



State of Jefferson County

July 23, 2026

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

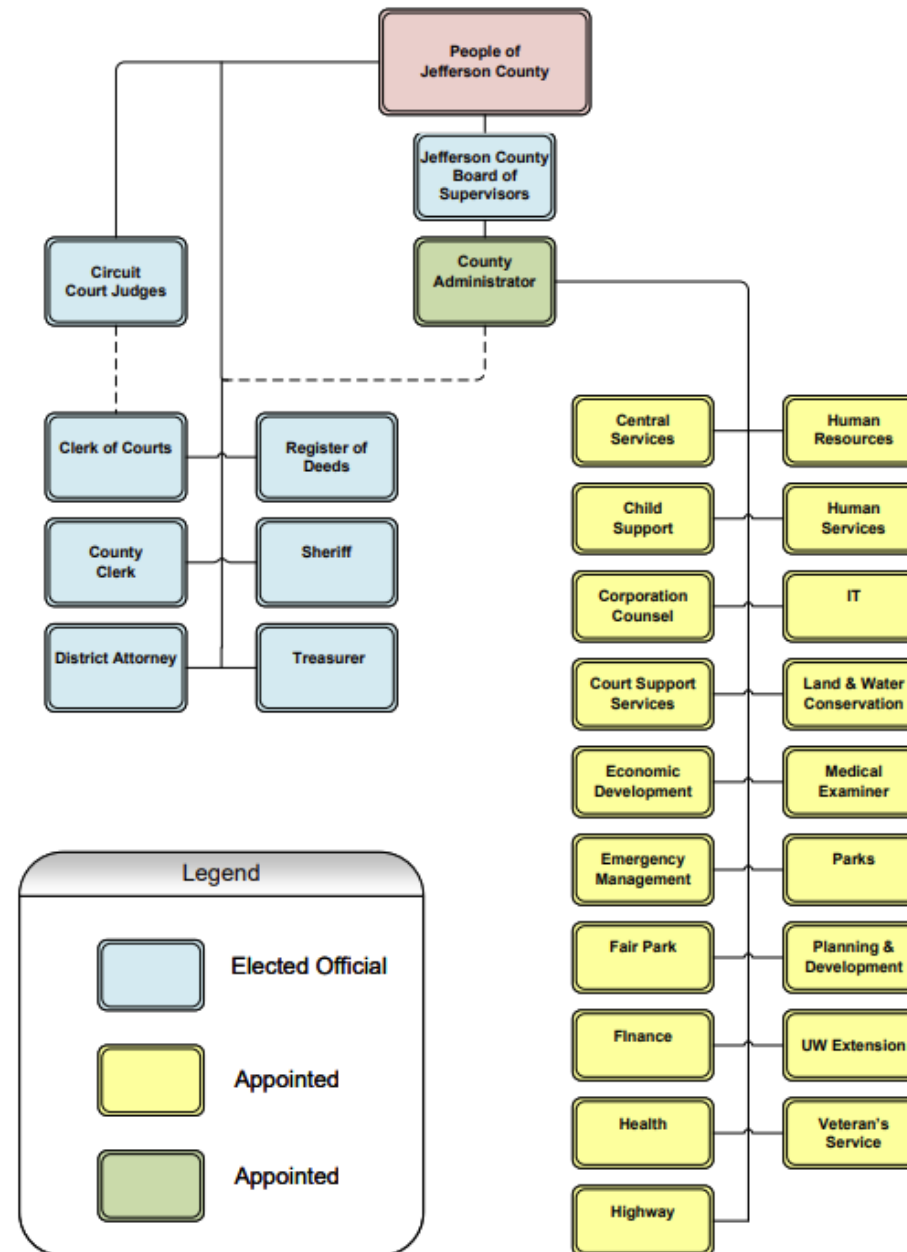
Jefferson County Statistics

- Population: 86,855
- Area: 583 sq. mi
- Total Cropped Acreage: 216,225
- Cropped Acreage Percentage of Total Land: 60.7%
- Average Acres Per Farm: 101
- County Center Lane Miles: 256.3
- Students: 14,376
- County Parks Acreage: 1,180 (22 County Parks)
- 11 Law Enforcement Departments
- 15 Fire and/or EMS Departments
- Total Labor Force: 47,915
- Unemployment Rate (Dec '25): 2.9%
- Labor Basin (people within a 45- minute drive time): 930,070
- Jefferson County workforce:
 - Median Age: 41.5
 - Median Household Income: \$87,512
 - High School/GED and Higher: 94%

