Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing

October 3 to October 10, 2026

The Wisconsin LocalGov Hub Briefing is a weekly governance intelligence product curated by BoldPath Consulting from Wisconsin local journalism, public-sector think tanks, and credible regional media. Source collection is automated; editorial selection, summarization, and topic assignment are overseen by Patrick Glynn, and a source link accompanies every item so readers can verify the underlying reporting. Items are selected for governance relevance, not political leaning. If a story meets the newsworthiness standards built into this workflow, it is included regardless of which direction it cuts, and contested or uncomfortable decisions are reported rather than avoided. The intent is to put the week's governance record in front of the practitioners who have to work with it, not to add to the argument surrounding it. The briefing is offered as an informational service and does not constitute legal, financial, or policy advice.

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Streckenbach presents 2027 Brown County budget proposal

Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach proposed a 2027 budget that would set the county mill rate at $2.54, down $0.12 from the current $2.66 and the lowest on record if adopted. The proposed levy totals $97.77 million, including $1.5 million attributable to net new construction. Outstanding county debt would fall by $7.41 million to $22.4 million. The budget funds nine road and bridge projects, Phase 2 of the Port Development Site and South Landfill, airport capital work, and a new emergency alert system. The County Board holds its annual budget meeting at 9 a.m. Oct. 28 in the County Board Chambers.

Source: The Press Times (Green Bay) (Northeastern) | https://gopresstimes.com/stories/streckenbach-presents-2027-brown-county-budget-proposal,358410

Increased Property Tax Levy Among Items Proposed In Manitowoc County 2027 Budget

Manitowoc County Executive Tyler Martell presented a proposed 2027 budget with a property tax levy of approximately $35.8 million, a 3.9 percent increase for the typical taxpayer. The tax rate would fall about 2 percent because of rising property values. The budget eliminates 11 vacant Human Services Department positions, cuts more than $1 million in capital projects, and reduces road borrowing to $2.4 million. Martell proposed a 2 percent employee salary increase tied to performance reviews and a new human services stabilization fund. He also removed opioid settlement funds from general budget use and assigned their allocation to a new Opioid Settlement Task Force. A public hearing is set for Oct. 26, and the County Board votes Nov. 5.

Source: Seehafer News (Northeastern) | https://www.seehafernews.com/2026/10/09/increased-property-tax-levy-among-items-proposed-in-manitowoc-county-2027-budget/

Oneida County faces tough budget decisions, saves funding for UW-Extension partnership

Oneida County's Executive Committee reversed an earlier 4-3 vote to eliminate the county's UW-Extension funding and instead allocated $125,000, roughly $9,000 less than the current year. The committee closed the gap by revising sales tax revenue projections, incorporating 16 county employee vacancies into cost estimates, and drawing on a Sheriff's Office rainy-day fund to replenish the general fund. The committee also cut $92,000 from the Oneida County Tourism Fund. The full County Board will consider the balanced budget in November.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/oneida-county-faces-tough-budget-decisions-saves-funding-for-uw-extension-partnership/article_dd7df270-ffea-4801-a51c-83d831d89b17.html

Beaver Dam officials unveil proposed 2027 city budget

City Administrator Larry Bierke presented a proposed $25.26 million 2027 Beaver Dam city budget to the Common Council. The proposal funds one additional police officer. Employee benefit costs

are projected to rise 10.8 percent and wages roughly 7 percent, reflecting market wage adjustments and a proposed 3 percent cost-of-living increase. The budget includes utility rate increases of 3 percent for solid waste and 5 percent each for sanitary sewer and stormwater. The Council continues budget discussions Oct. 19 and Nov. 2, with a possible work session Oct. 28.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (South Central) | https://dailydodge.com/beaver-dam-officials-unveil-proposed-2027-city-budget/

Milwaukee's Financial Strains Growing, Warns Policy Forum

The Wisconsin Policy Forum's annual review of Milwaukee's proposed 2027 budget found a $96.8 million gap between departmental requests and projected revenue. The proposal closes the gap with $42.8 million in reserve withdrawals, $20.5 million in higher revenue projections, and $33.5 million in spending reductions. The total reserve draw of $51.8 million, including $39.8 million from the Tax Stabilization Fund, would be the largest since at least 2016 and would leave that fund at roughly half its $79.6 million year-end 2025 balance. The Police Department would receive a $33.8 million (10.9 percent) increase and add 45.5 full-time equivalent positions, and the Fire Department a $7.5 million (4.5 percent) increase with 19 positions. The Forum estimates the city still needs 80 more sworn officers and 21 firefighters to meet Act 12 staffing mandates by 2033. The property tax levy would rise 2 percent, or $6.7 million, to $343.6 million, and pension contributions would rise $9.2 million to $219.1 million.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/10/09/milwaukees-financial-strains-growing-warns-policy-forum/

Racine 2027 budget: Why the city would use $5.1M in savings

Racine's proposed 2027 budget would draw $5.135 million from General Fund reserves, $3.635 million for general operations and $1.5 million for raises, which the city reports is $610,000 more than in the adopted 2026 budget. Finance Director Kathleen Fischer told the Common Council on Oct. 6 that the city faces a structural deficit, with recurring revenue not keeping pace with expenses. She cited expired state police overtime grants and the full cost of police and fire union contracts. The stabilization reserve is projected to fall from $16.7 million at the end of 2025 to $9 million by the end of 2027, with total spendable General Fund reserves projected at $37.9 million. A public hearing is scheduled for Oct. 14, council amendments for Oct. 19, and adoption for Oct. 20.

Source: WRJN 1400 AM Racine/Kenosha (Southeastern) | https://wrjn.com/news/2026/10/07/racine-2027-budget-why-the-city-would-use-51m-in-savings

Superior mayor proposes flat tax levy

Superior Mayor Jim Paine presented a 2027 budget to the City Council on Oct. 6 that holds the property tax levy at approximately $12.7 million, less than $30,000 below the current year. Total general government revenue and spending is nearly $36.6 million. The budget adds a fire marshal, a firefighter, and a seasonal parks employee, and increases allocations for streets, parks, public safety, affordable housing, and the Superior Public Library. It maintains the legal fund at nearly

$440,000 to preserve capacity for a potential water utility acquisition. Lead service line replacement ranks first in the capital improvement plan. A public hearing is set for 6:30 p.m. Nov. 10.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/superior-mayor-proposes-flat-tax-levy

Appleton Common Council votes to show taxpayers how much of their money goes to private school vouchers

The Appleton Common Council voted 13-1 for a resolution calling for private school voucher funding to be shown on property tax bills. Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim cast the lone dissenting vote. Hartzheim said she supported the disclosure but opposed the resolution as a political move, noting that Mayor Jake Woodford was already moving forward with the change independently. The Neenah Joint School District Board of Education has separately asked the five municipalities within its boundaries to include similar voucher funding information on their tax bills.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/appleton/appleton-common-council-votes-to-show-taxpayers-how-much-of-their-money-goes-to-private-school-vouchers

Workforce and Labor

Darlington announces new police chief after former chief was fired

The City of Darlington selected Sergeant Nicholas Mantsch, who had been serving as interim police chief, as its permanent chief of police. The city cited his law enforcement experience and his commitment to community-oriented policing. Former Chief Szvon D. Conway was fired in July at a Special Police Committee meeting following his June arrest on an alleged operating-while-intoxicated charge and other traffic violations. The city did not report a start date or salary for Mantsch.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/10/08/darlington-announces-new-police-chief-after-former-chief-was-fired/

Superior Fire Department recognizes lifesaving efforts

The Superior Fire Department promoted Bob Zimmerman, a 13-year veteran most recently serving as battalion chief, to assistant fire chief, replacing retiree Howard Huber. Firefighter Ja'lon Sventek was promoted to assistant fire inspector. The department held its promotion and awards ceremony Oct. 8, delayed from its usual April date because firefighters were completing advanced EMT training ahead of next year's Blatnik Bridge closure. More than 20 firefighters were recognized for completing that training. Capt. John Prendergast received the department's Firefighter of the Year award.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/superior-fire-department-recognizes-lifesaving-efforts

Two Rivers city manager Kyle Kordell on leave

Two Rivers City Manager Kyle Kordell is on paid temporary leave following a special Common Council meeting Tuesday that included a closed session on the employment, compensation, or performance evaluation of a public employee. Kordell's representatives confirmed he remains employed. They cited family-focused reasons connected to cyberbullying and online harassment directed at his minor children. Kordell was sworn in as city manager in August 2025. No timeline for his return was stated.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/tworivers/two-rivers-city-manager-kyle-kordell-on-leave

NG Village Board approves 3.5% COLA for non-union workers

The New Glarus Village Board approved a 3.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment for non-union village employees. The report does not state the meeting date, the effective date, the number of employees covered, or the cost.

