



OFFICIAL NOTICE & AGENDA REGULAR MEETING

MEETING: Sustainability, Energy & Environment Committee
DATE/TIME: Thursday, August 13, 2026, at 5:00 PM
LOCATION: Wausau City Hall — Maple Room
407 Grant Street, Wausau WI, 54403

MEMBERS:
Jean Abreu (C) Britnie Remer
Carol Lukens Lauren Leitner
Jesse Kearns Paul Kage
Christine Daniels

- 1 Call to order by the presiding officer.**
- 2 Public comment on agenda items and reading of the City of Wausau Public Comment Statement.**
- 3 Consideration of the minutes of the preceding meeting(s).**
 - a. Approving July 9, 2026, meeting minutes.
- 4 Discussion and possible action.**
 - a. Approving Existing Conditions, Demographics, Energy Use Citywide Sections of the City of Wausau Climate Action Work Plan
 - b. Approving Community Sustainability Survey and dissemination plan and timeline
 - c. Approving Business Sustainability Survey and dissemination plan and timeline
 - d. Approving fall Wausau Works for You newsletter content
- 5 Discussion.**
 - a. Discussion of the Transportation and Waste Citywide Sections of the City of Wausau Climate Action Work Plan
 - b. Discussion on August Common Council presentation
 - c. Discussion on Earth Week initiatives
- 6 Project Updates**
 - a. Update on City of Wausau Comprehensive Plan Update and Community Engagement Strategies
- 7 Adjournment.**

Jean Abreu, Chair

NOTICE POSTED AT CITY HALL (407 GRANT STREET) AND
TRANSMITTED TO THE OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED NEWSPAPER

DATE: August 5, 2026

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

POSTED BY: Carrie Edmondson, AICP, Assistant City Planner

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the City of Wausau will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities. If you need assistance or reasonable accommodations in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the ADA Coordinator at (715) 261-6622 or ADAServices@wausauwi.gov to discuss your accessibility needs. We ask your request be provided a minimum of 72 hours before the scheduled event or meeting. If a request is made less than 72 hours before the event the City of Wausau will make a good faith effort to accommodate your request.



City of Wausau
(715) 261-6500 | clerk@wausauwi.gov
wausauwi.gov



City of Wausau Sustainability, Energy, and Environment Committee

MINUTES July 9, 2026

Members Present: Jean Abreu (C), Jesse Kearns, Christine Daniels, Paul Kage, Britnie Remer, and Lauren Leitner

Others Present: Carrie Edmondson (staff) and Dani Taube

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and transmitted to the Wausau Daily Herald in the proper manner.

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Public comment.

No public comment was received.

3. Consideration of the minutes of the preceding meeting(s).

Motion/second to approve the June 4, 2026, minutes as presented.

Motion/second to approve minutes with modifications, Daniels/Kearns passed 6-0.

4. Discussion and possible action.

- a. Approve Introduction/Background Section of City of Wausau Climate Action Work Plan

Carrie reviewed the Introduction/Background section.

Motion/second to approve with the understanding that it will be revisited at the end of the planning process, Leitner/Remer passed 6-0.

- b. Approve Common Council Update

This update will be provided at the Common Council regular meeting on August 11.

Motion/second to accept as presented with further changes made by Jesse as needed, Kearns/Daniels passed 6-0.

- c. Approve revised Wausau Sustainability Award Timeline

Christine presented and suggested that the timeline be adjusted two months and agreed to make modifications to the timeline template and bring forward next month.

Motion/second to approve revised Wausau Sustainability Award timeline, Daniels/Leitner passed 6-0.

5. Discussion

- a. Overview Discussion of Existing Conditions Demographics Section of City of Wausau Climate Action Work Plan
Carrie provided an overview of the Demographic Section. Jesse suggested adding owner/renter data and noted that owners of rentals could be provided with specific educational information about energy upgrades. The group discussed the cost burden on lower income individuals/families and other barriers that exist. Christine suggested that updated ALICE data be added and Lauren suggested adding education data.
- b. Action Plan Updates and Discussion (Earth Week Initiatives)
Lauren provided information about a potential art project. She thought the most impact would happen when art is done within a sustainability initiative (the initiative is activated by art). Her thought is to incorporate native plantings within a public space and incorporate art. Carrie will discuss potential locations with the Parks Department.
- c. Discussion on Community Sustainability Survey and communication strategy
The group reviewed the Community Sustainability Survey questions and provided comment. Dani Taube with Roaster assisted with survey suggestions. Carrie will revise the survey and email the group in two weeks.
- d. Discussion on Business Sustainability Survey and communications strategy
The group reviewed the Business Sustainability Survey questions and provided comment. Dani Taube assisted with questions and made recommendations for dissemination. Carrie will revise the survey and email the group in two weeks.
- e. Discussion on Public Service Commission (PSC) community engagement initiative
Britnie provided an overview of the PSC community engagement initiative that will be conducted by 350 Wisconsin. She will share information with Carrie who will share it with the group.

