

# **Barron County Strategic Planning Work Group**

**Friday, January 16, 2026 – 9:00 a.m.**

Government Center – Room 2151

335 East Monroe Avenue - Barron, Wisconsin

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## **AGENDA**

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Public Meeting Notification
3. Special Matters & Announcements
4. Public Comment
5. Approve Agenda
6. Approve Minutes of 12-15-25 Meeting
7. Data Presentation on Barron County Services
  - a. Economic (Dave Armstrong / Karl Green)
  - b. Demographic (Karl Green)
  - c. Financial (Jeff French)
8. Changes to Local / County Landscape Since Last Planning Document
  - a. SP Committee & County Board (Jeff French)
  - b. County Service Delivery (Jeff French / Karl Green)
  - c. Department Heads
  - d. Survey Option
9. Staff Updates
10. Future Agenda Items
11. Set Next Meeting Date
12. Adjourn

### **PLEASE CALL 537-6841 IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND**

cc: Patti Anderson, Randy Cook, Louie Okey, Karolyn Bartlett, John Banks, Craig Turcott, Jodi Kummet, Karla Potts-Shufelt, John Muench, Rachael Richie, Jeff French, Administrator, Corp. Counsel, Co. Clerk, Webmaster & 3 Public Postings

*Any person who has a qualifying disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act and requires the meeting or materials at the meeting to be in an accessible format must contact the County Clerk's office at 715/537-6200 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting so that arrangements may be made to accommodate your request.*

Draft

**Minutes**  
**Barron County Strategic Planning Work Group**  
**Monday, December 15th, 2025 3pm**  
**Barron County Government Center, RM 2151**  
**335 East Monroe Avenue, Barron, WI 54812**  
**Minutes taken by CA French**

**Committee/County Board Members Present:** Okey, P. Anderson, Bartlett, Banks, Turcott,

**Staff Present:** French, Muench, Kummett, Hagen

**Virtual Attendance:** None

**Others Present:** U.W. Extension Staff: Lori Baltrusis, Karl Green, Sarah Brown,  
B/C EDC Staff: Dave Armstrong , Brandi Nelson

**#1. Call to Order:** 3.04pm Chair okey

**#2. Public Meeting Notification:**  
French provided notification of public posting

**#3. Special Matters and Announcements:**  
None

**#4. Public Comment:**  
None

**#5. Approve Agenda**  
P. Anderson/Turcott approve agenda, carried

**#6. Approve Minutes 11-19-2025 Meeting:**  
Bartlett/Banks, approve minutes, carried

**#7. Approved \$5,000 Payment UW Extension - Strategic Planning:**  
Motion: Turcott/Barlett to approve above payment, carried

**#8. Discuss/Review/Approve Process for Next Five Year Plan:**  
Discussion lead by Karl,  
In the mission statement, change the word "progressive" to "responsible"  
Motion, P. Anderson to change word, second Bartlett, carried  
Mission Statement to now read: "To enhance life by providing services in a fiscally responsible manner through leadership, collaboration and innovation, that is responsive to all Barron County citizens."

Vision Statement: Discussion, on meaning, B/C's inspiration, work that the county has done,

Draft

*A Safe, Stable, Sustainable, County*

Motion/ P. Anderson, second Bartlett to change Vision Statement to above. Carried

Discussion on Directional Statements:

- #1. "Expand affordable housing for aging population, rentals and entry level buyers"  
Agreed statement needs to stay, discussed attempts to expand smaller homes
- #2. "Expand broadband coverage and enhance technological advancement in Barron County."  
Discussed and agreed to leave
- #3. "Maintain and improve all county owned facilities"  
*Maintain and improve all county owned properties*  
Motion Bartlett/Turcott to change to "properties", carried
- #4. "Improved mental health and decrease substance abuse"  
*Strengthen community health and safety, mental wellness and substance use prevention.*  
Motion Bartlett, Second P. Anderson to change #4., Directional Statement to above, carried.
- #5. "Remain fiscally responsible"  
*Remain fiscally responsible through planning and execution*  
Motion; P. Anderson/Turcott, to change Directional Statement #5 to above, carried.
- #6. "Attract and retain new and skilled workforce"  
Discussed and agreed to leave
- #7. *Monitor technology, including, (AI), and effect on Barron County*  
Motion Turcott/Bartlett to add the above directional statement

**#9. Staff Updates:**

Staff updates as printed in the agenda were discussed, no action taken

**#9. Future Agenda Items:**

January meeting: Data presentation on Barron County Services and changes to local/county landscape since last planning document

**#10. Set Next Meeting Date:**

January 16th, 9am.

