



Committee on Planning & Development  
AGENDA

**June 10, 2025**

6:00 P.M.

Courthouse – Room 1277

721 Oxford Ave, Eau Claire, WI

**Join by Phone:**

Dial in Number: 1-415-655-0001

Access Code: **25306536922##**

**Join by Meeting Number:**

Meeting Number: **2530 653 6922**

Meeting Password: **En5mmCHBT48**

**Join from Meeting Link:**

<https://eauclairecounty.webex.com/eauclairecounty/j.php?MTID=mc7d9f588621f07a7ea9e41db0c1a0b1e>

1. Call to Order and confirmation of meeting notice
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment
4. Review/Approval of May 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes / Discussion – Action **Pages 2-4**
5. 2026 Budget Guidelines / Discussion **Pages 5-6**
6. Planning and Development Strategic Plan (2025-2026) / Discussion – Direction **Pages 7-13**
7. 2026 Fees / Discussion – Direction **Page 14**
8. Proposed Future Agenda Items
  - a. Next scheduled meeting June 24, 2025
9. Director's Update
10. Announcements
11. Adjourn



## MINUTES

Eau Claire County

• PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE •

**Date:** Tuesday, May 27, 2025

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.

**Location:** Eau Claire County Courthouse, 721 Oxford Ave, Room 1277, Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54703

Members Present: Dane Zook, Michele Skinner, James Dunning, Robin Leary (remote)

Members Absent: Caleb Aichele

Ex officio Present:

Staff Present: Rod Eslinger, Matt Michels

### Call to Order and confirmation of meeting notice

Chair Zook called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and confirmed the meeting notice with Director Eslinger.

### Roll Call:

Director Eslinger called the roll. The members that were present are noted above.

### Public Comment:

None

### Review/Approval of May 13 2025, Meeting Minutes

Motion by Michele Skinner to approve the May 13, 2025, committee meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote: 4-0-0.

### Public Hearings

**Proposed Ordinance: File No. 25-26/013** to rezone 5.22 acres +/- from the AP-Agricultural Preservation District to the A2-Agriculture-Residential District. **RZN-0006-25**

Matt Michels, Senior Planner for Eau Claire County, presented the staff report to the committee. He reviewed the property location within the town, aerial, adjacent land use, zoning and soils on the property. He indicated the Town of Brunswick recommended approval of the petition at their town board meeting on May 13, 2025. Mr. Michels recommended approval of the petition subject to the findings/conditions outlined in his report.

No one else spoke in favor or in opposition.

Motion by James Dunning to approve the Proposed Ordinance: File No. 25-26/013 subject to staff's findings. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 4-0-0.

### Findings:

1. The proposed rezoning is substantially consistent with the intent and purpose of the Eau Claire County Future Land Use plan.
2. There are numerous A-2 zoned parcels in proximity to the subject property.
3. The rezoning will have no impact on agricultural land.

**Proposed Ordinance: File No. 25-26/014** to rezone 3.15 acres +/- from the C-3 Commercial Highway District to the PUD Planned Unit Development District. **RZN-0007-25**

Mr. Michels presented background information regarding the applicant's petition to rezone 3.15 acres from the C-3 Commercial Highway District to the PUD-Planned Unit Development District for the purpose of allowing multiple retail and office uses in a strip mall arrangement. Further, the applicant requested approval of the attached General Development

Plan submitted with the rezoning petition. Mr. Michels indicated that the Town of Washington Town Board met on May 15, 2025, and voted to recommend approval of the applicant's rezoning petition.

Sean Bohan, engineer and owner of AEC, addressed the committee and clarified that the stormwater facilities for the commercial lots in the Plat of Trilogy are already in place and designed to handle the runoff from this lot. He added that the north building will consist of a 10 unit building and the south building will be 6 units. Sean informed the committee that depending on the types of businesses that want to locate to this development, the units can be combined to create a larger tenant space.

No one else spoke in favor or in opposition.

Motion by Robin Leary to approve the Proposed Ordinance: File No. 25-26/014 subject to staff's findings. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 4-0-0.

Findings in Favor of PUD rezoning and General Development Plan (GDP):

1. The proposed use and approximate density or intensity of use is consistent with the town and county comprehensive plans.
2. The property is currently zoned C-3, and the types and character contemplated with this PUD, including commercial retail and office, are consistent with the existing zone. Further, no deviations from the C-3 development standards are proposed.
3. The proposed development is compatible with the physical nature of the site, with particular concern for protection of surface water and groundwater resources through the application of Eau Claire County Title 17 Land Conservation ordinances that require stormwater management, as well as City-County Health Department regulations for on-site wastewater treatment systems and private wells.
4. Adequate service and infrastructure capacity exists to support the development, including roads, water (via private wells), and wastewater (via community septic systems).
5. Based on information provided, the proposed zoning will result in development that is aesthetically and ecologically desirable, economically viable, and functionally practical, in the context of Rural Commercial planned lands.