6. Update on City projects

- a. Carrie provided an update on the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment on Data Centers that will go before Common Council at their regular meeting on Tuesday, July 14.

7. Adjournment.

Motion/second to adjourn, Remer/Kearns, passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

DRAFT

**City of Wausau Climate Action Work Plan 2026-2031
Plan Development Timeline**

Planning Activity	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Introduction/Background								
Existing Conditions/Demographics/Energy Use - Citywide								
Transportation/Waste - Citywide								
Municipal GHG Data – Buildings								
Municipal GHG Data – Fleet/Waste								
Five-Year Work Plan/Strategies								
Community/Business Survey Development								
Survey Publicized								
Survey Results Presented								
Plan Adoption								

Existing Conditions

Existing conditions include demographic information as well as information about buildings, transportation, waste, renewable energy resources, and existing planning and policy context. This section includes existing conditions in the community to set a baseline that can be used to compare progress over time and to inform community decisions for how the city chooses to prioritize climate actions. The data for existing conditions comes from Metropolitan Council, the Department of Energy State and Local Energy Data (SLED) and Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) tool, and the United States Census Bureau.

Demographic Snapshot

The demographic information included in this section comes from the American Community Survey five-year estimates from 2023 unless otherwise noted. The median age is 38.4 with the population by age, gender, and race and ethnicity below.

Figure 1 – Population Data



The City of Wausau per capita income is \$35,290 per year and the median household income is \$61,877 per year. 14.4 percent of Wausau residents live below the poverty line. However, the ALICE report, prepared by the United Way (using ALICE as an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, includes households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county) reports that 40% of City of Wausau households were below the ALICE threshold in 2025.