Draft

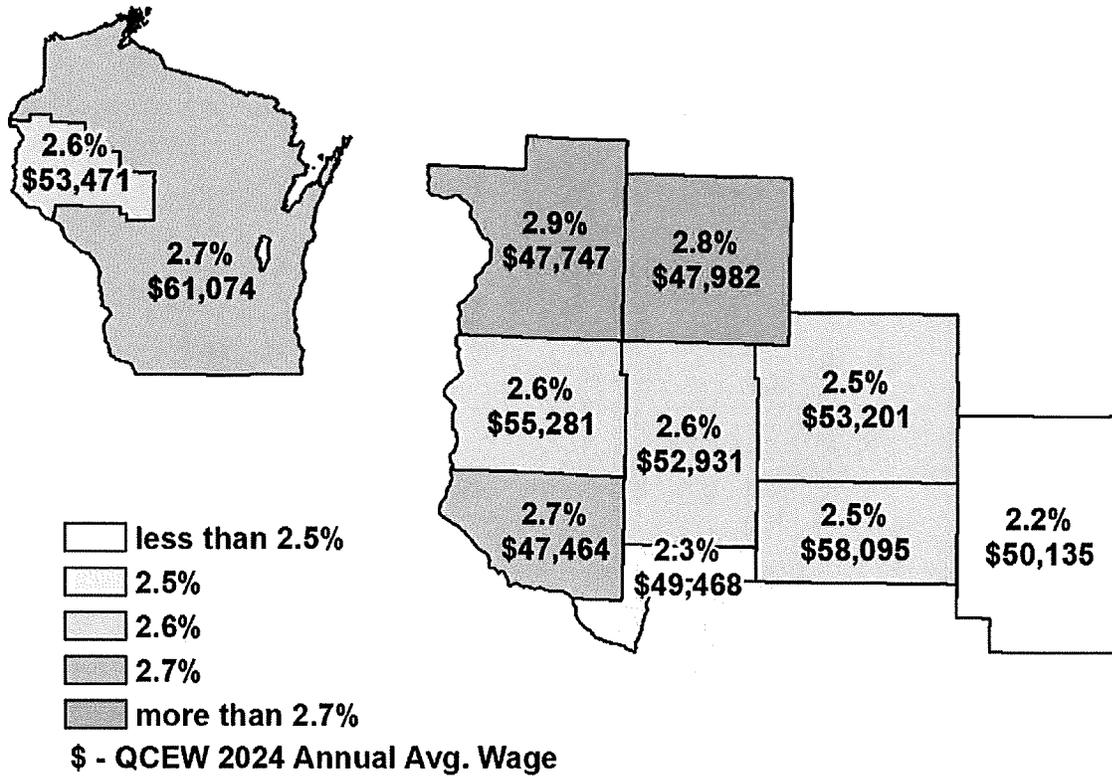
**#11. Adjourn:**

Chair Okey declared adjourned at 4.35pm by unanimous consent

[G:\google\googledocs\2025-12-15 SPWG Minutes.docx](#)

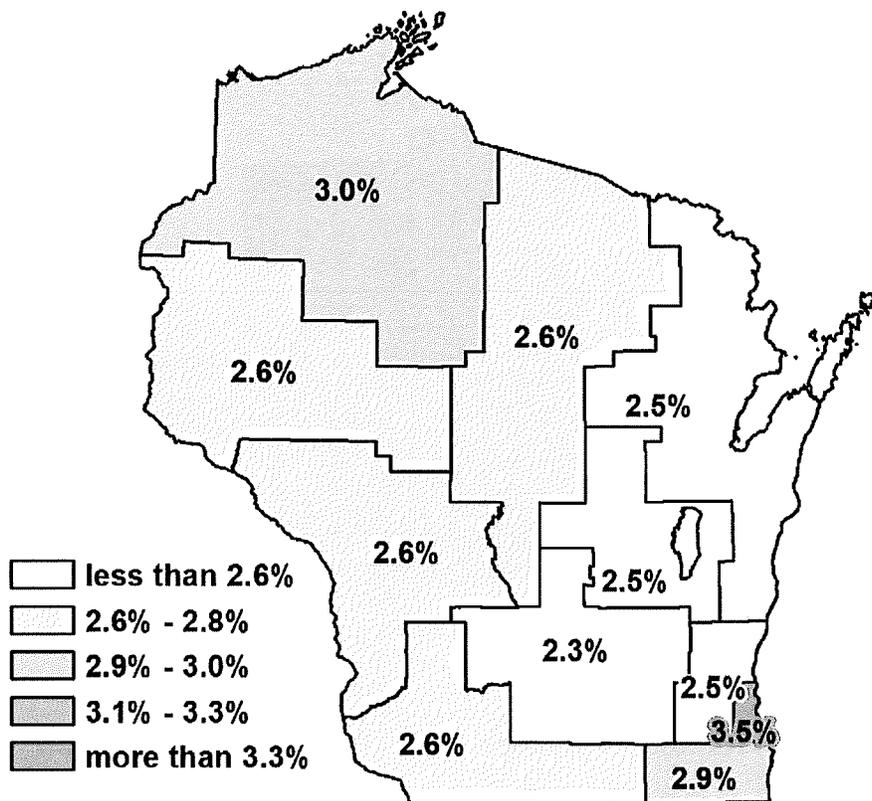
- December meeting
  - 30 Min - Discussion/Review of Historical Strategic Planning documents (including Goal/Directional Statements) (Karl Green)
  - 30 Min. - Discussion/Review of existing County Plans re: connections to Strategic Plan (Jeff French, Karl Green)
  - Review and refine/change Mission & Vision (Karl Green)
  