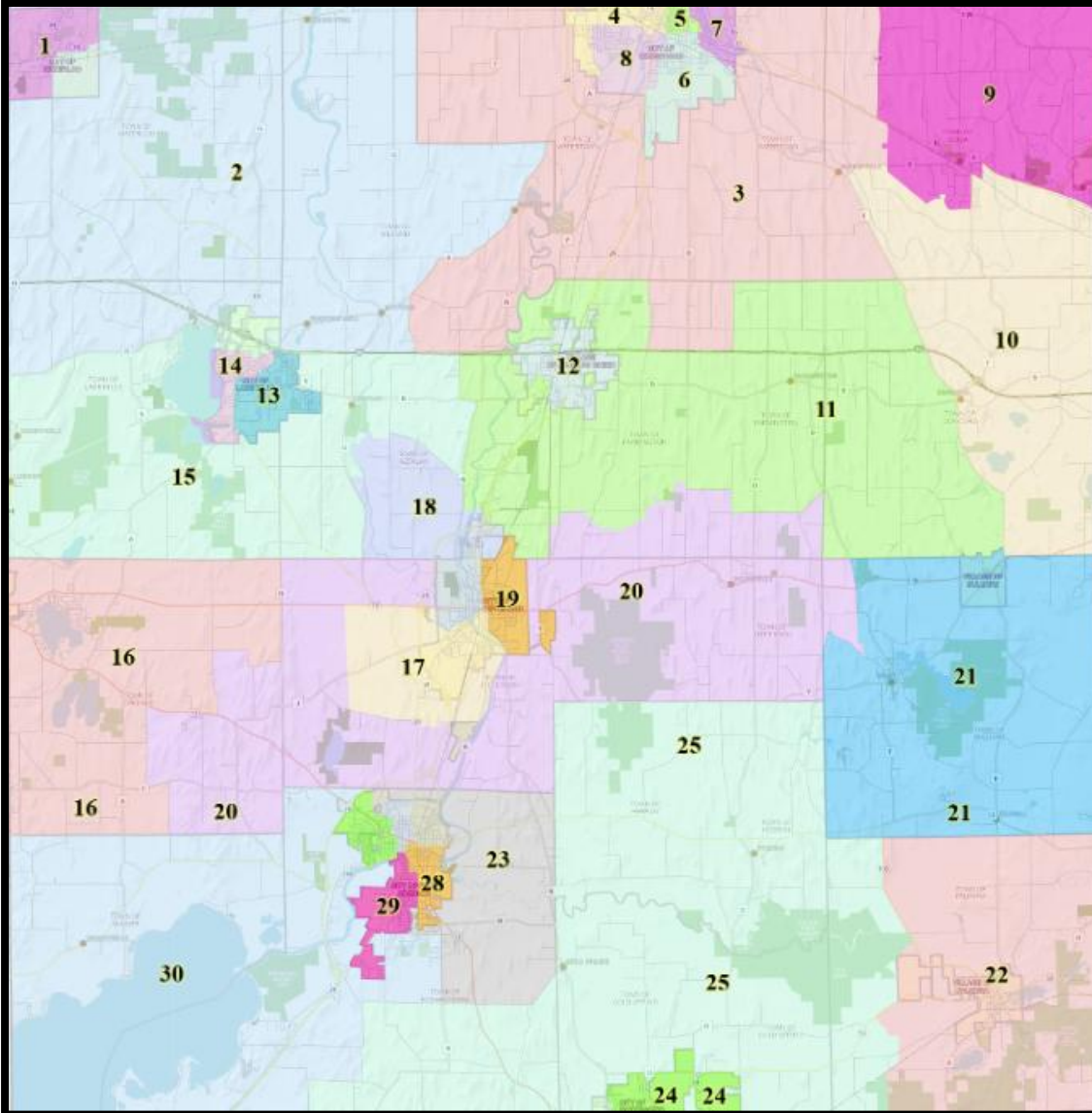
Organizational Chart and Structure

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

Jefferson County Government Organizational Chart



Jefferson County Board of Supervisors



Steve Nass
Chair



Jim Braugher
1st Vice-Chair



Blane Poulson
2nd Vice-Chair

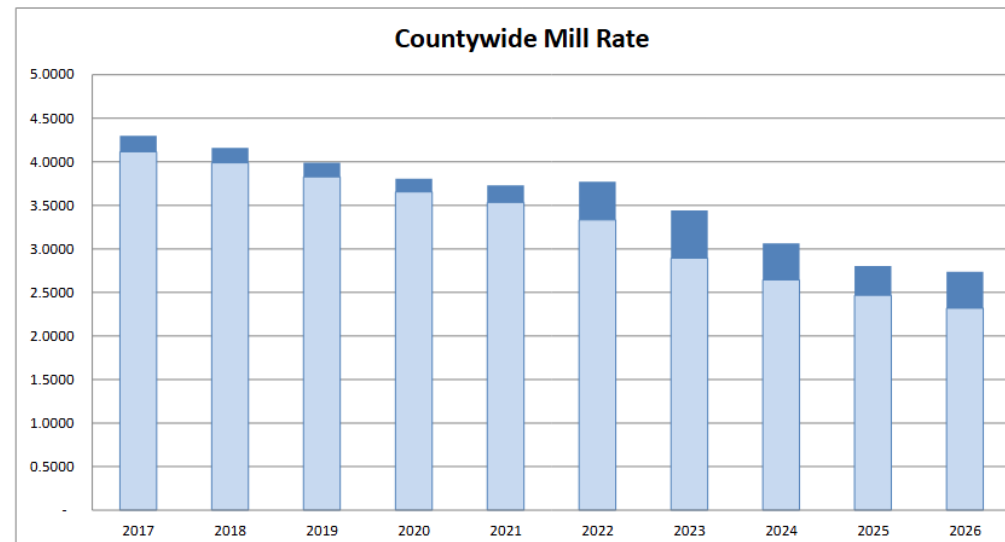
- 30 Supervisors elected to two-year terms
- 39 Committees, Boards, Commissions, and Other Bodies

Budget and Financial Information

- \$116 million budget
 - Total Tax Levy: \$36.7 million (31.6%)
- 2026 Mill Rate: 2.7391
- Nine of past ten years had Mill Rate decrease
- Maintain Aa2 Bond Rating