Figure 2 – Income and Transportation Data

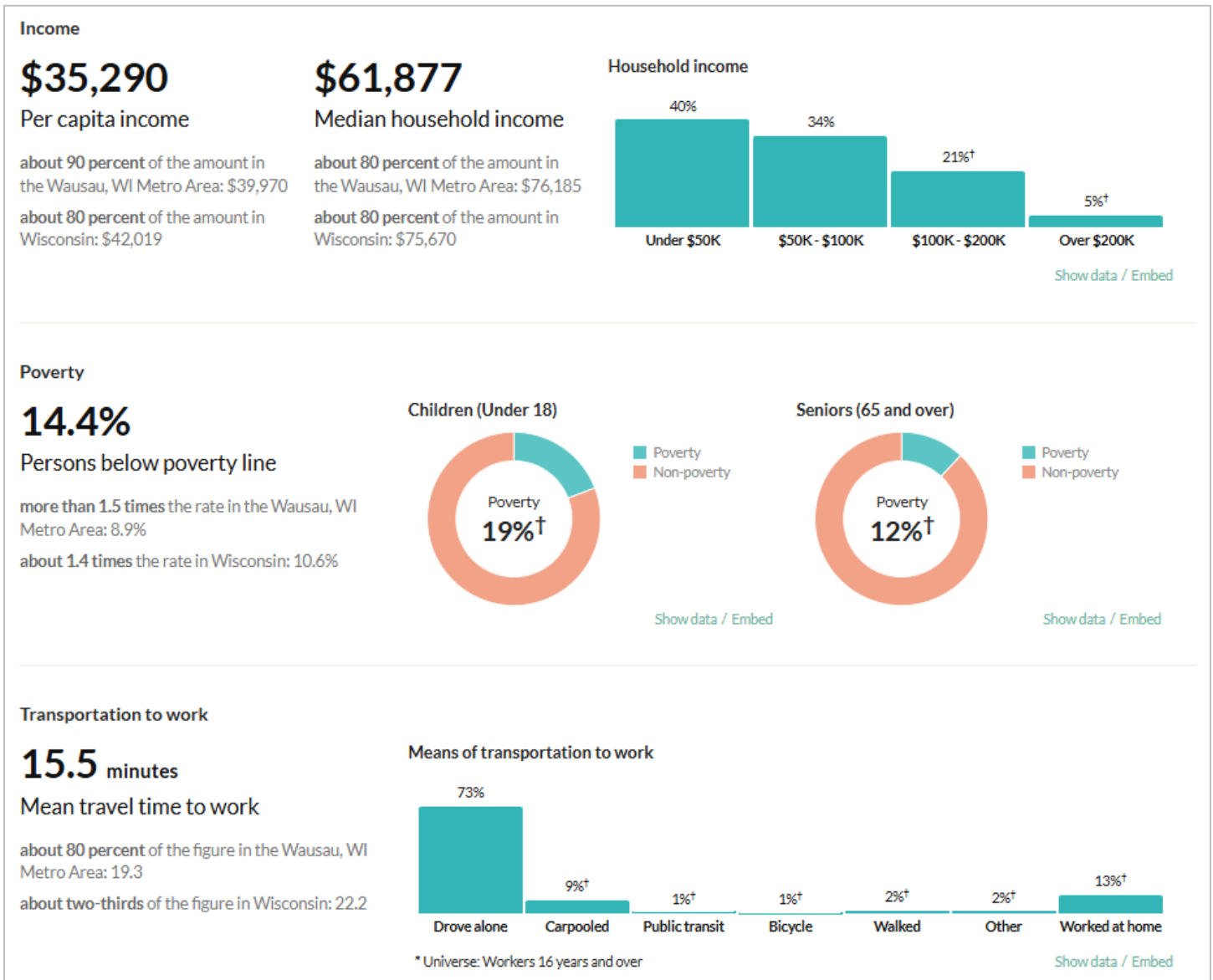


Figure 3 – Housing Data – City of Wausau

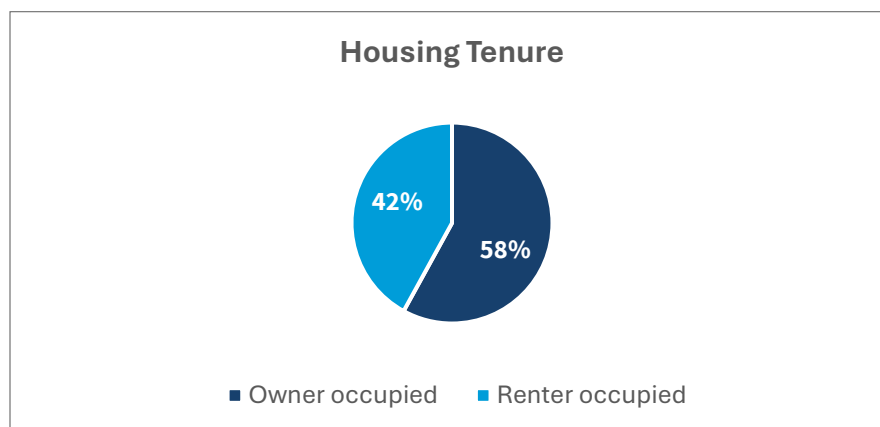
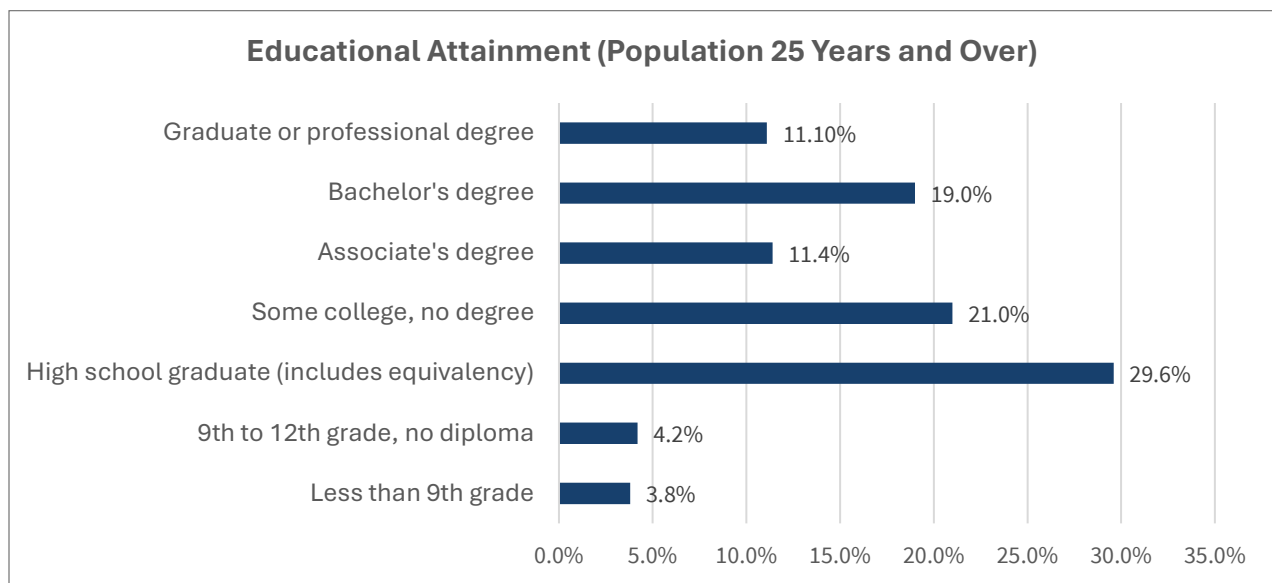
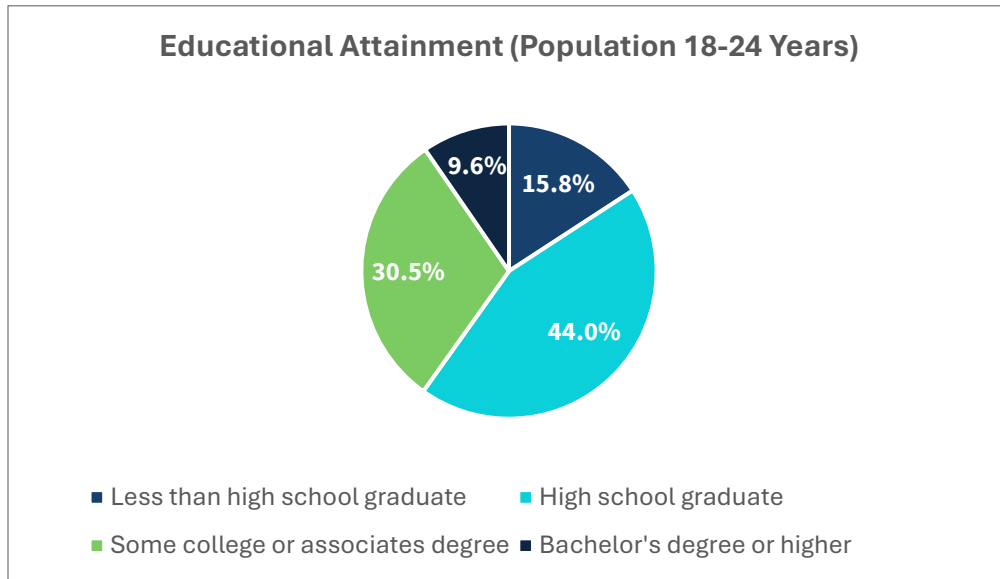