- January meeting
  - 60 Min. Data presentation on Barron County on County services
    - Economic (Dave Armstrong/Karl Green)
    - Demographic (Karl Green)
    - Financial (Jeff French)
  - 30 Min. Changes to Local/County landscape since last planning document
    - SP Committee & County Board (Jeff French)
    - County service delivery (Jeff French/Karl Green)
    - Department Heads
      - (Survey option-?)
  
- February meeting SWOT Analysis (Karl Green/Sarah Brown)
  - SP Committee & County Board
  - Department Heads
  
- March meeting
  - Refine & develop Strategic Plan directional statements (Karl Green/Sarah Brown)
  
- Late March/Early April meeting
  - Development and presentation of SP action Plan (Karl Green/Sarah Brown)

# West Central Wisconsin Unemployment Report– November 2025



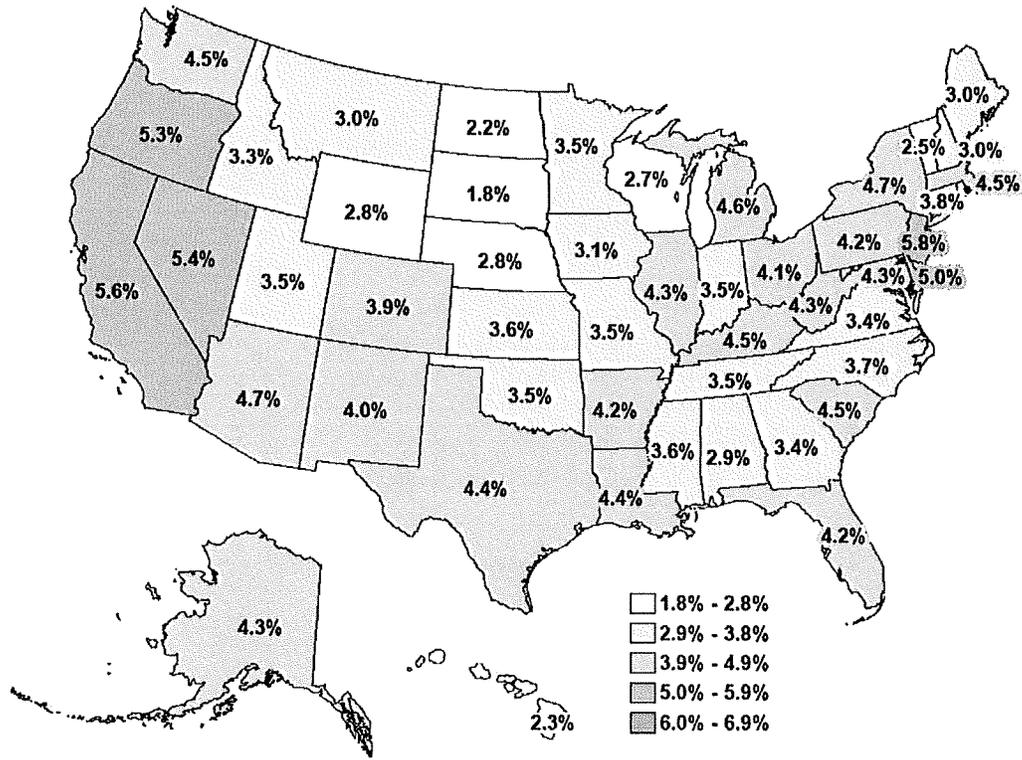
September Unemployment Rate				
Area	2024	2025	M-t-M % Change	Y-t-Y % Change
United States	3.9	4.3	-0.2	0.4
Wisconsin	2.5	2.7	-0.5	0.2
West Central WDA	2.5	2.6	-0.6	0.1
Barron County	2.7	2.8	-0.7	0.1
Chippewa County	2.4	2.5	-0.5	0.1
Clark County	2.4	2.2	-0.5	-0.2
Dunn County	2.5	2.6	-0.6	0.1
Eau Claire County	2.4	2.5	-0.7	0.1
Pepin County	2.3	2.3	-0.5	0.0
Pierce County	2.7	2.7	-0.8	0.0
Polk County	2.9	2.9	-0.5	0.0
St. Croix County	2.5	2.6	-0.7	0.1