Source: Post Messenger Recorder (South Central) | https://postmessengerrecorder.com/content/government/ng-village-board-approves-35-cola-non-union-workers

Infrastructure and Utilities

Superior council considers changes to utility referendum question

The Superior City Council voted unanimously on Oct. 6 on two actions advancing a potential acquisition of Superior Water, Light and Power's water utility. The council authorized nearly $5,000 to join four professional associations, including the American Public Power Association and Wisconsin sections of the American Water Works Association, to support acquisition planning. The council also took a first step toward revising the April 6 referendum question. Councilor Tylor Elm proposed language that names SWL&P explicitly and replaces the word "transition" with "acquire." The council will consider the revised ballot language Oct. 20.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/superior-council-considers-changes-to-utility-referendum-question

Montana city that took over water utility gives Superior advice

Missoula, Montana, Deputy Director of Utilities Logan McInnis briefed Superior's Public Works Committee on Oct. 1 on Missoula's 2017 acquisition of Mountain Water Co., which cost $106.6 million including more than $12 million in legal expenses. McInnis reported that annual rate increases fell from 5 percent to about 3.5 percent under public ownership. Annual infrastructure investment rose from $2 million to $3 million to between $8 million and $10 million, and leakage fell about 30 percent since 2021. Public ownership kept $1.5 million in the community that previously left the state in corporate fees. Mayor Jim Paine, who spent three days in Missoula, said opposition arguments there were "word-for-word identical" to those made in Superior.

Source: Superior Telegram (Western) | https://www.superiortelegram.com/news/local/montana-city-that-took-over-water-utility-gives-superior-advice

Some local officials sound alarm about proposed sewerage district fee increases

The nine-member Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District commission directed on Oct. 8 that a proposed 12 percent increase in 2027 charges to its 24 member communities be reduced to 9.9 percent. The district still projects similar annual increases over the following five years to fund aging infrastructure replacement and capacity for an anticipated 25 percent population increase over 20 years. Executive Director Eric Dundee cited DNR regulations and deferred capital projects as cost drivers. The McFarland Village Board plans to consider a resolution Oct. 13 opposing the increases and asking the district to lower reserves, use more short-term financing, and establish rate caps. At the original 12 percent rate, the district's average monthly charge of $28.50 would remain below Milwaukee's $36.96 and the state average of $45.80. The commission is scheduled to adopt its final 2027 budget at 8 a.m. Oct. 22.

Source: Waterloo/Marshall Courier (South Central) | https://hngnews.com/leader_independent/news/local/some-local-officials-sound-alarm-about-proposed-sewerage-district-fee-increases/article_57844822-0ccf-431c-875f-e66bdee66c43.html

Wisconsin to Lansing, IA Bridge to open November 6th

The new IA 9/WIS 82 bridge over the Mississippi River between Wisconsin and Lansing, Iowa, is scheduled to open Nov. 6, several months ahead of its original spring 2027 target. Construction began in late 2023, and crews demolished the previous structure in December 2025. During the closure, WisDOT and the Iowa DOT jointly operated a free car ferry that handled up to 550 vehicles daily at peak. Remaining work, including removal of legacy bridge piers and site restoration, will continue into late spring 2027. The departments anticipate possible minor lane restrictions but no full closures.

Source: WRJN 1400 AM Racine/Kenosha (Western) | https://wrjn.com/news/2026/10/05/wisconsin-to-lansing-ia-bridge-to-open-november-6th

DNR investigating groundwater release along Enbridge Line 5 reroute near Marengo

A groundwater release occurred after Enbridge installed pipe directly beneath the Marengo River in Ashland County as part of its Line 5 reroute. The Wisconsin DNR visited the site and is installing groundwater monitoring wells to characterize subsurface conditions. The agency has not determined whether the release constitutes an aquifer breach. The DNR said measured flow rates are about 5 percent of those recorded in confirmed aquifer breaches on comparable projects in other states. Earthjustice, representing the Bad River Band, called on the DNR to use its full enforcement authority against Enbridge.

Source: WRJN 1400 AM Racine/Kenosha (Central/Northern) | https://wrjn.com/news/2026/10/05/aquifer-breach-occurs-along-enbridge-line-5-reroute-near-marengo

Marinette County Fieldhouse bid discussion postponed until January

Marinette County's Infrastructure Committee postponed advertising the county-owned fieldhouse for public bids until its Jan. 27 meeting to give the YMCA more time to assess a possible takeover. YMCA Executive Director Jenni Campbell told the committee the organization expects to know by the end of 2026 whether it can assume ownership. The project cost has grown from an initial estimate of $4 million to $5 million to approximately $11.3 million. A commercial real estate firm gave a rough value estimate of $500,000, and the committee set no minimum bid. The committee also approved selling a vacant county lot across from the courthouse to T.Spell Development Group for $65,000 plus closing costs, contingent on the developer receiving a WHEDA grant. A $6.1 million road borrowing resolution advances to the full County Board.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | https://www.ehextra.com/news/marinette-county-fieldhouse-bid-discussion-postponed-until-january/article_95e515c9-0c78-407a-b163-9b39e51c9d9b.html

Another design snafu sets Lasata project back

Construction of a 21-bed community-based residential facility at the Ozaukee County-owned Lasata Senior Living Campus in Cedarburg has stalled because architect Dimension IV Design Group did not route commercial kitchen hood vent plans through a required separate DHS design review. That review has been pending for nearly two months. County Administrator Jason Dzwinel said the oversight has added at least four weeks to the kitchen remodeling timeline, with a state inspection scheduled for Oct. 19. It is the second architectural error on the $7.5 million project; a missing shower design discovered in December added about $55,000 in costs. The county has posted the facility director position without a listed salary range.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | https://ozaukeepress.com/content/another-design-snafu-sets-lasata-project-back

City of Kaukauna considering purchase of River View Middle School

The Kaukauna Common Council met in closed session under Wis. Stat. § 19.85(1)(e) to deliberate on purchasing River View Middle School once its replacement opens for the 2028-29 school year. The council reported no action. The city hired Hoffman Planning, Design and Construction in February to conduct a property use and feasibility study of the building and site. The original building, along the Fox River, dates to the 1920s and served as Kaukauna's high school before becoming a middle school. A $198 million referendum approved by district voters in November 2024 funds the new middle school, which broke ground in June.

Source: Kaukauna Community News (Northeastern) | https://kaukaunacommunitynews.com/2026/10/07/city-of-kaukauna-considering-purchase-of-river-view-middle-school/

Miner Avenue fix a change order from prior plan

Ladysmith reached a no-cost agreement with contractor Haas Sons and engineer MSA Professional Services to correct a defect on Miner Avenue from the city's $3.49 million 2024 downtown reconstruction. The agreement departs from a September Public Works Committee voice vote that would have required full storm sewer removal and complete pavement

replacement. Under the revised plan, the abandoned concrete storm sewer will be capped and filled with flowable fill rather than excavated. The section from West Second Street to West Fourth Street will be milled and repaved curb to curb. Mayor Bob Grotzinger said full excavation risked destabilizing the road base after two freeze-thaw cycles. MSA will provide engineering oversight.

Source: Ladysmith News (Western) | https://ladysmithnews.com/news/article_3b5c3d95-fdde-4d29-81a3-0a64b9b8f6d7.html

Portage finds use for expiring pandemic funds

The Portage Common Council unanimously approved spending $17,500 in American Rescue Plan Act funds that would otherwise have expired at year's end on its shared-ride taxi fleet. The allocation fulfills the city's matching share for a $69,760 Wisconsin Department of Transportation grant awarded in July toward a wheelchair-accessible van costing approximately $87,000. The city's Go Riteway fleet of eight vans has had repeated mechanical failures. Those failures include three transmission replacements since the start of the year.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/news/local/article_ff894837-48d9-4c43-b841-ff7bf8404ddf.html

Racine sump-pump proposal: inspections, costs and home sales

Racine Ordinance 0006-26, not yet adopted by the Common Council, would require sump-pump installation in one- to four-unit housing unless a plumbing inspector certifies that no foundation drain connects to the sanitary sewer. Any real property transfer citywide would trigger a wastewater utility inspection under the ordinance. The city's existing voluntary program has funded more than 100 installations and offers up to $5,000 per qualifying one- or two-family home. The proposed budget sets a goal of more than 3,000 installations over five years. Mayor Cory Mason said owners would absorb some installation costs at the point of sale. A public hearing is set for 6 p.m. Oct. 14 at City Hall, with no separate ordinance vote date established.

Source: WRJN 1400 AM Racine/Kenosha (Southeastern) | https://wrjn.com/news/2026/10/06/racine-sump-pump-proposal-inspections-costs-and-home-sales

Ripon library receives state grant money as renovations near completion

The City of Ripon received nearly $400,000 in additional state flexible facilities program funding for the Ripon Public Library renovation, bringing total state grants for the project to approximately $2.3 million. Library Director Nancy Bell said the grant kept the project from depleting emergency reserve funds after construction bids came in $500,000 above the planned cost. The renovated basement will include a telehealth room, meeting spaces, and a children's play area. The basement is tentatively scheduled to open to the public in early November.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/fonddulac/ripon-library-receives-state-grant-money-as-renovations-near-completion

Wausau likely to pass local ordinance to remove lead water lines

Wausau has approximately 4,000 lead water service lines left to replace at an estimated $10,000 per line. Federal infrastructure law funding has provided 100 percent principal forgiveness in some neighborhoods, 75 percent in others, and 50 percent in the rest, and the city has completed all 100 percent areas and most 75 percent areas. The Finance Committee approved a loan plan in September to cover remaining costs, which now goes to the City Council. The city is also preparing an ordinance requiring property owners to replace lead service lines. Public Works Director Eric Lindman said the ordinance would earn additional state award points on federal funding applications and allow more financing flexibility. The city's goal is to complete replacements by the end of 2028.