#### **Revised Preliminary Plat/Final Plat for Firenze Estates**

Mr. Bublitz updated the committee on the revised preliminary Plat of Firenze Estates. He noted that the preliminary plat now shows that the development will now be planned in two phases which will align with the final plat. He briefly updated the committee on the location of the development and indicated that the Town of Washington approves the developer's approach to phase the development.

Jeremy Skaw, of Real Land Surveying and Sean Bohan, engineer and owner of AEC, addressed the committee on the developer's approach to phasing and answered questions on the proposed community septic systems.

Motion by Michele Skinner to approve the revised preliminary plat for Firenze Estates as presented by staff. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 4-0-0.

Ben concluded his presentation by reviewing his staff report for the final plat of Firenze Estates. It was noted that the Health Department's report was not included in the packet, so Mr. Bublitz indicated he would forward that to the committee. He noted that the final plat is consistent with the revised preliminary plat and recommended approval of the final plat.

No one else spoke in favor or against the final plat of Firenze Estates.

Motion by Robin Leary to approve the Final Plat for Firenze Estates as recommended by staff. Motion carried on a roll call vote: 4-0-0.

#### **Review of the April Bills**

The committee reviewed the April bills.

**Proposed Future Agenda Items**

Next scheduled meeting June 10, 2025

**Director's Update**

Director Eslinger gave an update on the recruitment process of the GIS Specialist and the Farmland Preservation Committee selection process. He also noted that at the next meeting he would be discussing strategic planning, and fees with the committee.

**Announcements**

No other announcements.

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:11 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rodney Eslinger  
Clerk, Committee on Planning & Development



## memo

To: Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors  
Eau Claire County Department Heads

From: Kathryn Schauf, County Administrator

Date: May 27, 2025

Re: Eau Claire County 2026 Budget Guidelines

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The budget process is an opportunity for department heads, along with staff and oversight committees, to reflect on delivered services, making improvements and creating efficiencies. Everyone is encouraged to think innovatively and look beyond the status quo.

I believe we all recognize the challenges facing local government and the limits of our operating fund. We are restricted by the state legislature to zero percent increase in property tax levy, so any growth in revenue we achieve will be through growth in the County's equalized value due to new construction, sales tax, and outside funding. There will be a slight increase in levy available due to the closure of an Altoona tax incremental district. We have seen growth in our area, and sales tax performed better than anticipated in 2022 and 2023; however, year over year growth is slowing and we have budgeted the total amount of sales tax in order to keep up with increased cost-to-continue.

It is unknown at this time when we will have a budget from the State of Wisconsin, or if there will be reductions in federal funding. We will not have the capacity to backfill lost federal and state dollars. There have been requests made to the state by the Wisconsin Counties Association for state funding to provide adequate dollars for mandated services in both Human Services and the Courts.

There are also no fund balance dollars available to apply to 2026 per the fund balance policy as General Fund unassigned fund balance is going to be below the policy target

The ask of departments: Design budgets that hold levy increases as close to zero as possible. We also need to go into this budget cycle with the "What" and "How" being foremost in our thinking. What are we providing and how? How do those line up with the strategic policy direction provided by the board?

We want this budget process to be a dialog and an opportunity for collaboration.

- Wage workbooks are being constructed using 2025 wages. Increases for COLA and merit will be determined when final numbers for health insurance are available. Finding efficiencies and reviewing staffing structures at the departmental level will provide the capacity needed to apply both COLA and merit for 2026.
- Based on preliminary projections from our health insurance consultant there is the potential that the cost for health insurance may be around 15.0%. This is dependent on the County's medical claims continuing to remain below the premiums we pay. We anticipate having solid numbers in August and are hopeful for a competitive environment as we compare the differences between a fully insured model and self-insured.
- Funds are not anticipated to be available to reinstate positions that were held in 2025 due to a lack of funding. Departments are asked to refrain from new position requests in 2026.

Department Heads - as in the past we will convene as a group to discuss requests and to navigate a path forward that will work for all areas of service. We have a shared responsibility to put forward a budget that meets service needs within the funding we have available.

