



DANE COUNTY
BOARD of
SUPERVISORS
CHAIR PATRICK MILES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Dylan Moffitt
Policy, Outreach, and Communications Coordinator
(608) 228-9053 | Moffitt.Dylan@danecounty.gov

County Board Approves 2026 Budget, Moving Dane County Forward
Spending plan now advances to County Executive Agard

DANE COUNTY, Wis. — Following weeks of public testimony, committee review, and extensive collaboration, the Dane County Board of Supervisors tonight approved the 2026 county budget. The budget now advances to County Executive Melissa Agard for her consideration and signature.

The spending plan, which includes \$825.6 million for operating expenditures and \$90.5 million for capital expenditures, balances fiscal discipline with community investment, funding critical services in public safety, human services, housing, and behavioral health. Together, these investments sustain vital county functions and reflect the board’s focus on both immediate needs and long-term community well-being.

“This budget represents the collective effort of so many across every area of county government,” said County Board Chair Patrick Miles. “Despite significant challenges—driven by state-imposed revenue limits, federal gridlock, and funding uncertainty—we’ve passed a responsible and equitable budget that ensures that the needs of our community continue to be served. Every department made sacrifices and found innovative ways to do more with less.

“We know there will be more challenges and tough decisions in future budget cycles. The county board adopted a budget that upholds our promise to care for the most vulnerable in our community and keep our communities safe. It accomplishes that while maintaining the fiscal discipline taxpayers expect.”

“This budget takes a pragmatic and compassionate approach to public safety,” said Supervisor Richelle Andrae (Dist. 11), chair of the Public Protection & Judiciary Committee. “It preserves every current deputy position and gives the sheriff’s office the flexibility needed to continue building its workforce responsibly. At the same time, it ensures that our resources are being used strategically to reduce burnout, manage overtime, and support the wellbeing of those who protect our community.”

OFFICE OF THE DANE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

City-County Building, Room 362, 210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Madison, WI 53703
(608) 266-5758 | <https://board.danecounty.gov/>

“We’re fortunate to live in a county where people care deeply about one another,” said Supervisor Heidi Wegleitner (Dist. 2), chair of the Health & Human Needs Committee. “Throughout this process, residents, advocates, and service providers spoke up about the urgent need to protect our local social safety net. While this budget isn’t perfect, it reflects our shared commitment to do what we can with the limited resources available to care for those who need it most.”

“The 2026 budget demanded difficult decisions and collaboration across all levels of our county government,” said Supervisor Matt Veldran (Dist. 4), chair of the Personnel & Finance Committee. “Despite a challenging fiscal environment, we crafted a balanced plan that protects critical services while maintaining fiscal discipline. We did what was necessary to serve all Dane County residents, and I appreciate the thoughtful and transparent process that guided our work.”

“The 2026 budget invests significantly in land conservation, advances our five-phase sediment removal project to prevent flooding, and prioritizes phosphorus removal and sequestration through a range of conservation practices”, said Supervisor Yogesh Chawla (Dist. 6), chair of the Environment, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee. “While federal action on climate change stalls, Dane County is leading locally with practical, science-based solutions to protect our community.”

The approved budget includes provisions that:

- **Preserve all current Dane County Sheriff’s Office positions**, meeting public safety needs;
- **Reduce the additional 4% cut to community-based nonprofit (POS) agencies to 1%**, helping maintain critical health and social services;
- **Invest in homelessness prevention and shelter operations**, including \$1.06 million in operational support for the Bartillon Men’s Shelter and \$440,000 for outreach and overflow shelter capacity;
- **Support behavioral health services and affordable housing initiatives**, including funding for regional housing coordination and crisis stabilization efforts.

The approved budget sets a property tax rate of \$2.48 per \$1,000 of equalized value, resulting in a 1.29% increase to the tax levy. For the average City of Madison home valued at \$481,300, this represents a tax increase of just over \$15.

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About the Dane County Board of Supervisors: The Dane County Board of Supervisors is the legislative and policymaking body of Dane County government. Composed of 37 supervisors elected to represent each county district, the county board’s mission is to effectively represent the people of Dane County, providing services that secure the blessings of freedom, ensure domestic tranquility, promote the general welfare, and perfect the forms of government. Learn more about the county board at <https://board.danecounty.gov/>.