Source: WSAU 550 AM / 99.9 FM Wausau (Central/Northern) | https://wsau.com/2026/10/10/wausau-likely-to-pass-local-ordinance-to-remove-lead-water-lines/

Baileys Harbor Wastewater Treatment Plant prepares for multi-million-dollar project

The Town of Baileys Harbor is borrowing $3.268 million through the Wisconsin Clean Water Fund program toward an approximately $7.7 million wastewater treatment plant upgrade that could begin as soon as next year. The project includes electrical and aeration system upgrades and a 150,000-gallon sludge storage tank valued at about $3.2 million. To recover costs, the proposal would raise residential sewer charges from $560 to $738 per year and commercial charges from $324 to $490.20 per year. Holding tank and septic customers would pay a new $150 annual charge. The Town Board was scheduled to take up the fee proposal at its next meeting.

Source: WGBA NBC26 Green Bay (Northeastern) | https://www.nbc26.com/doorcounty/baileys-harbor-wastewater-treatment-plant-prepares-for-multi-million-dollar-project

Technology and AI Governance

No police report due to cyber attack

A cyberattack on City of Stevens Point servers that began Sept. 23 disrupted the records department's ability to produce weekly police reports. The city's IT department cut off the unauthorized network access, and about 1 percent of city devices were quarantined. Mayor Mike Wiza said the city has found no evidence that citizen or employee data was compromised. Wiza estimated that full restoration of city functions could take two weeks.

Source: Stevens Point Gazette (Central/Northern) | https://stevenspointgazette.com/stories/no-police-report-due-to-cyber-attack,357704

Public Safety

Lawsuit over Waukesha County Flock cameras moves to federal court

Attorneys for nearly a dozen Waukesha County cities and villages removed to federal court on Wednesday a lawsuit that the citizens group No Cams Muskego filed last month over automated

license plate reader cameras. The municipalities asked a federal judge to stay proceedings pending a Seventh Circuit ruling in a similar Illinois case. The suit alleges the camera systems constitute unlawful surveillance. The Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty argues the camera searches require a warrant. Defense attorneys contend motorists on public roadways have no expectation of privacy.

Source: WITI FOX6 Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.fox6now.com/news/flock-lawsuit-waukesha-county-federal-court

Milwaukee residents speak out against Flock cameras in city budget hearing

Several hundred Milwaukee residents spoke for nearly four hours at an Oct. 5 public hearing on Mayor Cavalier Johnson's proposed $2.26 billion 2027 budget. The most frequent demand was termination of the Milwaukee Police Department's contract with Flock, the license plate reader vendor. Residents also called for increased Election Commission funding. They compared Milwaukee's commission budget of approximately $3 million and 11 staff with Detroit's roughly $20 million and 115 staff. The Common Council is scheduled to adopt the final budget Nov. 6.

Source: WUWM 89.7 Milwaukee Public Radio (Southeastern) | https://www.wuwm.com/milwaukee-residents-speak-out-against-flock-cameras-in-city-budget-hearing

Beaver Dam approves ordinance regulating e-bikes, electric scooters

The Beaver Dam Common Council approved an ordinance regulating electric bicycles, electric scooters, and other electric micromobility devices after months of discussion and revisions. The ordinance sets age restrictions, requires helmets for younger riders, and authorizes police to impound devices operated recklessly. Before final passage, alders added an amendment prohibiting more than one rider on a device unless it is designed for multiple passengers. Police Chief John Kreuziger said the department will begin with public education outreach in partnership with schools.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (South Central) | https://dailydodge.com/beaver-dam-approves-ordinance-regulating-e-bikes-electric-scooters/

Greenfield sidewalk ban for e-bikes, e-scooters draws mixed reactions from riders and pedestrians

The Greenfield Common Council approved an ordinance Oct. 6 banning e-bikes and e-scooters from public sidewalks and from pedestrian paths in city parks. Riders on designated bicycle and recreational trails must travel no faster than 10 miles per hour when pedestrians are present. Electric scooters are prohibited on roads with speed limits above 25 miles per hour, and no one under 16 may operate a Class 3 electric bicycle. The ordinance prohibits dockless shared-mobility systems citywide and allows impoundment of dockless devices parked more than 24 hours, with a $100 redemption fee. The ordinance does not specify fines for sidewalk violations.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/in-your-community/milwaukee-county/greenfield-sidewalk-ban-for-e-bikes-e-scooters-draws-mixed-reactions-from-riders-and-pedestrians

Gov. Evers, county executive Crowley mark new forensic science facility

Gov. Tony Evers and Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley opened the four-story Forensic Science and Protective Medicine Facility on the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center campus in Wauwatosa, which the state and Milwaukee County co-own. The building consolidates the Wisconsin Milwaukee Crime Lab, the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office, the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management, and Versiti Wisconsin's Organ Procurement Organization and Tissue Bank. State support totaled nearly $139 million. That figure includes $115 million approved by the State Building Commission and a nearly $24 million grant Evers directed in 2022 to meet the construction threshold after earlier attempts stalled. The facility sits near Froedtert Hospital and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Source: WiscNews (Southeastern) | https://wiscnews.com/community/article_69a03ded-84a9-500c-adeb-9255b2e851d6.html

Dane County could expand body cameras countywide, with new AI and translation features

Dane County Executive Melissa Agard's proposed 2027 executive budget includes $3 million in capital funding to expand the Sheriff's Office body-worn camera program countywide. The appropriation would buy 200 cameras with AI-assisted features, including push-to-talk translation in up to 50 languages and automated redaction of faces, license plates, and sensitive information. The program would cover all public-facing deputies, expanding a pilot of about 32 cameras operating in the West Precinct since 2024. The camera policy is still being finalized. The County Board must approve the budget before the program proceeds, with rollout targeted for 2027.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/10/08/dane-county-could-expand-body-cameras-countywide-with-new-ai-translation-features/

Crowley Halts Tablet Messaging In County-Run Prison

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley ordered the Community Reintegration Center to disable instant messaging on inmate tablets and called on Sheriff Denita Ball to do the same at the Milwaukee County Jail, citing documented witness intimidation and victim harassment. The center operates under Crowley's direct authority through Superintendent Chantell Jewell, while the jail is under the sheriff's separate jurisdiction. The decision followed an investigation by the Sheriff's Office, the center, and the District Attorney's Office. The Sheriff's Office introduced tablets at the jail in 2021 under a telecommunications contract with ICSolutions. Roughly 20,000 people who pass through the jail each year receive the devices, which also provide law library and educational access.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/10/09/mke-county-crowley-halts-tablet-messaging-in-county-run-prison/

Lincoln County fire departments receive grant to upgrade safety gear

Five Lincoln County fire departments (Merrill, Tomahawk, Russell, Pine River, and Corning) received nearly $3 million from the Bierman Foundation to replace aging self-contained breathing apparatus units and other safety gear. The Merrill Fire Department will receive just under $1 million toward replacing its approximately 28 SCBA units, which are about 10 years old. The new units are expected in service by 2027 with a service life of at least a decade. The departments plan to resell their current units and return the proceeds to departmental budgets.

Source: WJFW NBC12 Rhinelander (Central/Northern) | https://www.wjfw.com/news/local/lincoln-county-fire-departments-receive-grant-to-upgrade-safety-gear/article_6e84828b-bea3-4004-9b8d-b144e9e1b78e.html

Ozaukee County first responders receive $175K from data center, Mel's Charities combined donation

Vantage, Oracle, and OpenAI, the three companies behind the planned Lighthouse data center campus in Port Washington, are each contributing $50,000 to Ozaukee County first responders, a total of $150,000. Mel's Charities is adding $25,000, bringing the combined grant to $175,000, which the charity describes as the largest in its history. The funds will buy crowd-control barriers and thermal imaging cameras for every fire department in Ozaukee County. Mel's Charities founder Tom Stanton said the grant program is intended to continue beyond a single cycle.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/in-your-community/ozaukee-county/ozaukee-county-first-responders-recieve-175k-from-data-center-mels-charities-combined-donation

Watertown Fire Department chases five calls in 48 minutes

Watertown Fire Chief Tanya Reynen reported that the department responded to five overlapping emergency calls between 7:03 and 7:51 a.m. on a single day while staffed at its minimum of seven personnel. The response required all-call pages to recall off-duty personnel and reassignment of firefighters between apparatus. Ixonia Fire and EMS and Johnson Creek Fire and EMS provided mutual aid. Reynen said the incident shows how additional ambulances become unusable without adequate daily staffing. She said mutual aid is intended to supplement local resources, not replace them.