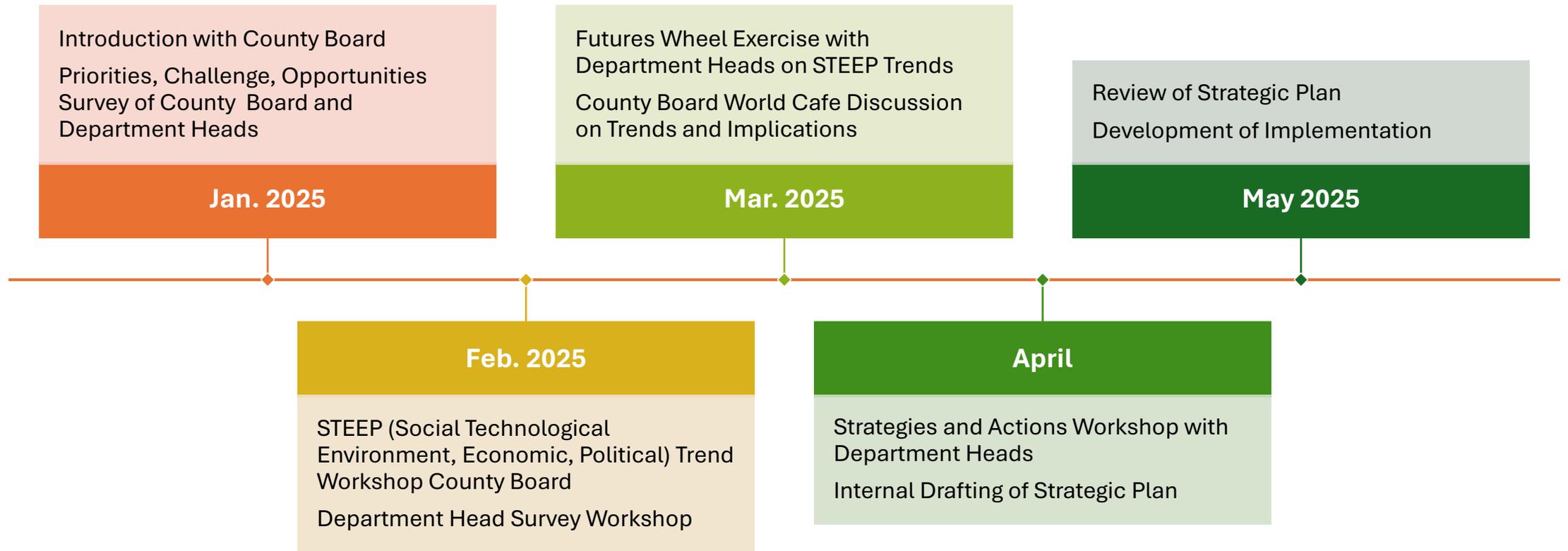
**GUIDELINES:**

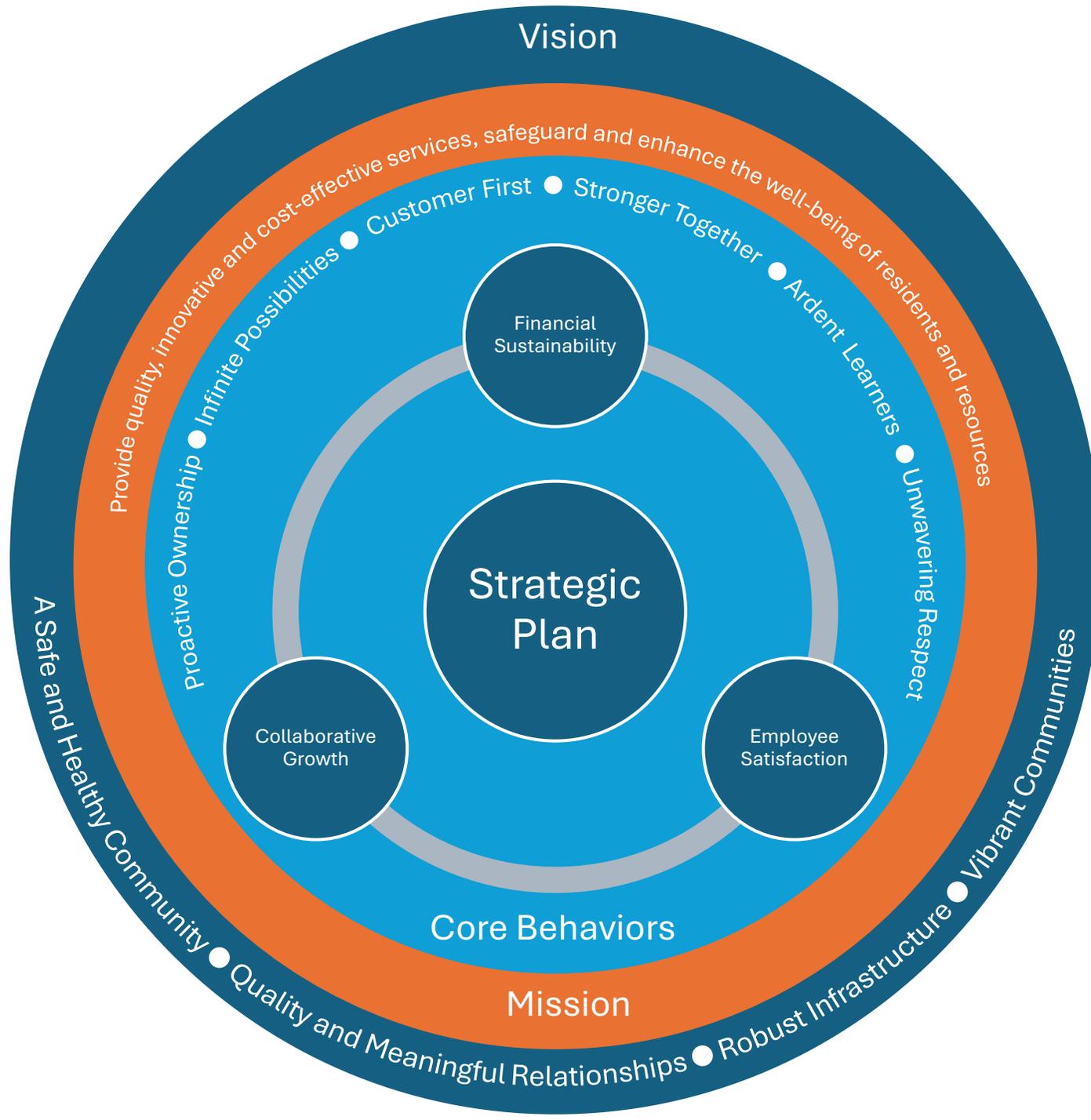
1. Departments are encouraged to look for alternative funding and revenue streams for programs. Cooperative partnerships, cost saving programs with other departments, outside agencies or other counties will continue to be given high priority. Innovative program proposals within existing funding, cost saving prevention programs or programs that generate new revenue will also be given high priority.
2. Crafting budgets if additional personnel are being considered will require identifying the revenue from sources **other than levy**. We are specifically asking that you do not repurpose levy from other line items of prior years for personnel, unless it is to reduce costs by bringing a contracted service in house. Levy capacity will be needed to meet ongoing costs-to-continue. Any position changes, regardless of funding source, should be explained in detail including an explanation of how it is a necessary (critical) addition to the department. **Appropriate levels of cost-of-living increases will be given a higher priority than new positions.**
3. Departments must include a list of revenue sources, with expected revenue amounts. Changes in revenue must be clearly identified and explained. Revenue assumptions are a key discussion point. Our worksheets will incorporate room for narrative on revenue changes.
4. County user fees shall be reviewed for potential increases commensurate with the increased cost of doing business. The review of fee schedules should include analysis of cost recovery for services. All user fee recommendations approved by oversight committees are due to the County Administrator's office by August 20, 2025.
5. Department budget proposals, (financial portion) with supporting documentation, shall be submitted electronically to the Finance Director via SharePoint by June 27, 2025.

# Eau Claire County Strategic Plan Final Report

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# Strategic Planning Process





# FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY: Ensure Eau Claire County Government's Financial Sustainability and Stability

01