Figure 4a and 4b – Education Data – City of Wausau



Energy Consumption and Buildings

Energy is used for space and water heating and cooling, ventilation, and the operation of lighting and appliances in buildings. Heating a building's space and water comes most often from natural gas, while electricity is typically used for operating appliances, lighting, and cooling. Wisconsin Public Service is the main electric and natural gas energy provider for City residents, businesses, and institutions. Wisconsin Public Service reported the following for 2025:

2025 City of Wausau Community Level Data - Wisconsin Public Service

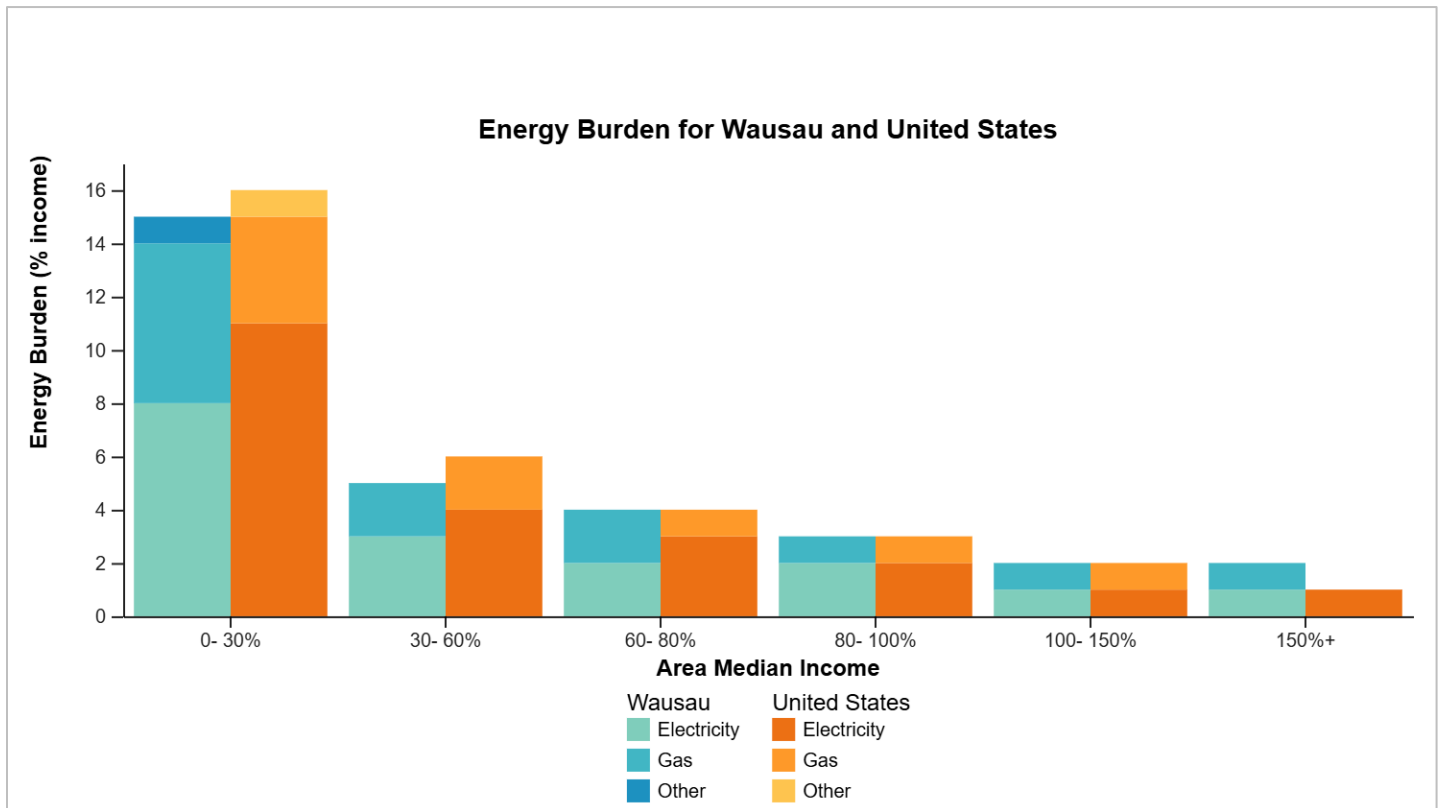
Electric – Residential	128,105,652 kWh	
Electric – Non-Residential	324,569,100 kWh	
Gas – Residential		12,077,645 therms
Gas-Non-Residential		26,171,725 therms
Total:	452,674,752 kWh	38,249,370 therms

