

BUDGET SUMMARY

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Requested Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures					
Personnel Costs	1,261,111	1,526,932	1,351,677	1,429,588	77,911
Operations Costs	94,604	96,692	139,650	139,750	100
Debt & Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0
Interdepartmental Charges	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$1,355,714	\$1,623,624	\$1,491,327	\$1,569,338	\$78,011
Revenues					
Other Direct Revenue	5,010,254	4,961,811	4,089,035	4,237,300	148,265
Total Revenues	\$5,010,254	\$4,961,811	\$4,089,035	\$4,237,300	\$148,265
Tax Levy	(\$3,654,540)	(\$3,338,187)	(\$2,597,708)	(\$2,667,962)	(\$70,254)
Personnel					
Full Time Pos (FTE)	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	0.00
Overtime \$	12,442	6,726	15,294	15,294	0
Seasonal/Hourly/Pool	0	0	0	0	0

Department Mission:

The mission of the Office of the Register of Deeds (ROD) is to provide timely, secure, accurate, archival accessible, and cost-effective record systems and services that are delivered in a prompt and courteous manner. The 1848 Wisconsin Constitution established the Register of Deeds as a permanent element of the county-level governmental structure. Each county in Wisconsin has a Register of Deeds. The Register of Deeds files, records, and issues instruments and documents of significance both to the community as a whole and to its individual citizens. Vital records document the span of lives from birth to death. Land records documenting title in Wisconsin are maintained. The filing or recording of other documents with the ROD is a way of putting the world on notice that something important has happened or will happen. The time of the act or transaction is often an important element in rights or relationships. The ROD records the time when, in effect, the public record is established.

Department Description:

The Register of Deeds includes the program areas of Administration, Real Estate Services, Vital Statistics and Tax Listing Services. The Register of Deeds office operates under WI State Statute 59.43 (Register of Deeds; duties, fees, deputies) and WI State Statute 69.05 and 69.07 (duties of register of deeds).

Major Changes

- Revenue increase of \$148,000 based on 2024 actuals and current year trends.
- September cycle 2025 equity increases \$45,629
- Salary increase (2) Real Estate Clerk \$19,292 - vacant positions budgeted at \$16.00/hour; will be filling in 2025 above \$16.00/hr based on skillset.
- Position low org changes (no fiscal impact)Real Estate Manager from 3430 to 3410Fiscal & VR Supervisor from 3410 to 3450

Strategic Program Area: Administration

Service Provision: Mandated

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	361,214	446,217	400,240	438,514	38,274
Revenues	3	0	0	0	0
Tax Levy	361,211	446,217	400,240	438,514	38,274
Full Time Pos (FTE)	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	0.00

Strategic Overview:

The administration program area provides leadership and oversight for the operations of the Register of Deeds Office.

Strategic Implementation:

The ROD's goal is to achieve excellence in customer service. Being helpful, responsive and friendly to county residents and industry partners are ROD's goals.

Strategic Program Area: Real Estate Services

Service Provision: Mandated

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	544,109	683,398	646,137	651,291	5,154
Revenues	4,766,453	4,747,000	3,869,035	4,016,300	147,265
Tax Levy	(4,222,344)	(4,063,602)	(3,222,898)	(3,365,009)	(142,111)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	10.00	10.00	11.00	11.00	0.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Document Types Requested - Assignments	3	5	10	10
Document Types Requested - Deed	300	187	400	250
Document Types Requested - LisPendens	6	1	20	10
Document Types Requested - Mortgage	38	21	50	40
Document Types Requested - Releases	13	9	30	20
Other - includes Easements, Plats, Weatherization Compliance, Affidavits, Leases, Certified Survey maps, Federal Tax Liens, Land Contracts, Judgements, Resolutions, Articles of Incorporation and UCC Forms	10	21	50	15
Recordings	82,061	85,007	80,000	82,000
Requester - Financial Institutions	17	10	40	20
Requester - Individuals	214	144	300	200
Requester - Law Firms	31	21	50	30
Requester - Others (Utilities, Outside Government)	7	3	15	10
Requester - Title Insurers/Researchers	10	6	30	10
Transfer Tax Collected	14,135	14,020	13,000	13,000