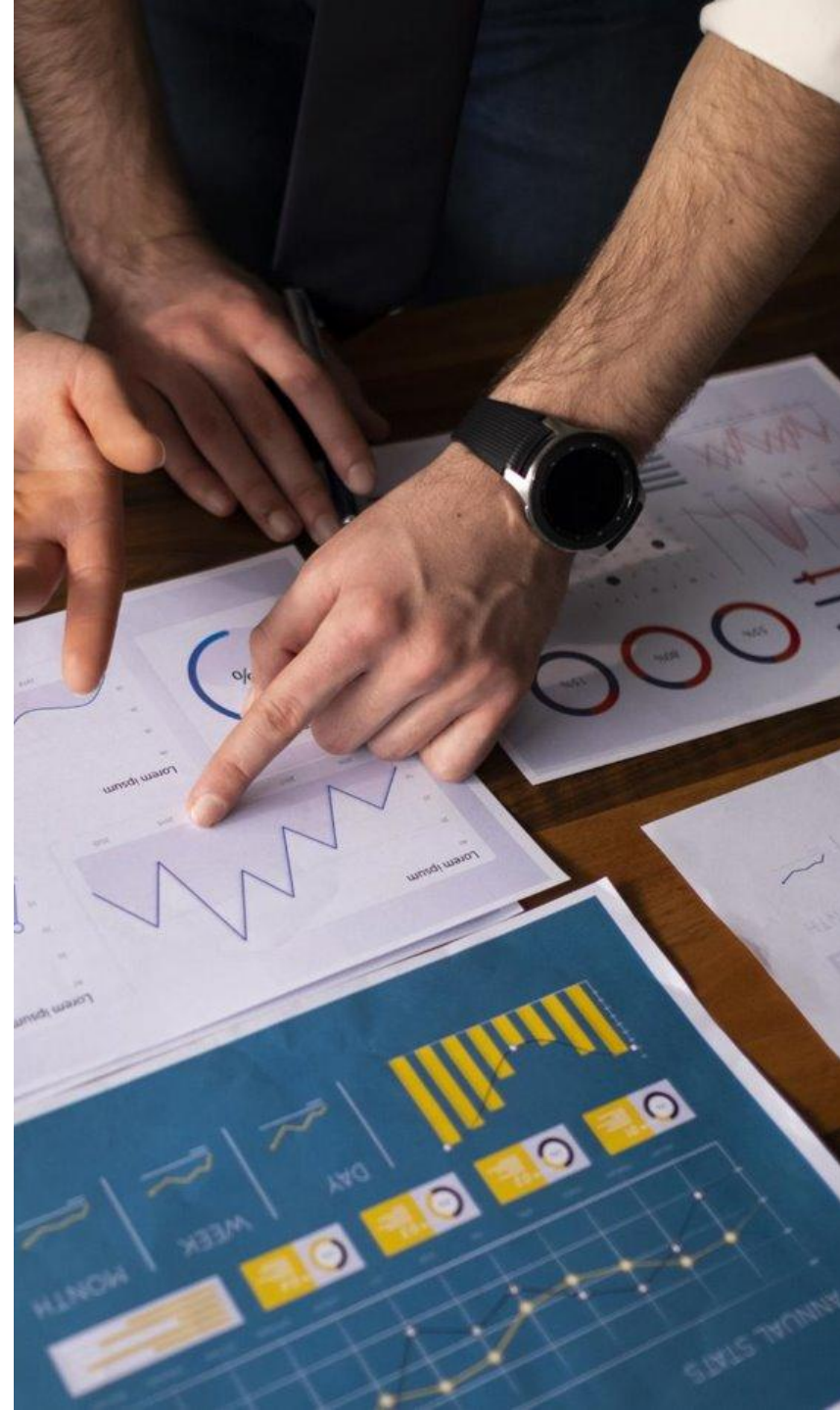
Adopted Mill Rate Summary

Year	Equalized Value	Tax Levy	Levy \$ Change	Chg from Pr	
				Yr	Mill Rate
2017	6,299,618,300	27,068,827	325,305	1.22%	4.2969
2018	6,575,416,500	27,357,982	289,155	1.07%	4.1606
2019	6,923,882,000	27,636,322	278,340	1.02%	3.9914
2020	7,363,259,200	28,045,222	408,900	1.48%	3.8088
2021	7,789,414,400	29,051,683	1,006,461	3.59%	3.7296
2022	8,324,422,600	31,392,371	2,340,688	8.06%	3.7711
2023	9,810,057,600	33,762,184	2,369,813	7.55%	3.4416
2024	10,869,930,000	33,285,195	(476,989)	-1.41%	3.0621
2025	11,657,080,200	32,696,383	(588,812)	-1.77%	2.8049
2026	12,565,910,700	34,419,898	1,723,515	5.27%	2.7391



Fiscal Responsibility & Administration

- Finance Department again received two awards from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)
 - Distinguished Budget Presentation Award
 - Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
- 2025 General Fund budget surplus of \$2.5 million
- Annual Reports for all Departments online
 - Encourage reading them
 - Finance Department report raises thoughtful questions about future priorities



Community Engagement & Communication



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.

It's free. It's local. It's for you.

STAY INFORMED. STAY CONNECTED.

JEFFERSON COUNTY CONNECT

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news.jeffersoncountywi.gov



Community Engagement & Communication

- New Website (ADA Accessibility)
- Communications and Marketing Coordinator hired Oct. 2025
 - Facebook: 8.1k followers to 9.1k followers, 12% increase
 - 400% increase in quarterly press releases
 - Increased Tourism push
 - Revitalization of county tourism website
- Co-Host of WCA Conference
- “Community Spotlight Award”

Speaker's Bureau

Department	Presentations	Contact Information
Administration	Jefferson County 101	920-674-7101
Corporation Counsel	An Overview of Wisconsin's Public Records Laws Ethics for Local Officials Parliamentary Procedure: Rules for Effective Meetings Transparency Matters: Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law	920-674-7135 corpc@jeffersoncountywi.gov