ENERGY BURDEN AND ENERGY SECURITY

Energy burden is the proportion of household income that is used to pay for energy utility bills – both electric and natural gas. In 2022, the average energy burden for all Wausau residents in year was 3 percent. This proportion was consistent with the average energy burden in Wisconsin households, which was also 3 percent.

Figure 5 – 2022 Average Annual Energy Burden for the City of Wausau and US

Source: DOE LEAD (Low-Energy Assistance Data)



As expected, energy burden is a substantially higher proportion of overall income for those in the 30 percent or below area median income ranges. However, it is still lower than the national average. For those in the 60 percent or below area median income ranges, energy burden is a lower proportion of overall income and is slightly lower than the national average. Other income ranges are on par with the national average, with the exception of the over 150 percent area median income ranges where the energy burden is slightly higher than the national average.

Transportation

Transportation energy is almost entirely attributed to surface travel from cars and trucks and is estimated by the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) within the city boundaries, regardless of through traffic. City level data is not available. However, WisDOT provides the data by county and data for Marathon County can be seen on the Figure 4. Total vehicle miles traveled has increased steadily throughout Marathon County over the past five years. Energy for vehicle travel primarily comes from liquid fuels like gasoline and diesel, though electric vehicles are increasingly a part of the vehicle mix. Other forms of in-boundary transportation include public transit, biking, walking, and wheeling (e.g., scooters, wheelchairs, or other mobility devices).



City of Wausau - Community Sustainability Survey

The City is gathering community input to guide sustainability and climate planning. Your responses help us understand community priorities and shape future decisions. This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

General Information



1. Which of the following applies to you?

- ☐ I live in Wausau
- ☐ I work in Wausau
- ☐ I live and work in Wausau
- ☐ Other

2. Please indicate your age group:

☐ Under 18

☐ 18-30

☐ 31-45

☐ 46-60

☐ 61-75

☐ 75+

3. Which of the following weather impacts have you noticed in Wausau? (check all that apply)

☐ Heavier rainfall or more frequent flooding

☐ Longer dry periods or drought

☐ More extreme temperatures (hotter summers or colder winters)

☐ Unusual or changing weather patterns (warmer winters)

☐ More frequent or more severe storms

☐ Increased days with poor air quality

☐ I have not noticed any of these

☐ Other

4. Have any of the following weather-related events personally impacted you or your household? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Flooding or flood related damage
- ☐ Drought or limited access to water
- ☐ Power outages or home/property damage from extreme storms (wind, hail, ice or the like)
- ☐ High heat or heat related illness
- ☐ Health issues such as asthma, breathing problems, or worsened allergies
- ☐ Loss of trees, crops, or produce due to storms, flooding, or drought
- ☐ I have not experienced any of these
- ☐ Other

5. What, if any, of the following actions have you personally taken? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Reducing consumption of electricity or natural gas use in buildings. (using energy-efficient appliances, reducing heat/air conditioning use, switching to electric appliances)
- ☐ Reducing water consumption (reducing water use, installing water efficient appliances)
- ☐ Reducing single-use plastics
- ☐ Focus on reuse or waste reduction
- ☐ Composting
- ☐ Reducing vehicle trips (public transportation, walking, or biking)
- ☐ Driving an Electric Vehicle (EV)
- ☐ None of the above are priorities for me
- ☐ Other

6. Rank your primary concerns related to sustainability or the environment in the City of Wausau. (Rank from highest priority to lowest priority with top row being the highest.)