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percent of document data indexed within 4 business days after the recorded date	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percent of electronic documents recorded within 2 business days of receipt	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percent of indexed data verified within 10 business days after the indexed date	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percent of paper documents recorded within 2 business days of receipt	96%	75%	100%	100%
Percent of time recorded paper documents are scanned into the imaging system within 2 business days after recorded date	96%	100%	100%	100%

Strategic Overview:

Real Estate Services is responsible for compliance with State Statutes (SS 59.43) regarding the recording, indexing and scanning of all public real estate indices. Duties include:

- Digitizing document images into the database, including microfilm images when needed.
- Scanning of plats.
- Auditing Indexed data.
- Assisting the public in person with inquiries for information about recorded documents and plat maps.
- Assisting customers with the public access computer system.
- Responding to phone calls, email and mail inquiries regarding documents, plat maps, etc.
- Selling copies of documents to the public.
- Communication and quality control with the indexing vendor performing Day Forward indexing of real estate documents.
- Creating and selling real estate data reports to the public and industry partners.
- Determining the recordability of real estate documents per State Statutes.
- Examination and entry of Department of Revenue Real Estate Transfer return forms.
- Providing written and verbal explanations to title companies, lawyers and the general public as to why documents are rejected for recording.

Strategic Implementation:

The Register of Deeds indexes key fields of information found in real estate documents, such as grantor, grantee, legal description, parcel ID number, associated document number, etc. Indexed data is necessary to allow title searchers and the general public to successfully search for a recorded document. Staff may then audit the indexed documents. This is the process, whereby staff corrects any indexing errors. Real Estate Clerks are required to record electronic documents within a 24-hour period and paper/mailed documents within a 48-hour period. Notice of rejected documents is provided the same day.

Strategic Program Area: Vital Statistics

Service Provision: Mandated

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	275,247	342,786	267,450	359,133	91,683
Revenues	240,543	210,475	215,500	216,500	1,000
Tax Levy	34,704	132,311	51,950	142,633	90,683
Full Time Pos (FTE)	6.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	1.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Certified Copies: Birth, Death, Marriage Records	51,651	45,129	50,000	50,000
Genealogy – Records Reviewed	97	86	90	90
Marriage Registration	3,609	3,276	2,500	2,500
Vital Records Correction - No Fee	675	851	900	900
Vital Records No Fee – Veterans Office Use Only	119	114	150	150
Vital Records Placed on File	24,286	24,188	24,000	24,000

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percent of death records and marriage records examined and processed within 1 business day of receipt	99%	99%	100%	100%
Percent of mail requests for the purchase of vital records sent out within 2 business days of receipt	99%	99%	100%	100%

Strategic Overview:

Vital Statistics maintains records on birth, death and marriages, divorce after 2016, declaration of domestic partnerships, and change of name orders according to State Statutes 69.05 and 69.07. Records are updated and changed at the request of County residents and/or court orders and the Judicial System.

Strategic Implementation:

Certified copies of vital records are sold to the public. The public may research birth records from the 1850's to present, death records from 1872 to present, and marriage records from the 1830's to present. Vital Records kiosks with English and Spanish capability have been installed in the office. The implementation of Official Records Online (ORO) through the ROD's webpage created a new revenue for each record accessed. In 2022, ROD implemented "On Demand" service. Individuals are able to scan a QR code, order and pay for their certificate without waiting in line. Once the certificate is ready, the individual receives an email stating it is available for pick up.

Strategic Program Area: Tax Listing Services

Service Provision: Mandated

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	175,145	151,224	177,500	120,400	(57,100)
Revenues	3,256	4,336	4,500	4,500	0
Tax Levy	171,889	146,888	173,000	115,900	(57,100)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	4.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	(1.00)

Strategic Overview:

Tax Listing Services is responsible for reviewing tax descriptions, assigning new tax key numbers due to real estate boundary changes, maintaining plat books and property records, assisting in the preparation of petitions for foreclosure action and providing copies of real estate document recordings to local assessors.

Strategic Implementation:

The Office of the Register of Deeds is responsible for providing timely tax listings to municipalities and local tax assessors. In addition, the ROD responds to inquiries from municipalities, local assessors and Milwaukee County residents.