## **Service Optimization:**

Optimize essential county services to ensure equitable access and quality amid changing demographics and budget constraints

02

## **Revenue Strategy:**

Strategically pursue revenue generating opportunities for the county government

03

## **Financial Resilience:**

Strengthen the County's long-term financial resilience through proactive and integrated financial planning

# **EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION:** Eau Claire County will be known for its positive and rewarding workplace within the Chippewa Valley



**Workforce Development:** Develop a versatile workforce by investing in continuous learning and development opportunities that meet the evolving county needs



**Future Workforce Planning:** Develop a thriving and future-ready workforce through strategic succession planning and robust career pathways



**Competitive Compensation:** Ensure sustainable public service delivery by attracting and retaining top talent through a market-responsive compensation model

# COLLABORATIVE GROWTH: Eau Claire County will achieve sustainable growth through strengthened partnerships



**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:** INCREASE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION WITH COUNTY LEADERSHIP



**REGIONAL COLLABORATION:** LEAD COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS (E.G., TASKFORCE) WITH MUNICIPALITIES AND PARTNERS TO ADDRESS REGIONAL GROWTH CHALLENGES



**COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS:** PURSUE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS WITH OTHER ENTITIES THAT PROVIDE GREATER EFFICIENCIES, COST-SAVINGS, AND RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

# Strategic Pathways

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Departmental Strategic Plan	Departmental Action Plan	Evidence-Based Departmental Policy Initiatives
Long-term (2-3 year) roadmap aligning department functions with County Strategic Plan goals.	Detailed annual plan outlining specific actions, timelines, responsibilities, and budget to implement strategic goals.	Specific policy efforts pursued in the next year (often with County Board) grounded in data and research to advance the Strategic Plan.