Flooding and extreme weather, including extreme heat and cold

Environmental health (water and air quality)

Protection of the natural environment (native species and ecosystems)

Waste management (including source reduction, reuse, recycling and composting, energy and recovery, and treatment and disposal)

Public education and engagement about sustainability/ clean energy initiatives

Food security/local food systems

Sustainable transportation/green mobility

City accomplishing 100% clean energy by 2050

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Solutions by Category

7. **Buildings and Energy:** What solutions would you prefer to improve energy efficiency and expand renewable energy access in Wausau? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Install solar panels on City-owned buildings
- ☐ Work with group purchasing partners to promote opportunities to save money on things such as solar energy
- ☐ Educate and connect residents to partner programs such as Focus on Energy to save money on home efficiency
- ☐ I am not familiar with these programs
- ☐ Other

8. **Transportation:** What solutions would you prefer to make transportation cleaner, healthier, and more convenient in Wausau? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Expand Electric Vehicle (EV) charger network
- ☐ Improve METRO bus shelter system to allow more protection from extreme weather
- ☐ Expand bicycle infrastructure including multiuse paths, bike lanes, bike racks, and bike fixstations
- ☐ Expand bikeshare (shared rental bikes available to the public)
- ☐ Other

9. **Waste:** What waste management strategies would you prefer to reduce and manage waste in Wausau?
(check all that apply)

- ☐ Create more education/awareness about reuse, reduction, and recycling strategies
- ☐ Create more education/awareness about composting strategies
- ☐ Expand publicly accessible recycling bins on City properties and parks?
- ☐ Establish a recycling and reuse policy for municipal operations
- ☐ Other

10. Are you aware that in 2023 the City of Wausau passed a resolution supporting reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy Security including a goal of moving City government operations to a more secure, and 100% clean energy by 2050.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

11. What specific sustainability projects, programs, or initiatives is the City doing well?

12. What specific sustainability projects, programs, or initiatives could the City improve upon?

13. What is one sustainability project or program that you would like to see in your neighborhood or Citywide?

14. Would you like to stay informed or involved in the City Five-Year Climate Action and Sustainability Plan and if so how? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Email updates
- ☐ Volunteer opportunities
- ☐ Public meetings
- ☐ Educational workshops
- ☐ I am not interested in future involvement
- ☐ Other

15. Is there anything else you would like to add?

16. If interested in receiving updates, please provide your email address:

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City of Wausau - Business Sustainability and Climate Survey

The City of Wausau is gathering business input to guide sustainability and climate planning. Your responses help us understand community priorities and shape future programs. This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

1. Which of the following best describes your business presence in Wausau? (check all that apply)

- ☐ My business is located in Wausau
- ☐ My business operates in Wausau but is headquartered elsewhere
- ☐ My business has clients/customers in Wausau
- ☐ Other

2. What type of organization do you represent?

- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Service Industry
- ☐ Manufacturing
- ☐ Construction/Trades
- ☐ Hospitality/Food Service
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Nonprofit/Government
- ☐ Other

3. How many employees does your business have?

- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-20
- ☐ 21-50
- ☐ 51-100
- ☐ Over 100

4. Which of the following have impacted your business operations in the last five years? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Flooding or water intrusion
- ☐ Extreme heat affecting staff or customers
- ☐ Power outages or equipment disruptions
- ☐ Storm damage
- ☐ Increased insurance costs
- ☐ Supply chain disruptions
- ☐ No impacts noticed
- ☐ Other

5. Has your business taken any sustainability actions in the past five years? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Improved building energy efficiency (LED lighting, HVAC upgrades, insulation, controls)
- ☐ Installed renewable energy (solar, geothermal, etc.)
- ☐ Reduced water usage
- ☐ Adopted recycling or reuse programs
- ☐ Adopted composting programs
- ☐ Reduced vehicle fleet emissions or transitioned to low-emission vehicles
- ☐ Encouraged employee commuting alternatives (bike, transit, carpool)
- ☐ Reduced waste or packaging
- ☐ Added sustainability staff or conducted trainings for sustainability staff
- ☐ Sustainable purchasing
- ☐ Sustainable specific employee engagement
- ☐ Supplier sustainability agreements
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other

6. What are your business's primary sustainability concerns? (rank from highest priority to lowest with top row being the highest)

Energy costs

Stormwater and flooding

Employee health and safety (air quality, heat, etc.)