# West Central Wisconsin Unemployment Report– November 2025



September Unemployment Rate				
Area	2024	2025	M-t-M % Change	Y-t-Y % Change
United States	3.9	4.3	-0.2	0.4
Wisconsin	2.5	2.7	-0.5	0.2
Bay Area WDA	2.3	2.5	-0.5	0.2
Fox Valley WDA	2.4	2.5	-0.5	0.1
Milwaukee County WDA	3.3	3.5	-0.8	0.2
North Central WDA	2.5	2.6	-0.5	0.1
Northwest WDA	2.9	3.0	-0.6	0.1
South Central WDA	2.2	2.3	-0.4	0.1
Southeast WDA	2.7	2.9	-0.6	0.2
Southwest WDA	2.5	2.6	-0.6	0.1
West Central WDA	2.5	2.6	-0.6	0.1
Western WDA	2.4	2.6	-0.4	0.2
WOW WDA	2.3	2.5	-0.5	0.2

# West Central Wisconsin Unemployment Report– November 2025

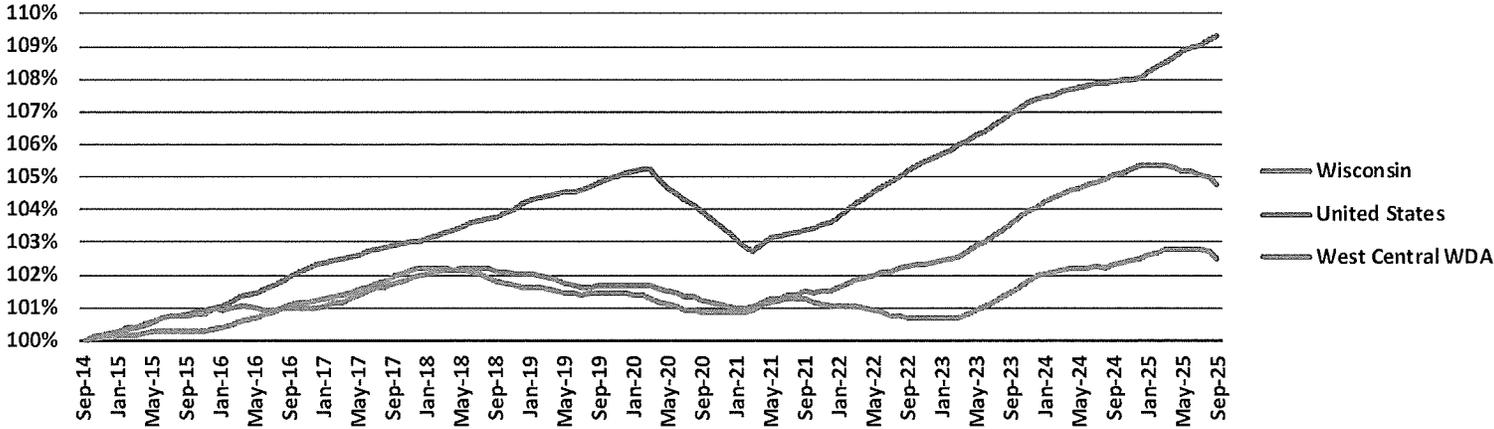


September 2025 Unemployment Rate					
Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate
Alabama	2.9	Kentucky	4.5	North Dakota	2.2
Alaska	4.3	Louisiana	4.4	Ohio	4.1
Arizona	4.7	Maine	3.0	Oklahoma	3.5
Arkansas	4.2	Maryland	4.3	Oregon	5.3
California	5.6	Massachusetts	4.5	Pennsylvania	4.2
Colorado	3.9	Michigan	4.6	Rhode Island	3.7
Connecticut	3.8	Minnesota	3.5	South Carolina	4.5
Delaware	5.0	Mississippi	3.6	South Dakota	1.8
District of Columbia	6.9	Missouri	3.5	Tennessee	3.5
Florida	4.2	Montana	3.0	Texas	4.4
Georgia	3.4	Nebraska	2.8	Utah	3.5
Hawaii	2.3	Nevada	5.4	Vermont	2.5
Idaho	3.3	New Hampshire	3.0	Virginia	3.4
Illinois	4.3	New Jersey	5.8	Washington	4.5
Indiana	3.5	New Mexico	4.0	West Virginia	4.3
Iowa	3.1	New York	4.7	Wisconsin	2.7
Kansas	3.6	North Carolina	3.7	Wyoming	2.8

