

BUDGET SUMMARY

Category	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget	2027 Requested Budget	2026/2027 Variance
Expenditures					
Personnel Costs	1,526,932	1,322,642	1,444,206	1,492,903	48,697
Operations Costs	96,692	110,083	139,750	150,250	10,500
Debt & Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	0
Interdepartmental Charges	0	241	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$1,623,624	\$1,432,966	\$1,583,956	\$1,643,153	\$59,197
Revenues					
Other Direct Revenue	4,961,811	5,855,479	4,237,300	4,335,300	98,000
State & Federal Revenue	0	0	0	0	0
Total Revenues	\$4,961,811	\$5,855,479	\$4,237,300	\$4,335,300	\$98,000
Tax Levy	(\$3,338,187)	(\$4,422,513)	(\$2,653,344)	(\$2,692,147)	(\$38,803)
Personnel					
Full Time Pos (FTE)	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	0.00
Overtime \$	6,726	22,896	15,442	20,000	4,558
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

- September Cycle 2026 Equity Increases \$48,700
- Operational Costs increased \$10,500 due to fee increases.
- Revenue increase of \$98,000 based on 2025 actuals and current year trends

Strategic Program Area: Administration**Service Provision:** Mandated**How We Do It: Program Budget Summary**

Category	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget	2027 Budget	2026/2027 Variance
Expenditures	446,217	390,242	512,356	512,272	(84)
Revenues	0	0	0	0	0
Tax Levy	446,217	390,242	512,356	512,272	(84)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	(1.00)

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	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget	2027 Budget	2026/2027 Variance
Expenditures	683,398	588,911	587,022	643,096	56,074
Revenues	4,747,000	5,581,308	4,016,300	4,114,300	98,000
Tax Levy	(4,063,602)	(4,992,397)	(3,429,278)	(3,471,204)	(41,926)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	10.00	11.00	10.00	11.00	1.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Target	2027 Target
Document Types Requested - Assignments	5	1	10	10
Document Types Requested - Deed	187	240	250	250
Document Types Requested - LisPendens	1	1	10	10
Document Types Requested - Mortgage	21	18	40	30
Document Types Requested - Releases	9	5	20	15
Other - includes Easements, Plats, Weatherization Compliance, Affidavits, Leases, Certified Survey maps, Federal Tax Liens, Land Contracts, Judgements, Resolutions, Articles of Incorporation and UCC Forms	21	17	15	15
Recordings	85,007	92,579	82,000	90,000
Requester - Financial Institutions	10	10	20	15
Requester - Individuals	144	207	200	200
Requester - Law Firms	21	12	30	20
Requester - Others (Utilities, Outside Government)	3	4	10	10
Requester - Title Insurers/Researchers	6	2	10	10
Transfer Tax Collected	14,020	14,162	13,000	14,000

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Target	2027 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	75%	92%	100%	100%
Percent of time recorded paper documents are scanned into the imaging system within 2 business days after recorded date	75%	92%	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	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget	2027 Budget	2026/2027 Variance
Expenditures	342,786	321,854	292,930	352,629	59,699
Revenues	210,475	269,736	216,500	216,500	0
Tax Levy	132,311	52,119	76,430	136,129	59,699
Full Time Pos (FTE)	6.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	1.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Target	2027 Target
Certified Copies: Birth, Death, Marriage Records	45,129	58,750	50,000	50,000
Genealogy – Records Reviewed	86	69	70	70
Marriage Registration	3,276	3,797	2,500	2,500
Vital Records Correction - No Fee	851	1,102	900	900
Vital Records No Fee – Veterans Office Use Only	114	235	150	150
Vital Records Placed on File	24,188	27,441	24,000	24,000

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Target	2027 Target
Percent of death records and marriage records examined and processed within 1 business day of receipt	99%	98%	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	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget	2027 Budget	2026/2027 Variance
Expenditures	151,224	131,959	191,648	135,156	(56,492)
Revenues	4,336	4,435	4,500	4,500	0
Tax Levy	146,888	127,524	187,148	130,656	(56,492)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	3.00	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.