Waste management and recycling

Transportation access for employees/customers

Regulatory or reporting requirements

Business continuity and resilience

7. **Buildings & Energy:** Which initiatives would your business support or participate in? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Group purchasing for commercial solar
- ☐ Access to energy audits or rebates (Focus on Energy)
- ☐ Electrification incentives for heat pumps, water heaters, or appliances
- ☐ A commercial energy-efficiency recognition program
- ☐ EV charging installation incentives
- ☐ Other

8. **Transportation:** What solutions would improve mobility and reduce transportation emissions for businesses? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Expanded EV charging network for customers or fleet
- ☐ Improved METRO bus service or shelters
- ☐ Expanded bike infrastructure (bike paths, bike lanes) near commercial areas
- ☐ Support for last mile delivery solutions (bike share, micromobility)
- ☐ Commute reduction/carpool incentives
- ☐ Other

9. **Waste:** Which strategies would your business prefer to see in Wausau? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Increased recycling services for business
- ☐ Commercial composting options
- ☐ Education on waste reduction and recycling regulations
- ☐ Assistance identifying recycling vendors
- ☐ Networking with businesses solving similar challenges
- ☐ Other

10. What is the City currently doing well to support businesses from a sustainability standpoint?

11. What sustainability initiatives or programs could the City improve to better support businesses?

12. Are there specific sustainability projects or programs you would like to see launched for businesses or commercial districts?