County Board	Fundamentals of Local Government Parliamentary Procedure	920-342-4758 jamesb@jeffersoncountywi.gov
County Clerk	Marriage License Issuance Election Administration Passport Acceptance Agent	920-674-8630 audreym@jeffersoncountywi.gov
Economic Development	Economic Development Update	https://forms.office.com/r/YYQ5H0xqHf
Emergency Management	What is Emergency Management?	920-674-7450 thameau@jeffersoncountywi.gov
Fair	A Preview of This Year's Jefferson County Fair	920-674-7159 rroberts@jeffersoncountywi.gov
Fair Park	Fair Park Operations: Behind the Scenes	920-674-7159 rroberts@jeffersoncountywi.gov
Health	Bloodborne Pathogen Training Car Seat Safety Chronic Diseases and Injury Prevention Education Communicable Disease Education CPR and First Aid Impact Teen Driving Labor and Delivery Classes Maturation Classes Medication Administration Mr. Yuk – Poison Control Narcarn Training Safe Sleep Strangulation and SANE	920-674-7275 health@jeffersoncountywi.gov
Human Services	Behavioral Health Services Overview Birth to Three Program (Introduction) Birth to Three Program (Presentation) Child Protective Services Mandated Reporting Dialectical/TEAM Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Foster Parent Recruitment Matz Center: Youth Crisis Stabilization Facility Mental Health First Aid Parents Supporting Parents: Peer Support Review of CLTS and CCOP	hollyp@jeffersoncountywi.gov elizabethb@jeffersoncountywi.gov elizabethb@jeffersoncountywi.gov nsopotnick@jeffersoncountywi.gov hollyp@jeffersoncountywi.gov katies@jeffersoncountywi.gov kimp@jeffersoncountywi.gov kimp@jeffersoncountywi.gov aszwec@jeffersoncountywi.gov darciw@jeffersoncountywi.gov

Financial Empowerment Center



**Jefferson County
Financial
Empowerment
Center**

*Free One-on-One
Financial Counseling*

- Certified financial counselors trained to guide participants through budgeting, debt management, credit improvement, and long-term goal setting
- On-site and virtual/phone appointments
- In <1 year since launch...