# West Central Wisconsin Unemployment Report– November 2025

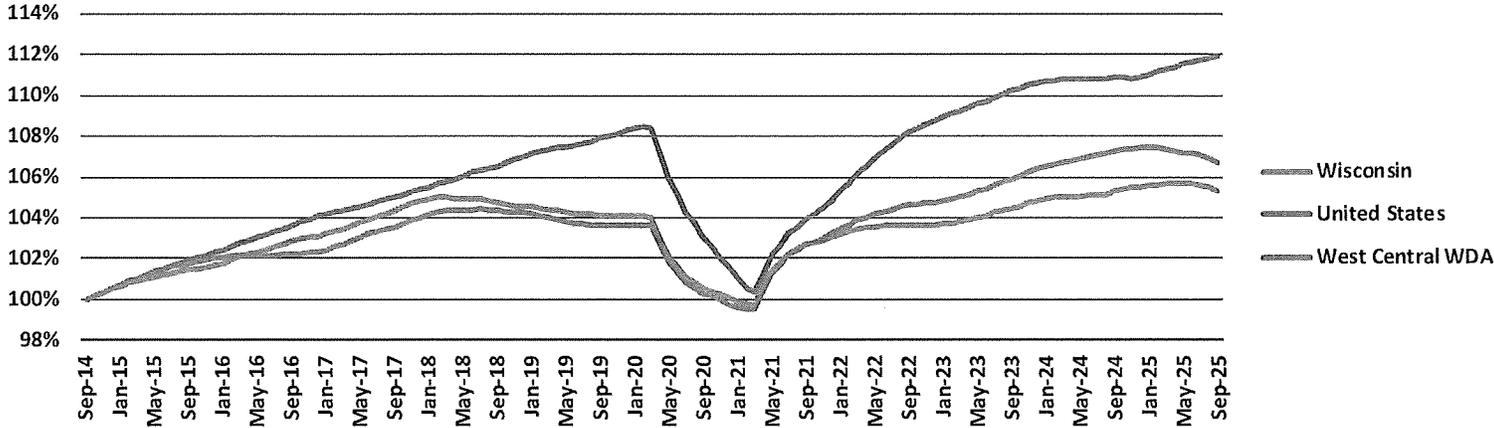
## Labor Force Index

12-Month Rolling Average



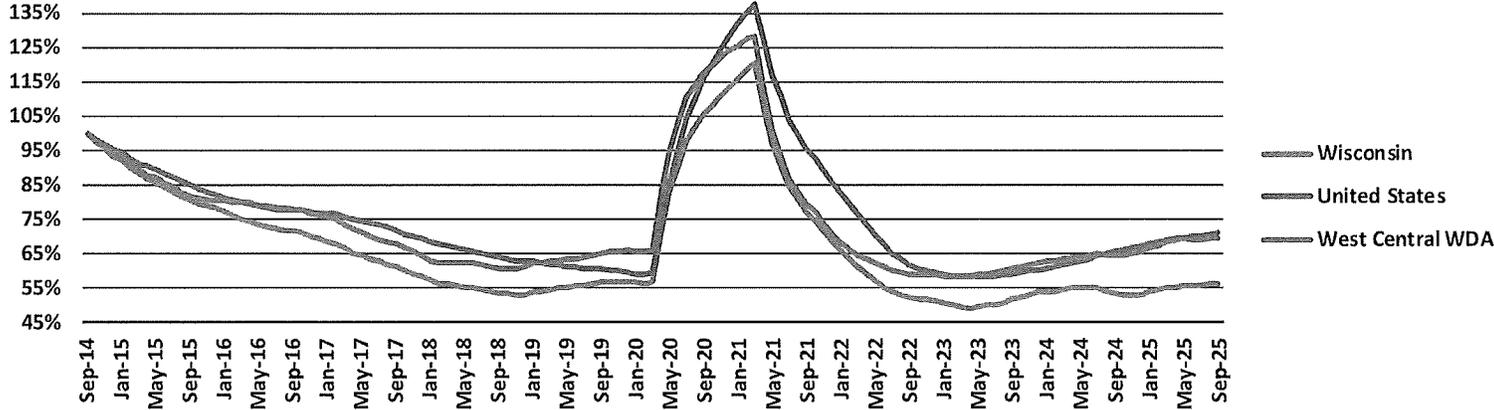
## Employment Index

12-Month Rolling Average



## Unemployment Index

12-Month Rolling Average



# West Central Wisconsin Unemployment Report– November 2025

Area	Sep-24			Aug-25			Sep-25		
	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed
United States	168,569,000	162,046,000	6,524,000	171,035,000	163,288,000	7,747,000	171,217,000	163,894,000	7,324,000
Wisconsin	3,186,034	3,104,893	81,141	3,144,516	3,043,029	101,487	3,097,477	3,014,651	82,826
West Central WDA	269,677	262,906	6,771	266,003	257,440	8,563	263,249	256,389	6,860
Barron County	22,973	22,348	625	22,704	21,910	794	22,388	21,757	631
Chippewa County	34,981	34,147	834	34,488	33,463	1,025	34,050	33,187	863
Clark County	17,140	16,733	407	17,258	16,789	469	16,912	16,532	380
Dunn County	25,427	24,794	633	24,056	23,282	774	24,707	24,062	645
Eau Claire County	61,698	60,248	1,450	60,883	58,927	1,956	59,974	58,477	1,497
Pepin County	3,980	3,887	93	3,933	3,823	110	3,870	3,781	89
Pierce County	24,834	24,172	662	24,783	23,927	856	24,426	23,758	668
Polk County	23,711	23,022	689	23,308	22,518	790	22,971	22,306	665
St. Croix County	54,933	53,555	1,378	54,590	52,801	1,789	53,951	52,529	1,422

Area	M-t-M % Change			Y-t-Y % Change		
	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed
United States	0.1%	0.4%	-5.5%	1.6%	1.1%	12.3%