Source: Watertown Daily Times (South Central) | https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/watertown-fire-department-chases-five-calls-in-48-minutes/article_643bd807-0ea0-4615-b0c6-453ce10fe830.html

Dunn Co. Sheriff addresses Elk Mound coverage amid response-time concerns

After the Elk Mound Village Board voted to disband its police department, Dunn County Sheriff Kevin Bygd outlined a plan to assign a dedicated full-time deputy to the village at an estimated cost of $88,000. That is about $13,000 more than the $75,000 the village budgeted for its police chief in 2026. The village would fund the deputy entirely, including equipment, for 40 hours of patrol per week with school coverage as a priority. A five-year intergovernmental agreement requires approval by both the Village Board and the County Board, whose final regular meeting

and budget adoption is Nov. 10. The village could also qualify for a state innovation grant of $39,970 per year for four years, $159,880 in total, with payments starting as early as March 2027.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | https://www.weau.com/2026/10/06/dunn-co-sheriff-addresses-elk-mound-coverage-amid-response-time-concerns/

Siting and Moratoria

Wisconsin can do more on data centers, Dane County lawmakers say

Dane County, Madison, and Sun Prairie are among the local governments that have enacted temporary moratoriums on hyperscale data center development. Sun Prairie's moratorium, passed in September, covers facilities of 10,000 square feet or larger. Dane County Board Chair Patrick Miles sponsored an 18-month moratorium in areas under county zoning authority. Miles said the county's advisory task force has shifted toward an informal lobbying role aimed at gaps in state policy. Local officials cited developer nondisclosure agreements, the 2023 state sales tax exemption for data center equipment, and their inability to address regional infrastructure impacts as constraints. At least seven hyperscale proposals have been blocked locally, while others in Port Washington and Beaver Dam have proceeded.

Source: Capital Times (South Central) | https://captimes.com/news/government/wisconsin-can-do-more-on-data-centers-dane-county-lawmakers-say/article_4182c7df-4c56-4870-a302-9c237bfadca1.html

Climate Change Task Force hears about regulation of energy and data center projects

At its Sept. 2 meeting, the Monroe County Climate Change Task Force heard UW-Extension Land Use Specialist Lynn Markham describe local authority over solar, wind, and data center development. Markham said solar projects under 100 megawatts, roughly 600 acres, fall under local zoning jurisdiction, while the Public Service Commission decides projects at or above that threshold. For larger projects, local governments may negotiate joint development agreements covering road use, damage liability, decommissioning, setbacks, noise, glare, utility aid payments, stormwater, and topsoil preservation. Markham said state law limits local zoning standards to public health and safety considerations, not aesthetics.

Source: SW News Group (portal) (Western) | https://www.swnews4u.com/local/government/climate-change-task-force-hears-about-regulation-of-energy-and-data-center-projects/

'Really frightening': Milwaukee officials consider data center pause, regulations

Milwaukee's Common Council is considering an ordinance, led by Ald. Marina Dimitrijevic and co-sponsored by four other alderpersons, that would impose a one-year moratorium on data center development and prohibit such facilities in most zoning districts. Data centers under 20,000 square feet could receive limited-use approval, and those up to 60,000 square feet could seek special-use approval. Any proposal larger than 60,000 square feet would be banned. A September City Plan Commission meeting drew more than 90 minutes of public comment, most of it supporting the pause. Madison, La Crosse, and Dane County have already adopted moratoriums. The Common Council has not scheduled a final vote.

Source: WUWM 89.7 Milwaukee Public Radio (Southeastern) | https://www.wuwm.com/milwaukee-officials-consider-data-center-pause-regulations

Stevens Point starts data center conversation

The Stevens Point Planning Commission held a public discussion on data center regulation at its Monday meeting after data center developers contacted the city. City staff had not formally engaged with those developers. Current zoning prohibits data centers in residential and commercial districts and permits them in industrial zones. Public commenters raised environmental concerns and questioned the economic benefit. City leaders said they want community input to guide any policy response before a formal proposal arrives.

Source: WSAW CBS7 Wausau (Central/Northern) | https://www.wsaw.com/2026/10/06/stevens-point-starts-data-center-conversation/

Town chips in for fight against Port data center power lines

Town of Fredonia electors approved a $5,000 contribution to Responsible Energy Alliance, a coalition opposing greenfield power line routes that American Transmission Co. proposed to serve the Vantage Data Centers Lighthouse Campus in Port Washington. Town Chairman Chris Janik voted against the contribution, arguing that both remaining routes run through Fredonia and the town should not pick sides. The Public Service Commission revoked ATC's first application in August because of substantial changes since the December filing. ATC has filed a second application, which is under PSC completeness review. The Saukville and Trenton route was dropped, leaving a Fredonia route as an alternate.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | https://ozaukeepress.com/content/town-chips-fight-against-port-data-center-power-lines

Fredonia homeowner vows to fight ATC power line proposal

Fredonia property owner Jerry Zelenka is contesting a revised American Transmission Co. proposal to route a power line across his land to serve the planned Port Washington data center. The Public Service Commission previously rejected ATC's initial application as incomplete and required a new filing. The current proposal would require clearing trees, removing several outbuildings, and erecting a 130-foot transmission tower. ATC has offered $81,000 for building and property impacts plus a $50,000 incentive for early signing. Zelenka, whose property is assessed at about $650,000, argues the compensation is insufficient and that eminent domain for a private data center is unlawful. Two neighboring property owners who are attorneys have filed a federal court challenge on that legal question.

Source: Washington County Insider (Southeastern) | https://www.washingtoncountyinsider.com/fredonia-home-fight-atc-power-line/

Data center firm not finished buying Port land

Vantage Data Centers bought a 2.55-acre parcel at 4145 Hwy. LL in the Town of Port Washington on Sept. 25 for $6 million, according to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. The parcel lies

east of I-43 and is not contiguous to the roughly 1,900 acres Vantage previously acquired west of the freeway. Of those acres, 672 are being developed as the $15 billion Lighthouse Campus for Oracle and OpenAI, targeted for completion in 2028. Vantage Vice President Mark Freeman said no plans for the new parcel have been announced. He said the company does not currently plan to seek annexation of the parcel into the city.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | https://ozaukeepress.com/content/data-center-firm-not-finished-buying-port-land

4 things to know about proposed Driftless Area transmission lines

Two proposed high-voltage transmission projects through the Driftless Area would operate at 765 kilovolts, the highest of any line in Wisconsin, where the largest current lines carry 345 kV. The 139-mile MariBell line would run from Marion, Minnesota, to Bell Center, Wisconsin, along a corridor built in the 1950s and 1960s. The 190-mile BECI line would extend to the Wisconsin-Illinois state line across land opponents describe as virgin Driftless terrain. Both are part of the Tranche 2.1 regional grid expansion. The Midcontinent Independent System Operator projects peak load in its territory could rise as much as 49.2 percent and has identified 20 Wisconsin transmission facilities at risk of overload. Proponents say the projects would address 1,300 reliability issues and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue.

Source: WiscNews (Western) | https://wiscnews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_68e1735a-c225-5907-8ec2-6bb4b45f3df6.html

Riverway Board discusses transmission lines and more

The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board reviewed two transmission line projects at its Sept. 10 meeting. Executive Director Mark Cupp said no route has been set for the proposed BECI 765 kV line, but any crossing of the river would require a board permit, with the Public Service Commission holding final authority. For Dairyland Power Cooperative's previously permitted 69 kV crossing near Boydtown and Woodman, Dairyland notified the board of a design change raising structure 114 from 56.5 feet to 140 feet. Cupp said he will not issue a permit amendment until the board reviews the revised plans.

Source: SW News Group (portal) (South Central) | https://www.swnews4u.com/local/business/riverway-board-discusses-transmission-lines-and-more/

We Energies plans new 750MW natural gas plant in Fox Valley

We Energies filed an engineering plan with state regulators for the Fox North Energy Center, a 750-megawatt natural gas power plant at the existing Fox Energy Center site in the Village of Wrightstown. The filing is the first step in regulatory review, and the utility has not disclosed a construction cost estimate. Environmental groups describe it as the seventh new gas plant proposal in Wisconsin in roughly two years. A draft report from state utility regulators projects electricity demand will rise 40 percent by 2032, driven by three large data center developments. The same report projects natural gas will supply about 50 percent of Wisconsin's generation by that year.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) (Northeastern) | https://www.wpr.org/news/we-energies-plans-new-750mw-natural-gas-plant-in-fox-valley

Housing and Development

Brookfield approves $28M purchase agreement for portion of Brookfield Square Mall property

The Brookfield Common Council approved a $28 million purchase and sale agreement for a portion of Brookfield Square Mall, covering the J.C. Penney and Firestone parcels, adjacent vacant land including a wetland area, and the main mall section around Cooper's Hawk. The agreement does not obligate the city to complete the purchase. The city has 60 days, extendable by 30 days, to conduct due diligence and assess redevelopment viability with potential development partners. City Attorney Jenna Merten said the city is actively seeking developers during that period. Any financing for a purchase or public-private partnership requires further Common Council action.

Source: Waukesha Freeman (Southeastern) | https://www.gmtoday.com/the_freeman/news/brookfield-mall-property-purchase/article_660f0993-ccc7-451c-afa6-306d25439ab6.html

Brookfield breaks ground on public market at former Boston Store site

City of Brookfield officials broke ground on the Brookfield Public Market at the former Boston Store site at Brookfield Square, targeting completion in spring 2028. The project is a public-private partnership among the city, Visit Brookfield, and Irgens Development. Visit Brookfield will own and operate the market and projects one million visitors a year. Organizers surveyed more than 45 markets nationally while planning the facility, which will include local vendors, retail shops, and an outdoor event space.