Financial Empowerment Center

- “Before financial counseling, I didn’t have savings, made ends meet but barely, and had lots of debt. I didn’t realize how the worry and stress over money was negatively impacting me and my family.
- With the guidance I’m receiving from CJ and the Jefferson County FEC, I am more confident and breathing a sigh of relief that I’m on the right path.”
- I went there with all the book smarts on how to budget. I had been doing it for decades, spending hours and hours, spiraling with a focus on negativity toward my financial status. It affects everything and everyone around you. In one hour sessions I left the spiraling at the door and walked out feeling empowered and purposeful toward my finances. What a wonderful gift.

Financial Empowerment Center

- Between August 4, 2025 and July 22, 2026:
- Total number of clients: 80
- Total sessions: 239
- Total increase in savings: \$114,037
- Total non-mortgage debt reduced: \$405,912
- Average savings per client: \$1,425
- Average debt reduction per client*: \$1,603

*outliers removed



Jefferson County
Financial
Empowerment
Center

*Free One-on-One
Financial Counseling*



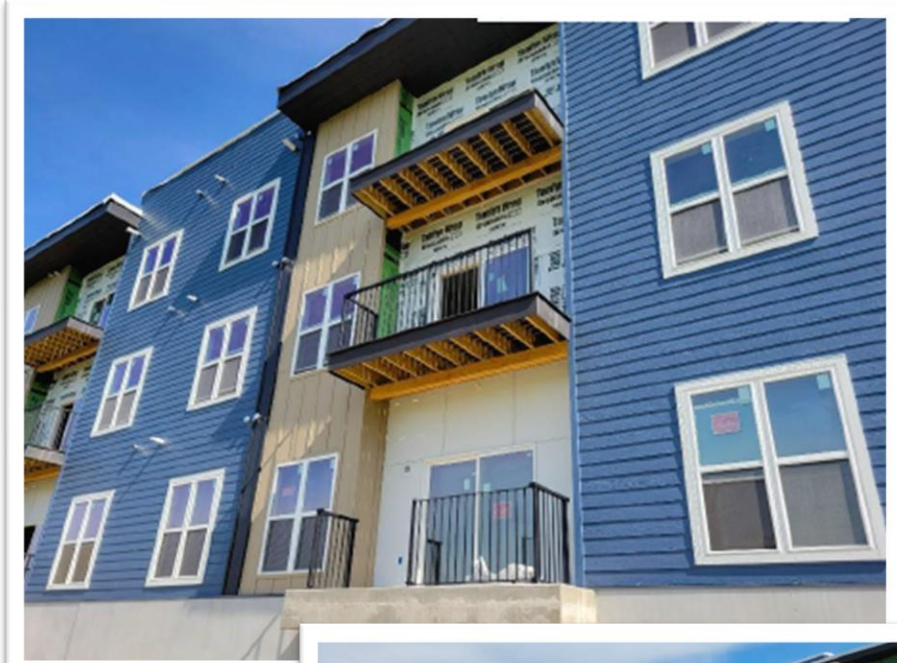
Housing Development



- \$12.7 million in investor funding
 - \$11.2 million in executed agreements
 - \$1.5 million expected to contract
- Funded \$4.75 million
 - \$2.62 million deployed
 - \$2.15 million encumbered
- Three projects funded: Watertown, Fort Atkinson, Waterloo
- Three projects in the pipeline, estimated at \$4.6 million

Housing Development

- Every JCEDC community has new housing developments in the works
 - Waterloo, Watertown, Lake Mills, Johnson Creek, Cambridge, Jefferson, Fort Atkinson, Whitewater, Palmyra
- Fort Atkinson Habitat for Humanity houses completed and sold
- Watertown Habitat for Humanity in construction
- Jefferson County passed Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance



Housing Partnerships

Senator Tammy Baldwin



James Kuckkan, Watertown Daily Times
https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/senator-baldwin-visits-habitat-for-humanitys-college-park-development/article_70b6a030-9266-42c3-a9fa-e7c5de009585.html



HUD Regional Administrator Duey Stroebel

Economic Growth

- Groundbreaking on two 40,000 ft²+ industrial buildings in Klement Business Park (Fort Atkinson)
- Groundbreaking on Abet Laminati manufacturing facility (Johnson Creek)



Samantha Erstad, Daily Jefferson County Union
https://www.dailyunion.com/news/local/groundbreaking-community-leaders-celebrate-next-phase-of-klement-business-park/article_6be06cc1-12c6-4232-a0eb-532c99ecb5e9.html



