michael Luckey  
*County Administrator*



John Fox  
*Facilities Director*

# Jefferson County Legislative Breakfast draws local, state leaders

DAILY UNION STAFF May 4, 2025 0



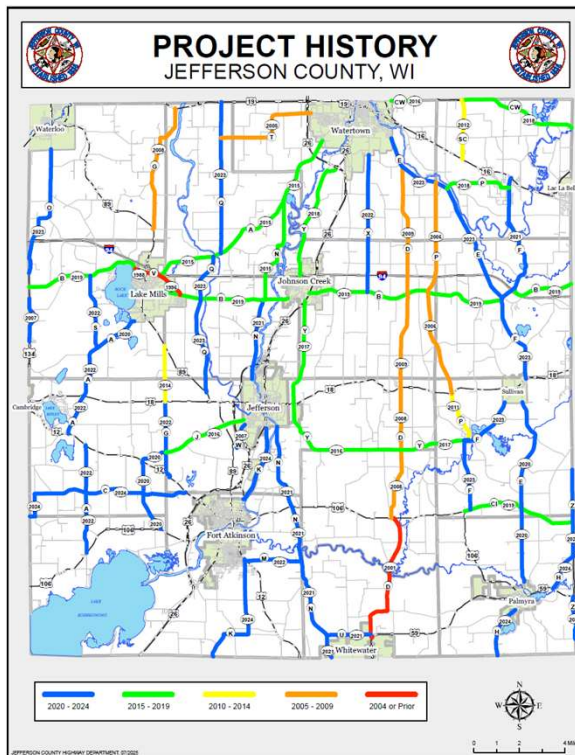
State Sen. Melissa Ratcliff speaks at a recent Jefferson County Legislative Breakfast at the Jefferson County Courthouse.  
COURTESY JEFFERSON COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

# County Fair / Fair Park

- 2025 Fair July 9-13
- Preliminary Numbers (will increase slightly)
- Attendance up 13%
- Gate Receipts up 32%



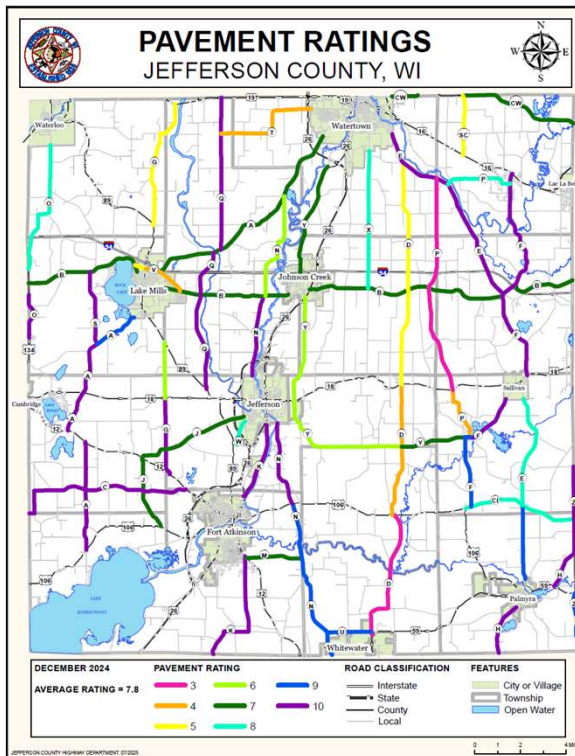
# County Highway System



- Continue corridor-based maintenance projects
- 20-year highway plan
- 256.3 Center Lane Miles in County Highway System
  - 24.5 center lane miles Interstate
  - 152.5 center lane miles State
  - 1,010.24 center lane miles Local



# Pavement Ratings



- Ten-point scale for pavement ratings
- Improvement from 5.5 in 2015 to 7.8 in 2024

# Jefferson County Sheriff's Office



- Strong recruitment and high employee satisfaction
- Jail is fully staffed, Patrol is staffed at a high level



# County Parks System



- Korth Park 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration – June 5, 2025
- Brew with a View

- Carnes Park 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration – August 19, 2025

# Human Services Department

- Popular new vendor for Congregate and Home Delivered Meals
  - “My parents LOVE the new fresh meal options... these meals have changed their eating life, this is the best decision we could have made for our parents, thank you!”
- Increased attendance at “Welcome to Medicare” workshops
- Voices for Hope to hold first Run/Walk for Suicide Prevention in Watertown on September 13<sup>th</sup>
- All CCS staff trained in Motivational Interviewing
- Community Support Program satisfaction increased from 4.3 to 4.6 on a five-point scale
- Birth to Three program referrals are helping us reach kids earlier
- Children’s Long-Term Support family testimonial
  - “We have come a long way from the beginning. The CLTS IT’S JUST AN AMAZING PROGRAM.”



# Future Projects and Goals

- Facilities Upgrades
  - Courthouse project complete
  - Building & Grounds Committee touring & examining all facilities for future prioritization
  - Building Upgrade & Energy Audit complete, will assist with energy-saving and environmental measures
  - Will be adding additional courthouse parking
  - Designing new lobby for Health & Human Services to improve security
- Website upgrade underway
- Additional Solar & Alternative Energy Projects within the County
- Continued focus on “Transformative Government”
  - Be a leader in local government
  - Financial responsibility, data-driven budgets and policy, professional development, succession planning, wellness, partnerships and collaboration



# The State of the County is Strong