Source: WISN 12 ABC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.wisn.com/article/brookfield-breaks-ground-on-public-market-at-former-boston-store-site/74099318

How Wisconsin can reverse its drift toward unaffordable homes

A Badger Institute policy report finds that Wisconsin's median home price rose from about $215,000 in June 2019 to approximately $360,000 by June 2026, a 72 percent increase under the FHFA House Price Index. By 2024 every Wisconsin metropolitan area had moved out of Demographia's affordable category, and Madison had reached the severely unaffordable rating. The report recommends that local governments ease minimum lot size and floor space requirements, permit accessory dwelling units, allow lot subdivision, open commercially zoned land to residential use, and expand by-right zoning. At the state level, it recommends against rent control and against overriding local zoning authority.

Source: Badger Institute (Statewide) | https://www.badgerinstitute.org/how-wisconsin-can-reverse-its-drift-toward-unaffordable-homes-mandate26/

Barron County Completes Major Renovation of 70 Affordable Housing Units

The Barron County Housing Authority completed renovation of 70 scattered-site affordable housing units across five villages and the City of Barron, with construction running from April 2025 through August 2026. The units, originally built from 1977 plans, were gutted to the studs and upgraded with high-efficiency heating and cooling, updated electrical and telecommunications systems, dishwashers, and tenant storage. Funding came from WHEDA, Hunt Capital Partners, the Department of Administration, a Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago grant, authority reserve funds, and Barron County ARPA funds. The authority held an open house Oct. 5 at Berger-Woodland Manor, the 24-unit Barron complex.

Source: DrydenWire (Western) | https://drydenwire.com/news/barron-county-completes-major-renovation-of-70-affordable-housing-units/

Fitzgerald, Ratcliff pen letter outlining Mercyhealth concerns

State Rep. Joan Fitzgerald and State Sen. Melissa Ratcliff sent a letter to the City of Jefferson raising concerns about a proposed $45 million Mercyhealth stand-alone emergency facility. The legislators contend the facility would not provide primary care and would require patients needing hospitalization to travel to Mercyhealth's Janesville hospital. The letter warned of potential job losses and movement of health care revenue out of Jefferson County. Rezoning, a certified survey map, and site plan approvals remain required before construction can begin.

Source: Daily Jefferson County Union (South Central) | https://www.dailyunion.com/news/local/fitzgerald-ratcliff-pen-letter-outlining-mercyhealth-concerns/article_f1b7a378-17cd-484e-8ece-ad67d49349e5.html

Milton Common Council to consider development agreement for manufacturing, storage

The Milton Common Council is set to consider a development agreement with Putnam Properties for an approximately 38,400-square-foot expansion at Crossroads Business Park valued at more than $460,000. Putnam Properties would receive $46,450 annually for 10 years from Tax Increment District 11, contingent on the project generating at least equivalent property tax payments. The Plan Commission approved the agreement June 2. A Sept. 15 council vote was canceled for lack of a quorum. A second expansion phase of about 70,000 square feet is planned for a later date.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/milton-common-council-to-consider-development-agreement-for-manufacturing-storage/article_cfa35aa5-0269-4266-aab3-fe690299b17d.html

New rental property inspection program launching in Milwaukee's Uptown neighborhood

Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson signed off on a Rental Housing Inspection Program for the Uptown neighborhood that allows tenants in one- and two-family rental properties more than eight years old to request city inspections without filing a formal complaint against their landlord. The program covers the area bounded by Center Street, Sherman Boulevard, 50th Street, and

North Avenue. Owners found in violation will have 30 days to make repairs before reinspection. The Department of Neighborhood Services expects to launch the program by April after training inspectors and community groups, including the Reclaiming Our Neighborhoods Coalition.

Source: WISN 12 ABC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.wisn.com/article/new-rental-property-inspection-program-launching-in-milwaukees-uptown-neighborhood/74082117

Former Shopko site cleanup moves forward in Stevens Point

Stevens Point received a $4.5 million EPA grant to remediate soil contamination from a former dry cleaner on the 1.3-acre former Shopko site. The Stevens Point Redevelopment Authority approved redevelopment plans for the site in December 2025. Mayor Mike Wiza said remediation is expected to begin next year and that a housing project contingent on the grant can now proceed. The timing of groundbreaking remains to be determined. The city finance committee will discuss the site and an amendment to the developer's agreement in October.

Source: WSAW CBS7 Wausau (Central/Northern) | https://www.wsaw.com/2026/10/06/former-shopko-site-cleanup-moves-forward-stevens-point/

G'town votes 6-2 to retain rural feel of community, tanks 256 rental home proposal

The Village of Germantown board voted 6-2 on Oct. 6 to reject rezoning about 71 acres from agricultural districts and amending the 2050 Future Land Use Plan for Heyday Germantown, a 256-unit market-rate rental development on the Roskopf and Barnes properties off Lilac Lane. The Plan Commission had approved the proposal 7-0 on Sept. 14. Of 24 public speakers at the nearly four-hour meeting, 20 opposed the project, citing flooding risk from bedrock blasting, traffic, and deviation from the 2050 plan. Trustee Scott Hefle cited more than 70 resident contacts, two of them in favor. Village President Bob Soderberg, who voted in support, said he ran on a platform of welcoming smart development.

Source: Washington County Insider (Southeastern) | https://www.washingtoncountyinsider.com/gtown-votes-6-2-retain-rural-feel/

Land Use and Zoning

City of Janesville moves into home stretch on massive zoning code rewrite

Janesville is nearing completion of its first full zoning code rewrite in 45 years, with city staff and the Plan Commission working toward completion by late 2026 or early 2027. The city held the last of three public open houses this week at Hedberg Public Library. Written comments on the draft zoning map will be accepted through about Oct. 16. Proposed residential changes would permit a broader mix of housing types, including apartments, duplexes, and condominiums, within single neighborhoods and with fewer restrictions.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/city-of-janesville-moves-into-home-stretch-on-massive-zoning-code-rewrite/article_e3c6363d-a7ef-45a6-b36d-ba2e300e99d5.html

What a zoning rewrite could mean for La Crosse housing

La Crosse's planning department has spent the past year drafting an overhaul of the city's 1980s zoning ordinance. Deputy Planning Director Tim Acklin said the goal is to replace an outdated code with one that reflects modern uses. Planners aim to present a final draft to the City Council by December, with new rules taking effect the following year. The 2023 comprehensive plan and a 2024 housing study both identified a shortage of missing middle housing, including duplexes and small multifamily buildings. A 2024 survey found more than 60 percent of respondents concerned about housing costs.

Source: La Crosse Tribune (Western) | https://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/government-politics/article_021860f4-dff3-4b4a-a805-129d454bb1a3.html

Demolition of Madison's Wonder Bar approved despite preservation push

Madison's Plan Commission unanimously approved a demolition application for the Wonder Bar at Olin Avenue and John Nolen Drive, a site vacant for five years. Range Hill Partners has presented initial plans for a seven-story building with about 190 apartments and more than 1,600 square feet of ground-floor commercial space. The demolition drew 41 registered supporters and 233 registered opponents. The Landmarks Commission found historic value in the structure in August but recommended against local landmark designation. An 18-story proposal for the site was rejected in 2021, and a 2022 approval for a 12-story building that would have kept the structure did not proceed.

Source: Capital Times (South Central) | https://captimes.com/news/government/demolition-of-madisons-wonder-bar-approved-despite-preservation-push/article_6b95472c-7803-45e4-961e-ce560b3dcdaf.html

Adding new slow-no-wake zone possible, but not without challenges

Prescott's City Council directed City Administrator Matt Wolf at its Sept. 14 meeting to contact federal and state agencies about funding an erosion study, a prerequisite for possibly extending an existing slow-no-wake zone about 300 yards north along Lake Street on the St. Croix River. The DNR's Robert Kneeland advised that any local boating ordinance must align with St. Croix River regulations and federal law. He recommended consultation with the U.S. Coast Guard, Minnesota authorities, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The city has no water patrol, which leaves enforcement of an expanded zone unresolved.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/adding-new-slow-no-wake-zone-possible-but-not-without-challenges,208722

Woodman's plan advances but not without debate

The Grafton Village Board voted 6-1 to approve annexation and rezoning of 29 acres on North Port Washington Road for a proposed Woodman's Food Markets development, with Trustee Sarah Scarpace dissenting. The approvals are contingent on a pre-annexation and developer's agreement with Woodman's, which Community Development Director Gabe Gilbertson expects to finalize in late 2026 or early 2027. The development would include a 245,000-square-foot

grocery store, a 3,078-square-foot convenience store, a gas station with quick lube, and a 4,828-square-foot car wash. The proposal goes next to the village Architectural Review Board on Oct. 14.

Source: Ozaukee Press (Southeastern) | https://ozaukeepress.com/content/woodman%E2%80%99s-plan-advances-not-without-debate

Governance and Ethics

October: Contenders for governor weigh in on open government

The Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council reported that Democratic gubernatorial candidate David Crowley answered its open-government questionnaire and Republican Tom Tiffany did not. Both candidates support closing the legislative exemption that lets lawmakers delete emails not covered by pending records requests. Both also oppose nondisclosure agreements between data center developers and local governments. Crowley said he would post commonly requested information online, require appointee training on public records and open meetings laws, and raise the location-fee threshold, unchanged since 1981. Tiffany has separately pledged to improve a state data portal, create agency spending dashboards, and set response-time standards for records requests. The general election is Nov. 3.