James Kuckkan, Watertown Daily Times
https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/welcome-to-america-abet-laminati-breaks-ground-in-johnson-creek/article_e393c16c-d868-416e-a817-774d10638304.html

Economic Growth

- Topcon – consolidated warehouse operations from Kansas location to Koshkonong facility
- Summerset Marine – to build a new 200,000 ft² to consolidate and optimize Whitewater area operations including manufacturing, service, and sales
- Two deployments of Revolving Loan Fund
- Wisconsin-Japan Strategic Partnership



JEFFERSON COUNTY
WISCONSIN



A GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

How Development Impacts Jefferson County's Local Governments

- Study released May 2026
- How does development (commercial/residential/industrial) affect local government finances?
- What has development looked like in Jefferson County communities over the past two decades?
- What is the impact of single-family vs. multifamily?
- What is the effect of development on school districts? What are our local school districts' capacities to accept new students?
- How does growth impact existing services?
- What are the short-term and long-term impacts of new development?



Economic Development Awards

- Thrive Leaders & Legends
 - Emerging Business: FITBENCH
 - Community Impact Award: Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation
 - Small Business Excellence: PaddyShack
 - Collaboration Award: Live Local Development Fund
 - Housing & Development Award: Loos Homes
 - Project of the Year Waard: Food and Beverage Innovation Campus
 - Business of the Year: Jones Dairy Farm

THRIVE
LEADERS & LEGENDS
AWARDS



- ThriveED wins 2026 Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA) Organizational Excellence Award





When **ThriveED** was created, it was built on a belief that still guides our work today: **Jefferson County** is **stronger** when public & private partners **work together** around a **shared vision** for economic growth, community vitality & long-term prosperity.



DEB REINBOLD
PRESIDENT



Future Plans for ThriveED

- ThriveED/JCEDC as a public-private partnership; staff are employees of Jefferson County
- ThriveED exists as an independent 501(c)3
- Discussions are underway with ThriveED/JCEDC Boards to reorganize ThriveED – remaining an independent 501(c)3 under the umbrella of the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation
- Alignment with Regional Prosperity Hub and needs identified during Community Health Assessment
- Involvement of Dodge County
- Stability, market compensation, expansion of service territory and services to municipalities
- Municipal contribution to decrease, move towards fee-for-service model

Jefferson County Department/County Highlights

New Faces

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



Jenifer Quimby
Supervisor, District 1



Gary Skalitzky
Supervisor, District 2



Francine Gies
Supervisor, District 4



Kerry Kneser
Supervisor, District 6



Michael Foster
Supervisor, District 13



Kathi Cauley
Supervisor, District 20



Amanda Kaiser
Supervisor, District 29



Brandie Hanson
Veterans Service Officer

Leadership & Awards

- “Outstanding Professional of the Year” – Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association
 - Kevin Wiesmann, Parks Director
- “Secretary’s Putting Families First Award” – Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
 - Andrea Szwec, Parents Supporting Parents Supervisor
- “Notable Economic Development Executive” – BizTimes Media
 - Deb Reinbold, President/Executive Director, ThriveED and JCEDC
- “Notable CFO” – BizTimes Media & “Executive Excellence” - InBusiness
 - Marc DeVries, Finance Director