Wisconsin	-1.5%	-0.9%	-18.4%	-2.8%	-2.9%	2.1%
West Central WDA	-1.0%	-0.4%	-19.9%	-2.4%	-2.5%	1.3%
Barron County	-1.4%	-0.7%	-20.5%	-2.5%	-2.6%	1.0%
Chippewa County	-1.3%	-0.8%	-15.8%	-2.7%	-2.8%	3.5%
Clark County	-2.0%	-1.5%	-19.0%	-1.3%	-1.2%	-6.6%
Dunn County	2.7%	3.4%	-16.7%	-2.8%	-3.0%	1.9%
Eau Claire County	-1.5%	-0.8%	-23.5%	-2.8%	-2.9%	3.2%
Pepin County	-1.6%	-1.1%	-19.1%	-2.8%	-2.7%	-4.3%
Pierce County	-1.4%	-0.7%	-22.0%	-1.6%	-1.7%	0.9%
Polk County	-1.4%	-0.9%	-15.8%	-3.1%	-3.1%	-3.5%
St. Croix County	-1.2%	-0.5%	-20.5%	-1.8%	-1.9%	3.2%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS and QCEW

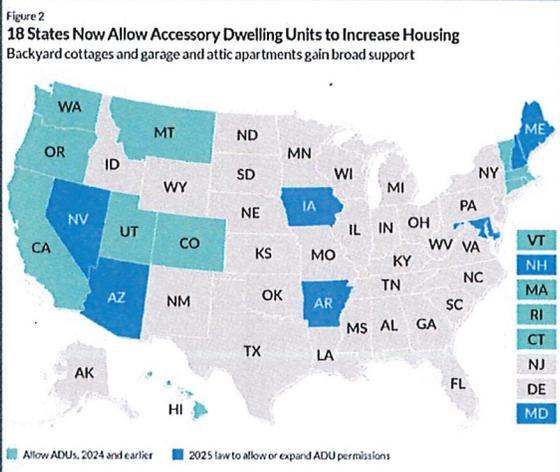
For more information, contact  
 Labor Economist Thomas Michels  
 715.679.5611, [Thomas.Michels@dwd.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Thomas.Michels@dwd.wisconsin.gov)



CITYBUILDERNC.ORG FACTS 

# 8 More States Legalize ADUs

Figure 2  
**18 States Now Allow Accessory Dwelling Units to Increase Housing**  
 Backyard cottages and garage and attic apartments gain broad support



Source: Pew Charitable Trusts

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Accessory dwelling units mean more homes, more flexibility, and sustainable growth 🏡  
 ... more

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32m 

Publisher, MetroWest Trades Weekly

The northeast is representing well

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Reply

Barron County, Barron Wisconsin  
 Analysis of WCA Green Book  
 Highway Expenditures, Per Capita,