Source: Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council (Statewide) | https://wisfoic.org/october-guv-contenders-weigh-in-on-open-government/

Langlade corrections officer facing felony misconduct

Langlade County corrections officer Gina Woertz was charged Sept. 28 in Langlade County Circuit Court with one felony count of misconduct in public office. The complaint alleges that on July 13 Woertz used jail department computers to access a confidential law enforcement database and an investigative report on pending charges against her fiance in Lincoln County. It further alleges that she drafted an official county system report seeking to disprove investigators' findings and placed money in a detective's mailbox. Judge John Rhode set a $5,000 signature bond. Woertz's next court appearance is Oct. 19 at 1:30 p.m.

Source: Antigo Daily Journal (Central/Northern) | https://www.antigojournal.com/news/langlade-corrections-officer-facing-felony-misconduct/article_77743e98-86c5-418b-bd44-c9e8a9af8f01.html

Marinette County petition seeks vote on halving county board size

Peshtigo Town Chairperson Jennifer Friday is circulating a petition to place a referendum on the ballot that would cut the Marinette County Board from 30 supervisors to 15, a size unchanged since 1965. She needs 2,000 valid signatures and is targeting 2,500. If the measure qualifies and voters approve it in spring 2027, redrawn districts would take effect in April 2028. County Board Chair John Guarisco has separately submitted his own proposal to halve the board and asked that it be held while the board addresses the budget and a vacant administrator position. His plan would raise pay for the remaining supervisors and consolidate committee work into two full board meetings a month.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | https://www.ehextra.com/news/marinette-county-petition-seeks-vote-on-halving-county-board-size/article_a91d0a27-e776-4c26-978b-12308b2b8d37.html

Beaver Dam council approves alderperson pay increase

The Beaver Dam Common Council unanimously approved an ordinance raising the annual alderperson salary from $3,700 to $5,000, effective May 2029, after a public hearing. The ordinance also allows alderpersons, the mayor, and the municipal judge to receive annual salary increases of up to 2 percent. Those increases are tied to city staff wage adjustments. Alderperson Jack Yuds noted that the increase would mark 26 years since the last aldermanic pay raise.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (South Central) | https://dailydodge.com/beaver-dam-council-approves-alderperson-pay-increase/

Council moves to oust Police Monitor Glass, but Oversight Board says it doesn't have the power

The Madison Common Council voted 18-2 to introduce a resolution terminating the appointment of Interim Independent Police Monitor Aeiramique Glass before its March 31, 2027 expiration. The council cited a City Attorney review that found little formal progress on hiring a permanent monitor after nearly 10 months, with no approved job description, posting, finalized hiring committee, or candidates referred to the board. The Police Civilian Oversight Board disputes the factual basis and argues that Madison General Ordinance Section 5.19 gives it exclusive hiring and firing authority. City Attorney Michael Haas counters that the council's June 2026 vote extending Glass's appointment implies equivalent authority to revoke it. The ordinance does not explicitly address removal. The council is expected to vote further on the resolution Oct. 20, and the board plans an emergency meeting before then.

Source: WMTV NBC15 Madison (South Central) | https://www.wmtv15news.com/2026/10/08/council-moves-oust-police-monitor-glass-oversight-board-says-it-doesnt-have-power/

More accusations made about Winneconne School Board members

Winneconne Area School Board Vice President Dean Ackmann accused fellow member Mark Kunde of blocking his participation in a Finance Committee meeting, raising potential open meetings law concerns in an attorney letter. Ackmann also alleged that member Donna Hanson may have violated open meetings laws while serving as board chair. He accused member Jillayne Verich of calling Board President Kati Calewarts a liar during a board meeting. Ackmann said he has not filed a formal complaint but reserves the right to do so. Board Clerk Kari Flagg previously rejected recall petitions against Ackmann and Calewarts.

Source: WHBY 1150 AM Appleton (Northeastern) | https://www.whby.com/2026/10/08/more-accusations-made-about-winneconne-school-board-members/

Kronenwetter administrator asks board to revive ethics committee, adopt code of conduct

Kronenwetter Village Administrator James Davel recommended that the Village Board reestablish an ethics committee and adopt a code of conduct, both previously dismantled by the board, with a vote possible at the Oct. 12 meeting. The draft committee would have five citizen members serving three-year terms. Complaints would be written, notarized, filed through the village attorney, reviewed within five days, and subject to a one-year statute of limitations. Davel attached Green Bay's 10-page elected officials code as a model; it prohibits publicly demeaning staff, giving orders outside the chain of command, and discussing personnel matters in the media, with sanctions up to a $500 fine. The proposal follows former Trustee Sandi Sorensen's May 4 resignation alleging bullying and a 7-0 board vote in June releasing findings from an internal investigation launched in March.

Source: Wausau Pilot & Review (Central/Northern) | https://wausaupilotandreview.com/2026/10/10/kronenwetter-administrator-asks-board-to-revive-ethics-committee-adopt-code-of-conduct/

Elections and Election Administration

What to know about ICE, federal agents at polling places in the 2026 midterms

Wisconsin election officials are being trained to respond if armed federal agents appear at polling places before the Nov. 3 election, amid conflicting signals from the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Justice Department. Federal law prohibits deploying armed federal personnel to polling places, with narrow exceptions. A separate federal law prohibits voter intimidation and carries a penalty of up to one year in prison. A University of San Diego poll found 40 percent of Americans consider ICE presence at polls likely, and one-third said such a presence would reduce their trust in elections. Nine advocacy groups filed a federal lawsuit in September against DHS and other agencies over statements they characterize as threats to deploy agents to polling sites.

Source: WRJN 1400 AM Racine/Kenosha (Statewide) | https://wrjn.com/news/2026/10/07/what-to-know-about-ice-federal-agents-at-polling-places-in-the-2026-midterms

Fear within hispanic community leads to focus on early voting and absentee ballots

Voces de la Frontera is deploying election observers and volunteers ahead of the Nov. 3 election over concerns that federal agents or law enforcement near polling places could deter Hispanic voters, and it is encouraging early and absentee voting. Janesville City Clerk Lori Stottler confirmed that Rock County maintains a long-standing practice of keeping uniformed officers away from polling places to limit voter stress. Stottler said chief inspectors may still summon police if needed. State statute allows a police chief to station an officer at a polling place at the direction of the board of election commissioners.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/local/fear-within-hispanic-community-leads-to-focus-on-early-voting-and-absentee-ballots/article_b7327a12-bbbe-4331-ac1b-b40cc5ef2c15.html

Hundreds of Wisconsin election offices not using cybersecurity best practices

A Votebeat analysis of state data found about one in three Wisconsin municipal clerks still use Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, or other consumer email accounts for election business. Every such municipality has fewer than 5,000 residents, and most have fewer than 1,000. A Bipartisan Policy Center analysis found about 43 percent of Wisconsin municipalities and counties with listed websites use government domains, near the 44 percent national average. The Wisconsin Elections Commission has provided grants to help municipalities migrate to government domains, but federal funding for those programs is declining. Wisconsin has 1,850 municipal clerks and 72 county clerks, many serving small jurisdictions with no dedicated IT staff. Experts cite phishing and spoofing as concrete risks.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Statewide) | https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/10/wisconsin-election-offices-not-using-cybersecurity-best-practices/

City of Janesville documents give clarity on wording of GM/JATCO ballot referendum

The Janesville GM/JATCO referendum on the Nov. 3 ballot asks whether development agreements, projects, sales, and leases at the site exceeding $450 million in project costs must be approved by a majority vote of electors. City Clerk Lori Stottler confirmed that "electors" means voters in a general or special election, consistent with standard statutory ballot language. The city has posted its official common-language explanation on its election webpage, substituting "voters" for "electors." Stottler noted that the original citizen petition, which gathered thousands of signatures, also used the term "electors."

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/city-of-janesville-documents-give-clarity-on-wording-of-gm-jatco-ballot-referendum/article_c0264bb4-1707-4c6a-8a40-7a2b99c920e0.html

Redner ousts Anclam in Turtle board chair recall election

Donna Redner defeated incumbent Town of Turtle Board Chair Roger Anclam 400 to 232 in a recall election, with 634 of 1,693 registered voters casting ballots, a 37.45 percent turnout. The recall arose from Anclam's support for a cost-reimbursement agreement with a California company seeking to build a $1 billion data center campus spanning the towns of Turtle and Beloit. Redner takes office as the town's emergency medical services agreement with the City of Beloit expires at year's end. The city is seeking an increase from about $27,000 to $225,000 a year. The town must also set its annual budget and tax levy by the end of November. The chair position pays $3,800 a year.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/local/redner-ousts-anclam-in-turtle-board-chair-recall-election/article_17b58457-4ae6-5245-aeff-b6b3bbb78f12.html

Racine County Meals on Wheels: 2027 funding explained

Racine County Executive Ralph Malicki's proposed 2027 budget allocates $181,591 in local levy support for the Home Delivered Meals program against $838,122 in total expenses. Projected other revenue of $656,531 comes from intergovernmental sources ($401,238), nutrition program fees ($105,293), and managed care organizations ($150,000). The county served 94,589 home-delivered meals in 2024. A public hearing is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Oct. 22 in the County Board Chambers at the Ives Grove Office Building, after which the County Board may amend or adopt the budget.