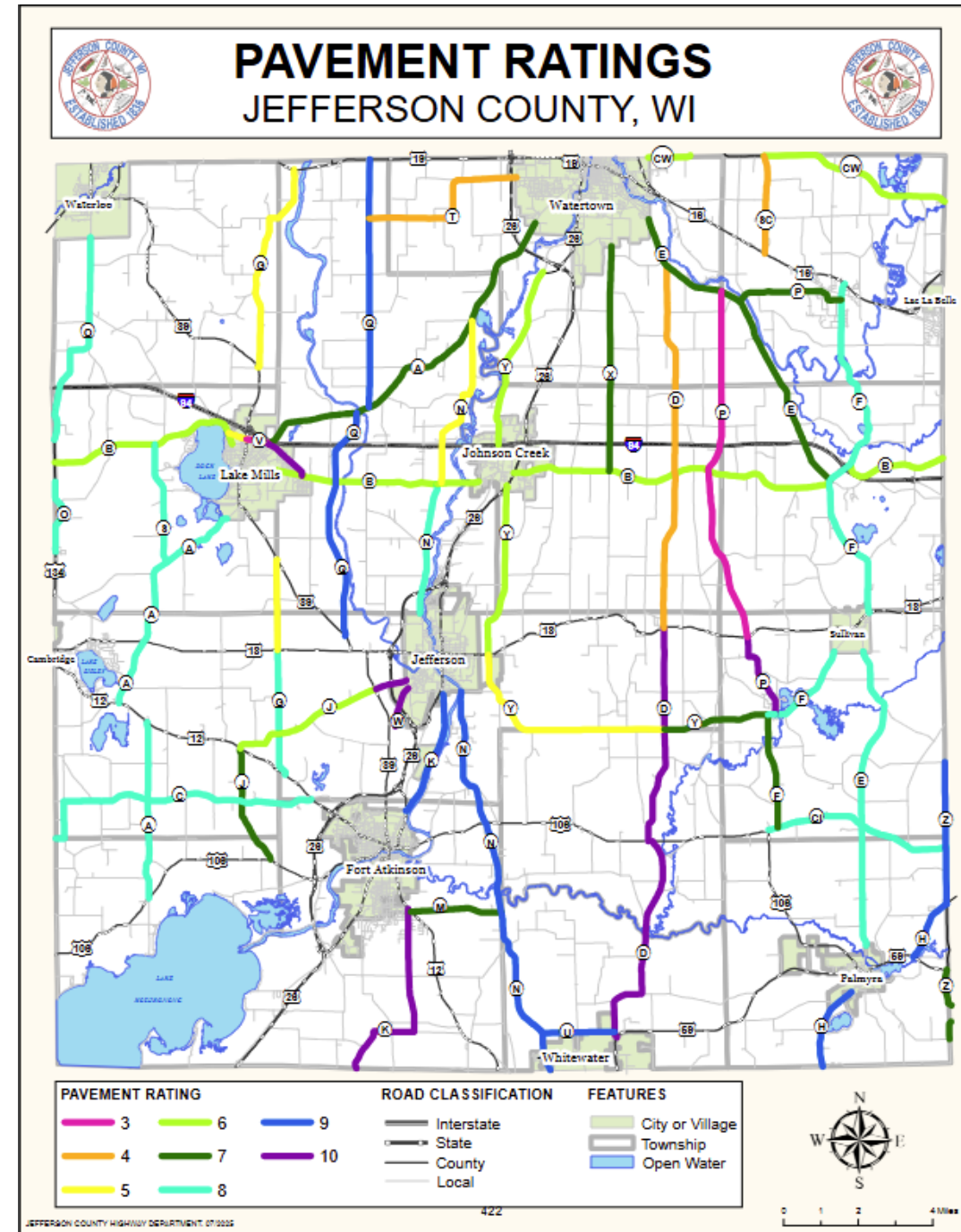


Transformative Government

- “Lunch & Learns”
- Blood Drives
- AI Policy
- Business Continuity/Succession Planning
- Youth Government Day
- Legislative Breakfast

Infrastructure

- 2026 Highway Projects:
 - CTH V (night work)
 - Mill & Pave, CTH B to CTH A
 - CTH G
 - Mill & Pave, US 18 to STH 89
 - CTH D
 - Pulverize & Pave, CTH E to US 18
 - CTH P
 - Pulverize & Pave, CTH B to US 18
- Completion of 212 miles of paving work on County Highway System (out of 256 miles) in the past ten years
- Improvement in average pavement condition ratings from 5.5 in 2015 to 7.9 in 2025