OPD 7/31/2020  
 Date/Time 12/12/2025 9:26  
 Preparer JSF

\\bcusers\users\$\jeffrench\My Documents\WCA Documents\[WCA Green Book.xlsx]Hwy Exp per Capita

Green Book County			2023	2024	2025	\$\$ Change	% Change
	2018 Data	2019 Data	2021	2022	2023	Base Year 2018	Base Year 2018
Barron	\$69	\$194	\$85	\$465	\$133	\$64	92.75%
St. Croix	96	97	96	103	109	\$13	13.54%
Chippewa	146	162	140	235	261	\$115	78.77%
Polk	124	128	133	128	152	\$28	22.58%
Dunn	168	204	133	189	204	\$36	21.43%
Sawyer	212	198	217	221	222	\$10	4.72%
Washburn	495	384	429	323	666	\$171	34.55%
Burnett	249	188	212	209	196	(\$53)	-21.29%
Rusk	270	227	228	400	308	\$38	14.07%
State Avg.	86	91	93	118	104	\$18	20.93%
State Median	125	137	141	175	160	\$35	28.00%
Avg. Surrounding Counties, excluding Barron	220	199	199	226	265	\$45	20.34%
Avg. Surrounding Counties, including Barron	203	198	186	253	250	\$47	23.07%
<b><u>Variance Barron County From:</u></b>							
State Avg.	(17)	103	(8)	347	29	46	
State Median	(56)	57	(56)	290	(27)	29	
Avg. Surrounding Counties, excluding Barron	(151)	(5)	(114)	239	(132)	19	
Avg. Surrounding Counties, including Barron	(134)	(4)	(101)	212	(117)	17	

Comments:

Reference lane miles wherein we are above the averages

This analysis also supports how critical the construction work of the B/C Hwy Dept. is.

**For 2019 Reconstruction and betterments we up in costs by \$1.7M and work for other local districts as up \$1.1M, 15.2% increase therefore this explains the jump from prior years**

In 2022 more work done on State and County Roads

City of Cumberland - Hines Lakeview Drive, Harbor Drive and Pine Valley Street								12/15/2025	
Code	Work Item	Units	Quantity	Unit Price	Extension	Work by	Year-to-date Cost	% Complete	Over/Under Budget
237	Temporary Erosion Control	LS	1.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,500.00	County	\$ 6,273.97	100.0%	\$773.97
637	Construction Staking	LS	1.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	County	\$ 1,630.65	100.0%	(\$10,369.35)
857	Pulverizing	SY	19000.00	\$ 0.60	\$ 11,445.23	County	\$ 1,671.33	100.0%	(\$2,652.19)
						WK	\$ 7,121.71		
857	Sawcut Pavement	LF	1400.00	\$ 4.40	\$ 6,160.00	Pember	\$ 3,516.12	100.0%	(\$2,643.88)
370	Remove Concrete Pavement	SY	275.00	\$ 15.60	\$ 4,290.00	Pember	\$ 3,759.60	100.0%	(\$530.40)
857	Remove Asphalt Pavement	SY	1100.00	\$ 8.90	\$ 9,790.00	Pember	\$ 9,858.37	100.0%	\$68.37
565	Remove Culvert Pipes	LS	1.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	Pember	\$ 3,000.00	100.0%	\$0.00
	Excavation Below Subgrade	CY	400.00		\$ 18,273.22	County	\$ -	100.0%	(\$18,273.22)
857	1 1/4" Dense Graded Base	Ton	2000.00	\$ 15.18	\$ 30,369.09	County	\$ 14,182.01	100.0%	(\$16,187.08)
426	Culvert Pipe Materials & ECB	LS	1.00	\$ 31,500.00	\$ 31,500.00	Pember	\$ 31,500.00	100.0%	\$0.00
052	Install Culvert Pipes & Underdrain	LS	1.00						
570	Slope work and Ditching	LS	1.00	\$ 18,600.69	\$ 18,600.69	Pember	\$ 8,504.00	100.0%	(\$10,096.69)
857	4LT 58-28 S Warm Mix with RAP	Ton	2544.12	\$ 60.58	\$ 154,118.23	County	\$ 169,080.87	100.0%	\$14,962.64
706	Asphaltic Surface (driveways)	Ton	221.02	\$ 125.91	\$ 27,827.60	County	\$ 26,014.11	100.0%	(\$1,813.49)
706	Concrete Driveway Pavement	SY	272.00	\$ 95.90	\$ 26,084.80	Pember	\$ 9,209.00	100.0%	(\$16,875.80)
857	3/4" Dense Graded Base (shoulders)	Ton	362.43	\$ 47.95	\$ 17,378.48	County	\$ 13,374.72	100.0%	(\$4,003.76)
	Sand					County	\$ 204.54	100.0%	
200	Restoration	LS	1.00	\$ 14,500.00	\$ 14,500.00	County	\$ 5,342.46	100.0%	(\$9,157.54)
<b>FINAL COST</b>							\$ 314,243.46		
<b>ORIGINAL BUDGET</b>							\$ 386,273.23		
<b>FINAL COST VS. ESTIMATE</b>							\$ (72,029.77)		