Source: WRJN 1400 AM Racine/Kenosha (Southeastern) | https://wrjn.com/news/2026/10/07/racine-county-meals-on-wheels-2027-funding-explained

Chippewa County Confirms 11 Measles Cases as Statewide Activity Rises

The Chippewa County Department of Public Health and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services confirmed 11 measles cases among county residents. Health Officer Brittnay Herrick said the county has identified no known community exposure locations, and staff are contacting individuals with potential exposures directly. Public health officials are conducting follow-up with individuals and health care providers. DHS updates statewide case data on Tuesdays and Fridays. Officials urged residents to verify their vaccination status and contact providers promptly if symptoms develop.

Source: DrydenWire (Western) | https://drydenwire.com/news/chippewa-county-confirms-11-measles-cases-as-statewide-activity-rises/

OCHD launches first public health vending machine

The Oneida County Health Department launched its first public health vending machine outside its offices at 100 W. Keenan St. in Rhinelander, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at no cost to users. The machine dispenses hygiene kits, dental kits, gunlocks, drug deactivation bags, first aid kits, and seasonal items. The Rhinelander Police Department and the Iron Mountain VA donated the gunlocks. Acacia Lane Dental donated the children's dental kits.

Source: Tomahawk Leader (Central/Northern) | https://www.tomahawkleader.com/stories/ochd-launches-first-public-health-vending-machine,357854

School Districts

Here's how many school referendums are on the ballot this fall

Seventy-eight school referendums totaling about $1.6 billion will appear on Wisconsin's Nov. 3 ballot across 72 districts, bringing the 2026 total to 153 questions. Nearly 80 percent are operating referendums seeking authority to exceed state revenue limits. The largest capital request is Waunakee's $97.5 million referendum, paired with a $10.5 million recurring operating

question. Green Bay's $158 million operating referendum ranks fifth largest in state history, and Middleton-Cross Plains' $118.5 million ranks seventh. The spring approval rate was 61 percent, down from a 2018 peak of 89.7 percent. A Marquette Law School poll found 54 percent of registered voters prioritize keeping property taxes down over funding local education.

Source: Kenosha News (Statewide) | https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_6eb04516-a357-532d-8bf6-05b9d174ff13.html

Elmbrook Schools ask for $100 million referendum

The Elmbrook School District is asking voters Nov. 3 to approve a $100 million referendum for improvements at Pilgrim Park and Wisconsin Hills middle schools and Tonawanda and Swanson elementary schools. The district's last referendum was in 2008. The district estimates the owner of an average $600,000 home would pay $66 more per year if the measure passes. The district is hosting a virtual question-and-answer session Oct. 12 and facility tours Oct. 14, 15, and 20.

Source: WTMJ 4 NBC Milwaukee (Southeastern) | https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/in-your-community/waukesha-county/elmbrook-schools-ask-for-100-million-referendum

Janesville School District referendum shares space on Nov. 3 ballot with four other questions

The School District of Janesville is seeking voter approval Nov. 3 of a four-year, $98 million referendum, sharing the ballot with three state constitutional amendments and the GM/JATCO site development question. Superintendent Mark Holzman said the district projects an $18.5 million deficit in 2027-28 without passage, given current revenue limits. Without additional funding, the district could eliminate 150 to 180 staff positions. The district held a community question-and-answer meeting Sept. 30 and has another scheduled for Oct. 14.

Source: Janesville Gazette (South Central) | https://www.gazettextra.com/news/janesville-school-district-referendum-shares-space-on-nov-3-ballot-with-four-other-questions/article_bbd49790-2ce1-488c-bef1-23b220abbdd8.html

Marinette School District outlines $68 million referendum proposal

Marinette School District officials presented a $68 million capital referendum on the Nov. 3 ballot that would authorize general obligation bonds for renovations and additions at the middle and high schools. The work covers career and technical education, arts, science, security, accessibility, and building systems including new HVAC and air conditioning. Finance Director Sean Kelly estimated the tax impact at 47 cents per $1,000 of equalized value. A similar referendum for the same buildings failed narrowly in April 2025. The district scheduled additional community sessions for Oct. 5, Oct. 8, and Oct. 14.

Source: EagleHerald (Northeastern) | https://www.ehextra.com/news/marinette-school-district-outlines-68-million-referendum-proposal/article_83fbb045-add0-45a9-8dd6-6ff3ce07916a.html

How Wisconsin school districts like Mayville can say their referendums won't raise taxes

The Mayville School District is asking voters Nov. 3 to approve $950,000 a year for seven years beginning in 2027-28 for safety upgrades ($532,978), capital maintenance ($4.6 million), and bus replacement ($1.5 million). The district argues the referendum will not raise the mill rate because it redirects defeasance levies already collected to retire a $24.5 million 2017 bond, of which about $12.8 million remains. Mayville faces a $403,224 annual budget shortfall that the district attributes to state aid gaps, special education mandates, and the voucher program. If the referendum fails, the district says it will return with another question on a later ballot.

Source: WiscNews (South Central) | https://wiscnews.com/community/columbusjournal/article_02b399bb-e91a-45c6-a580-61a9d4b110c5.html

Eau Claire Area School District accepting applications for 'Community Engagement Task Force'

The Eau Claire Area School District is seeking 40 to 50 community members for a Community Engagement Task Force to evaluate elementary enrollment trends, facility needs, attendance areas, and potential operating adjustments. The district describes the charge as assessing long-term, flexible, and fiscally responsible solutions for facility planning. About 12 public meetings are planned between November and February, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Members must attend all meetings. Applications are due Oct. 22.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Western) | https://www.weau.com/2026/10/09/eau-claire-area-school-district-accepting-applications-community-engagement-task-force/

La Crosse schools seek public input on reuse of 3 elementary sites

La Crosse Public Schools is gathering community input on the future of the Spence, Hintgen, and Emerson elementary buildings, all scheduled to close at the end of the 2026-27 school year under the district's consolidation plan. The district has contracted with Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. to study existing conditions, market opportunities, and reuse options. A virtual session covering all three properties is set for Oct. 21, with open houses at each site Oct. 28, Oct. 29, and Nov. 3. The new Hogan Elementary is opening as part of the same consolidation.

Source: WIZM 1410 AM La Crosse (Western) | https://www.wizmnews.com/2026/10/10/la-crosse-schools-public-input-elementary-site-reuse/

Madison school district considers adding new west side middle school

The Madison Metropolitan School District released a second draft of attendance area maps that includes two new schools: an east side elementary school and a west side middle school near the Acacia Ridge area close to Olson Elementary. Without the new middle school, Toki Middle is projected to reach 100 percent utilization within a decade. The new school's projected utilization would be 66 percent, below the district's 75 to 85 percent target. Officials acknowledged a property tax referendum may be needed to fund construction. A districtwide town hall is planned

for January, and the School Board is scheduled to vote on new attendance maps in February, with implementation in 2028-29.

Source: Capital Times (South Central) | https://captimes.com/news/education/madison-school-district-considers-adding-new-west-side-middle-school/article_bc7172f4-9b48-46e9-81fa-55d4461fef44.html

Amery school board reviews new rules for e-bikes, scooters on campus

The Amery Board of Education gave a first reading Sept. 21 to proposed Policy 443.7, which would require students to obtain an annual district-issued permit signed by a parent or guardian to ride e-bikes and scooters on campus, cap campus speeds at 15 mph, and restrict riding to designated areas. Board member Steve Osero raised concerns about a confiscation provision. District Administrator Shawn Doerfler said the provision may be revised before the October second reading to instead bar violating devices from campus. Board member April Ziemer noted that the City of Amery has adopted a helmet requirement covering all bikes.

Source: Amery Free Press (Western) | https://theameryfreepress.com/news/amery-school-board-reviews-new-rules-for-e-bikes-scooters-on-campus/article_5e1a8e56-076b-4927-bb7f-6bdeeec00fc5.html

SDRF proposes increase to tax levy, decrease to mill rate

The River Falls School District presented a proposed 5.44 percent total tax levy increase, to $28.7 million, at its Sept. 28 annual budget hearing, down from a 5.7 percent increase the prior year. The mill rate would fall from 6.89 to 6.84, which Finance and Facilities Director Lynette Coy said would be the second lowest since 2015-16 and below the state average of 7.18. Local tax revenue would rise about $2.2 million while state aid is estimated to fall about $400,000. The district is in the third year of an operating referendum and projects total debt of about $57.8 million at fiscal year-end. Superintendent David Bell said the district will make staffing adjustments gradually after three consecutive years of enrollment decline, with a fourth projected.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Western) | https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/sdrf-proposes-increase-to-tax-levy-decrease-to-mill-rate,208742

State-Local Interface

Trump announces nearly $18M in disaster relief for tornado, storm damage in Wisconsin

President Trump announced on Truth Social that he would approve $17.9 million in federal disaster relief for Wisconsin after the July 27 EF-3 tornado centered on Menasha, which damaged 663 homes, including 140 deemed unsafe. FEMA confirmed assistance would be available, covering temporary housing grants, home repair grants, and low-cost loans for individuals and for state, local, and tribal governments, but released no dollar figure. The announced amount falls more than $4 million short of the $22 million in combined residential and government property damage documented in Gov. Tony Evers' August request. Menasha Mayor Austin Hammond and Winnebago County Executive Gordon Hintz each said they had received no official confirmation of approved funds or allocation details.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Statewide) | https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/10/wisconsin-trump-disaster-relief-tornado-storm-damage-evers-tiffany-menasha-fox-valley/

FEMA assistance available for tornado victims as local funds continue to be distributed

FEMA assistance is available to homeowners and renters in Outagamie and Winnebago counties who sustained damage to their primary residence in the July 27 Fox Valley tornado. Residents must register at the FEMA disaster website or by calling 1-800-621-3362, and the registration deadline is Dec. 7. FEMA inspectors will contact applicants to assess losses and review repair receipts. LEAVEN Fox Cities separately reported receiving more than 1,900 assistance requests and distributing about $5.6 million to more than 1,500 households.