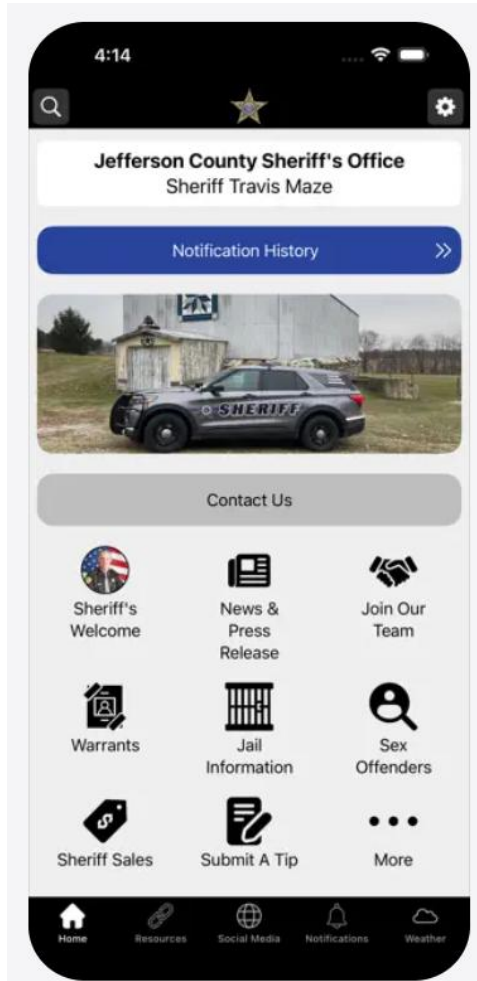


Infrastructure

- Broadband
 - Brightspeed, Bertram, and SpaceX have executed BEAD Agreements
 - Edge Broadband (now acquired by American Heartland Fiber Networks LLC) and Bug Tussel BEAD Agreements still in the works
 - \$60 million in available funding for 2026 State Broadband Expansion Grant
 - Jefferson County has 350 eligible locations (102 priority locations and 104 targeted locations) under this grant
- Liquefied Natural Gas
 - Act 163 now law
 - Utility aid payment guaranteed for Battery Energy Storage Systems and Liquefied Natural Gas Storage
 - Local advocacy



Public Safety



- Sheriff's Office launches JESO App
 - 43,000 weekly hits
 - 2,767 downloads
- Jail is fully staffed
- Entire Sheriff's Office nearly fully staffed (recent retirements)
- Additional Communications Operators in Dispatch Center; Comm Ops Supervisor
- Launch of Emergency Medical Dispatching on 6/1/2026

Public Safety

- EMS Working Group
 - Continue to meet as a cross-disciplinary group
 - County Administrator delivers monthly report to Jefferson County Executive Committee and full Jefferson County Board of Supervisors
 - Examination of operational efficiencies and consensus of lack of resources across all municipal systems
 - Anticipated request to exceed levy limit (additional property tax) on all county residents to support a countywide EMS system with enhanced staffing
 - Upcoming meetings: July 28th with WI Towns Association, July 29th with MABAS Division 118 Fire Chiefs, August 12th EMS Working Group

Public Safety

- Emergency Management
 - Homeowners and renters in Jefferson County can apply for federal disaster assistance related to April 2026 severe storms & flooding, following a Federal Disaster Declaration from President Trump
 - Apply at DisasterAssistance.gov, or contact Jefferson County Emergency Management
 - Formal HazMat agreement with Dodge County
 - Resolution thanking Johnsonville for donation of HazMat equipment
- District Attorney
 - New split DA Position: Victim Witness/Legal Support Specialist

Health Department / Human Services Department



PurpleAir

<https://www2.purpleair.com/products/purpleair-pa-ii?srsId=AfmBOoqVpqTqfxc4YRd6hJ2rcZ0YMYxeDRglykpITOhJI084s5NEKab>

- PurpleAir monitors in Fort Atkinson, Palmyra, Johnson Creek, Watertown, and Jefferson (public-facing dashboard)
- Treatment Court case management in-house (Administration)
- 100% of returned ADRC surveys rate services as Excellent or Very Good
- Emergency Detention diversion rate rose 9% over previous year
- “Any time I am in crisis, I am met with respect.”
- Birth to Three Program recognized for 100% compliance with Federal Indicators in 2025
- “The services we’ve received have given us peace of mind, independence for our kids, lessened the stress load and given us added support.”
- “Thank you for being by my side and on my team during one of the most difficult moments of my life!”



Parks Department



- Marsh Lake Public Access officially open
 - Direct entry to Marsh Lake (south of Lake Mills) for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, birding, and new access to the expansive Lake Mills Wildlife Area
- Interurban Trail Phase III – Complete
 - Waukesha County yet to complete
 - Additional dollars from Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program closeout, identified for potential trailhead facility land acquisition

Fair Park

- “Homegrown Showcase” at County Fair
 - “Highlighting the incredible businesses that make Jefferson County unique.”
- More than 34,000 guests at 2026 County Fair
- 300+ event days in 2025
- LED replacements throughout Fair Park, saving energy and electricity costs



JEFFERSON COUNTY FAIR PARK COMMITTEE
Jefferson County Fairest of the Fair Megan Doherty talks with young attendees.

ROARING SUCCESS

Planning for 2027 Jefferson County Fair already underway

ED ZAGORSKI
edz@wdtimes.com

JEFFERSON — With the official numbers in, Jefferson County Fair Director

Becky Roberts said attendance held strong compared to previous years. “We had great weather for the Fair’s entire run,” she said. “I like that we

are trying new things. We adjust and evolve for new events and give our leadership team stability. We are starting to dial it in.”

More FAIR | A5



Planning for the Future

- Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan: underway
- Space Study at Health/Human Services Campus: underway
- Fair Park Master Plan: under contract
- Consolidation of facilities maintenance/custodial
 - New Systems Administrator position
- 2027 Budget in the works
 - Kick-off meeting on June 24th

All County Departments



- Some Departments fly under the radar
- Goal of job shadows each year
- Success stories throughout Annual Reports and goal setting
- It's because of them, because of you, because of all our local governments, because of our partners, I can say...

The State of the County is Strong