**ADRC of Barron and Rusk County- Barron County Office**

**2025 Annual Plan Review**

Dear Jen and Team,

It was a pleasure meeting with you for your 2025–2027 Aging Unit Annual Review. I was very impressed by your innovative programming, strong partnerships, and responsiveness to community needs. I truly applaud you, your team, and your board and nutrition advisory council for the dedication, creativity, and passion you demonstrate each day in serving older adults, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities. Your commitment makes a real difference, and I'm excited to see your great work continue.

Below is a summary of your 2025 updates. Here is [the link](#) to your plan, which you can update in real time as needed. The 2025 changes, updates, and recommendations have been highlighted in **red font**—please feel free to make additional revisions throughout the year.

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**Barron County 2025 Plan Review – Summary**

**Goal 1: Health Promotion – Stepping On Expansion**

Barron County aims to expand the evidence-based Stepping On fall prevention program by 2027 to increase older adults' independence and reduce falls and related hospitalizations. In 2025, five workshops were held (four in Barron, one in Rusk), reaching 62 participants. A new facilitator was trained, and a Falls Prevention Coalition was launched. Discussions with EMS about a formal referral system will begin in August 2025.

**Goal 2: Caregiver Supports & Advocacy – Caregiver Voices Event**

Efforts continue to raise awareness and support for family caregivers. Due to budget cycles, the next Caregiver Voices advocacy event is planned for fall 2026. Staff participated in Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Day, and the caregiver specialist is preparing educational newsletter content about AFCSP funding changes and advocacy resources.

**Goal 3: Nutrition Program & Person-Centeredness – Pop-Up Dining Site**

The pilot pop-up dining event—launched through the Men's Shed social isolation grant—became an official nutrition site in April 2025. Attendance averages 40–50 men monthly, with steady growth and strong interest. Sites have expanded to additional locations, and participants are connecting to other ADRC programs and services. This pop-up model will continue long-term as long as participation remains strong.

**Goal 4: Supportive Services & Equity – Transportation (AddLIFE Transit)**

AddLIFE Transit continues to meet high demand, providing 3,844 rides in the first half of 2025 for older adults and adults with disabilities, including rides to Daybreak and Men's Shed. MARE events remain popular; partnerships with Barron County Developmental Services and Namekagon Transit now support family transportation needs. AddLIFE will remain available to fill gaps as needed.

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**Additional 2025 Highlights****Nutrition Program**

- Beneficial Bites theme: *Spice Up Your Health*
- Weekly produce donations from Barron Community Garden
- Sustainable Men's Shed dining site
- Successful March for Meals with 26 community partners
- Share the Love campaign through Meals on Wheels America
- Strong participation at Lona's Senior Dining, Dining at 5, and Soup & Salad Bar

**Caregiver Support**

- "Stress Less, Care Better" workshops
- Memory cafés and brain health programs
- After-Dementia Caregiving Ends group
- 10th Annual Caregiver Conference & Resource Fair

**Health Promotion**

- Stepping On expansion and active Falls Prevention Coalition
- Live 2 B Healthy programs

**Other Department Highlights**

- Strong partnership with UW-Extension; involvement in multiple regional coalitions
- Updated volunteer tracking systems and improved in-kind reporting
- Staff serving on numerous statewide committees, councils, and boards
- ~1,200 customers assisted during Medicare Part D Open Enrollment
- Transition to statewide resource database (QI project)

- ADRC logo refresh and improved social media engagement
- Administration of Senior Farmers Market Vouchers and Food Commodities

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I am always in awe of all that you achieve! You continue to be one of the top agencies in the state and are continually striving to do more, think outside the box, develop and pilot new programs that are replicated by your peers. Sincerely, thank you!

We will meet again next year to review formally. However, I am always available to assist in whatever manner you need, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

With tremendous gratitude and appreciation,



Pam VanKampen, Nutrition Program Specialist, GWAAR

[Pam.vankampen@gwaar.org](mailto:Pam.vankampen@gwaar.org)

Cc:

Patti Anderson, Board Chair