Source: WLUK FOX11 Green Bay (Statewide) | https://fox11online.com/news/local/fema-assistance-available-for-tornado-victims-as-local-funds-continue-to-be-distributed-menasha-winnebago-county-leaven-outagamie-county

Wisconsin's controversial anti-union law faces a reckoning this fall. Here's what that could mean.

Act 10, the 2011 law that eliminated most public-sector collective bargaining in Wisconsin, faces potential rollback through both the Nov. 3 election and a pending Wisconsin Supreme Court case. In July the Court of Appeals overturned a 2024 Dane County Circuit Court ruling that invalidated parts of the law, setting up Supreme Court review. An Aug. 26 Marquette Law School Poll found 54 percent of registered voters favor restoring collective bargaining to pre-Act 10 levels and 43 percent support keeping the law. Democratic gubernatorial candidate David Crowley has called for repeal, and Republican Tom Tiffany has defended the law. Repeal would require a governor willing to sign legislation and majorities in both legislative chambers. Senate Democratic Leader Dianne Hesselbein said her caucus supports restoring bargaining rights, with health insurance and pension contribution changes still under internal discussion.

Source: Wisconsin Watch (Statewide) | https://wisconsinwatch.org/2026/10/wisconsin-act-10-union-law-reckoning-public-employee-collective-bargaining-supreme-court-election/

Republicans Move To Repeal Data Center Tax Break They Once Championed

Four Republican legislators, Sen. Andre Jacque and Reps. Lindee Brill, Dean Kaufert, and Shae Sortwell, circulated a co-sponsorship memo for a bill repealing the sales tax exemption for data center construction and operations enacted in the 2023-25 state budget. A March Legislative Fiscal Bureau analysis found the exemption has saved developers $1.5 billion statewide. Democratic leaders said any bill introduced at this point in the calendar would require a special session to receive a number and a hearing. Kaufert and Jacque are both retiring from the Legislature. Sponsors said the bill is intended to start a debate for the incoming Legislature in January.

Source: Urban Milwaukee (Statewide) | https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2026/10/09/republicans-move-to-repeal-data-center-tax-break-they-once-championed/

State lawmakers, business leaders weigh regulation of AI in healthcare

A Joint Legislative Council Study Committee on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Health Care, chaired by Sen. Rachael Cabral-Guevara (R-Appleton), is examining how Wisconsin might regulate AI in health care settings. The 18-member committee includes four legislators and 14 public members from the legal, insurance, and health care industries, among them leaders from Epic Systems, Abbott Laboratories, and UW Health. The committee spent several hours in early October debating whether to adopt a formal definition of artificial intelligence. Focus areas include patient data protection, transparency in AI use for medical billing and insurance claim evaluation, and risks such as deepfakes and chatbot-related patient harm. The committee aims to recommend regulatory approaches before the Legislature reconvenes in January.

Source: Kenosha News (Statewide) | https://www.kenoshanews.com/news/state-regional/wisconsin/article_2de3f51f-0cd3-560f-af40-6d75899d2fe1.html

Wisconsin Supreme Court seeks to make courthouses safer in new budget proposal

The Wisconsin Supreme Court's 2027-29 biennial budget request seeks approximately $3 million for court security, including $1.5 million for a Court Security Improvement grant program available to counties. The court cited 129 security threats reported by circuit court judges in 2025. The request also seeks about $1.9 million to establish eight new circuit court branches in Brown, Kenosha, La Crosse, Pierce, Trempealeau, Washington, and Shawano/Menominee counties. It also seeks an additional Court of Appeals judgeship in District III, based in Wausau and serving 35 northern counties.

Source: WEAU NBC13 Eau Claire (Statewide) | https://www.weau.com/2026/10/06/wisconsin-supreme-court-seeks-make-courthouses-safer-new-budget-proposal/

Wisconsin DOJ opposes proposed changes to Head Start standards

The Wisconsin Department of Justice joined a coalition of 22 other states and the District of Columbia in submitting a comment letter opposing proposed federal changes to Head Start regulations. The department said the proposal would eliminate more than 1,400 regulations, lower the administrative and development cost cap from 15 percent to 5 percent, and reduce minimum service requirements. Attorney General Josh Kaul said the changes would undermine a program that has served children for more than 60 years. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services proposed the changes to the program's performance standards.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (Statewide) | https://dailydodge.com/wisconsin-doj-opposes-proposed-changes-to-head-start-standards/

State grants will help some school districts pay for student financial literacy requirement

The Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Financial Institutions awarded $296,000 in Financial Literacy Innovation Grants to more than two dozen school districts and community organizations. Funding comes from DFI settlement dollars. The grants support compliance with a 2023 state law requiring a half-credit personal financial literacy course for

graduation beginning with the Class of 2028. Recipient districts include Appleton, Baraboo, Beaver Dam, Racine, Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Palmyra-Eagle, selected through a competitive DPI application process.

Source: WPR News Madison (Statewide) (Statewide) | https://www.wpr.org/news/state-grants-help-school-districts-pay-for-student-financial-literacy-requirement

Wisconsin school districts can apply for $1 million in technical education grants

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development opened applications for Expanded Wisconsin Fast Forward grants, offering a total of $1 million to school districts for advanced manufacturing and construction career training. Individual awards range from $5,000 to $100,000. Eligible uses include facility construction and renovation, equipment, software, and instructor training. Applications are due by 3 p.m. Nov. 9 through the program's online system.

Source: WBEV 1430 AM Beaver Dam (Statewide) | https://dailydodge.com/wisconsin-school-districts-can-apply-for-1-million-in-technical-education-grants/

Pierce Co. residents continue clean water fight as Ridge Breeze appeals groundwater ruling

Administrative Law Judge Angela Chaput Foy ruled in August that Ridge Breeze Dairy's DNR permit lacked a meaningful mechanism to verify compliance with Wisconsin groundwater quality standards, declared the permit unreasonable, and directed the DNR to amend it. The permit allowed the Pierce County dairy to expand from about 1,700 to 6,500 cows and spread roughly 80 million gallons of manure and wastewater annually. Ridge Breeze has filed a petition for judicial review in Outagamie County Circuit Court, and the DNR is not seeking review. GROWW and Midwest Environmental Advocates, which brought the original challenge on behalf of five Pierce County residents, will contest the appeal. Court timelines are expected within weeks.

Source: Pierce County Journal (Statewide) | https://www.piercecountyjournal.news/stories/pierce-co-residents-continue-clean-water-fight-as-ridge-breeze-appeals-groundwater-ruling,208575

Appleton airport solar-microgrid plans stalled after $1.5M FAA grant is canceled

The U.S. Department of Transportation canceled a $1.5 million FAA Airport Improvement Program grant awarded in 2024 to Appleton International Airport, citing failure to meet agency priorities. The grant was to fund a solar array and a microgrid system with battery storage to support operations during grid outages. The project had not begun. Airport Director Abe Weber said the cancellation would not change the airport's long-term sustainable energy strategy and that the airport will continue pursuing federal and state funding for similar projects. Sen. Tammy Baldwin called for the cancellation to be reversed.

Source: WLUK FOX11 Green Bay (Statewide) | https://fox11online.com/news/local/appleton-airport-solar-microgrid-plans-stalled-after-15m-faa-grant-is-canceled-atw-trump-administration-dot-fox-valley-green-energy-outages-sustainability-tammy-baldwin-wisconsin

City of Waukesha petitions Supreme Court to review ruling in Blair House case

The City of Waukesha petitioned the Wisconsin Supreme Court on Oct. 2 to review a Court of Appeals decision finding that Blair House owners Robert and Lisa Salb have standing under Wis. Stat. § 781.10 to challenge the city's approval of the Mandel Group's four-story, 219-unit apartment project next to their Madison Street property. The circuit court had sided with the city. The Court of Appeals reversed, holding that the Salbs' aesthetic harm was distinct from harm to the general public. City Attorney Brian Running argues the appellate interpretation would nullify the statute's intent to limit challenges to residential development. The Supreme Court may decline review, which would return the case to circuit court, and a decision on whether to hear the case could take months.

Source: Waukesha Freeman (Statewide) | https://www.gmtoday.com/the_freeman/news/waukesha-blair-house-standing-appeal/article_ca8c3bb4-e346-59c5-a029-2ff77c1cc20e.html

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Summaries are drawn from the linked source reporting and are not independently fact-checked, so errors in the original coverage can carry through. Some Wisconsin outlets restrict automated access to their content, which leaves known gaps in any given edition, and I keep refining the collection workflow to close them. If you spot an inaccuracy, or know of a governance story a colleague in another community would want to see, I want to know. Forward this edition to someone who works in Wisconsin local government. Reach me at patrick@boldpathconsulting.com or (920) 522-2413.