13. Is there anything else you would like to add?

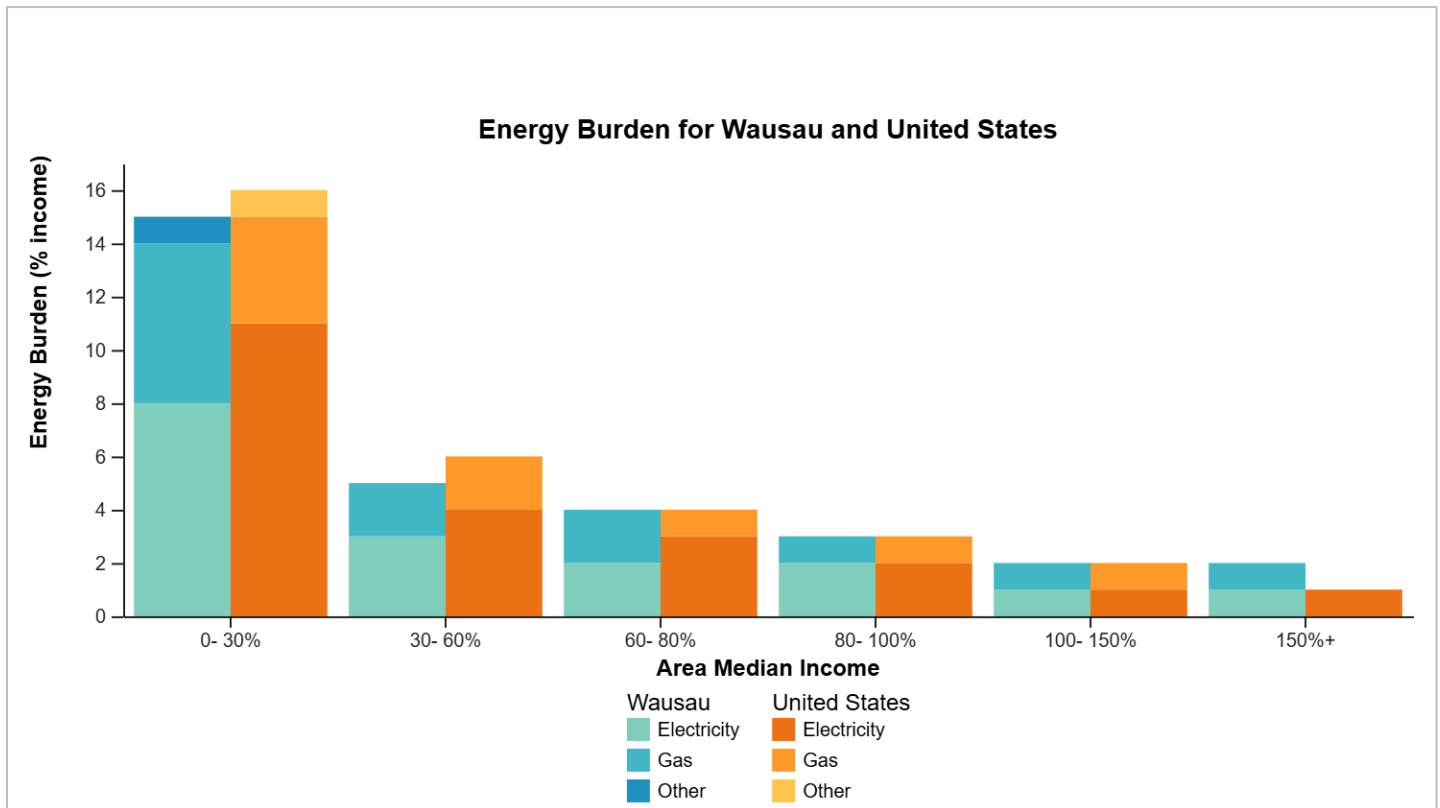
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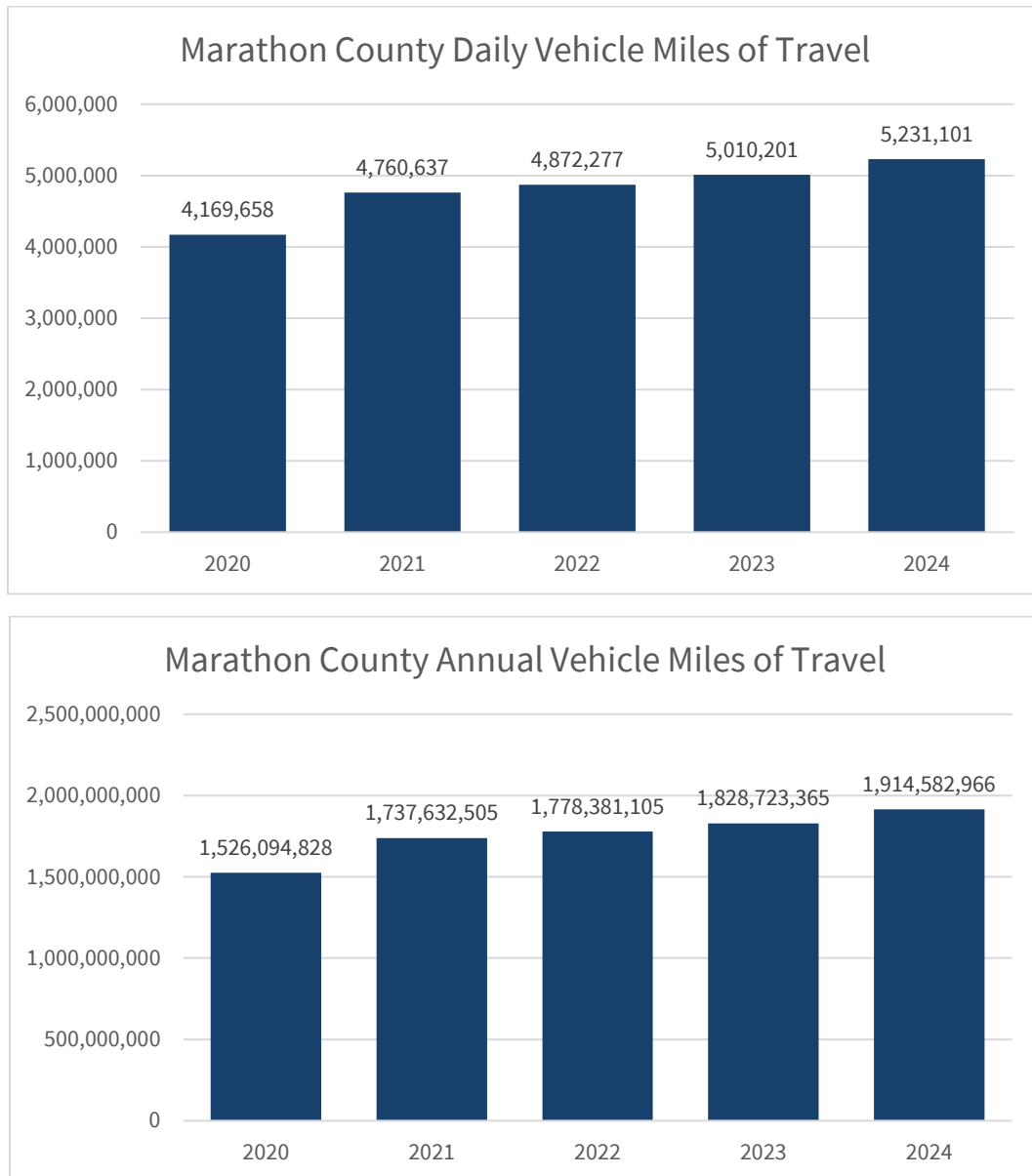
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Figure 6 – Vehicle Miles Traveled Marathon County by Year

Source: WisDOT



TRANSPORTATION USE IN CITY

Figure 1 shows a mean commute time of 15.5 minutes. Driving alone is the predominant mode of transportation for work, used by 73 percent of commuters. Carpooling accounts for 9 percent, while smaller shares of residents walk, bike, or use public transit. Remote workers represent 13 percent of City of Wausau residents. Overall, personal vehicle use remains the primary mode of transportation in Wausau today.

To improve sustainability and reduce environmental impacts, the City should focus on reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips and expanding the use of electric vehicles, bicycling, walking, and other low-carbon transportation options. Additionally, this should be a key consideration in planning new development.

Integrating residential, commercial, and recreational land uses can create more opportunities for residents to walk, bike, or use transit to commute, run errands, and access recreational activities.

Waste

Solid waste consists of post-consumer materials including food waste, plastics, paper, metals, construction debris, and other materials. The data collected do not consider the manufacturing and usage of the product being discarded, but rather the volume of waste generated and the breakdown of how waste and recycling are processed.

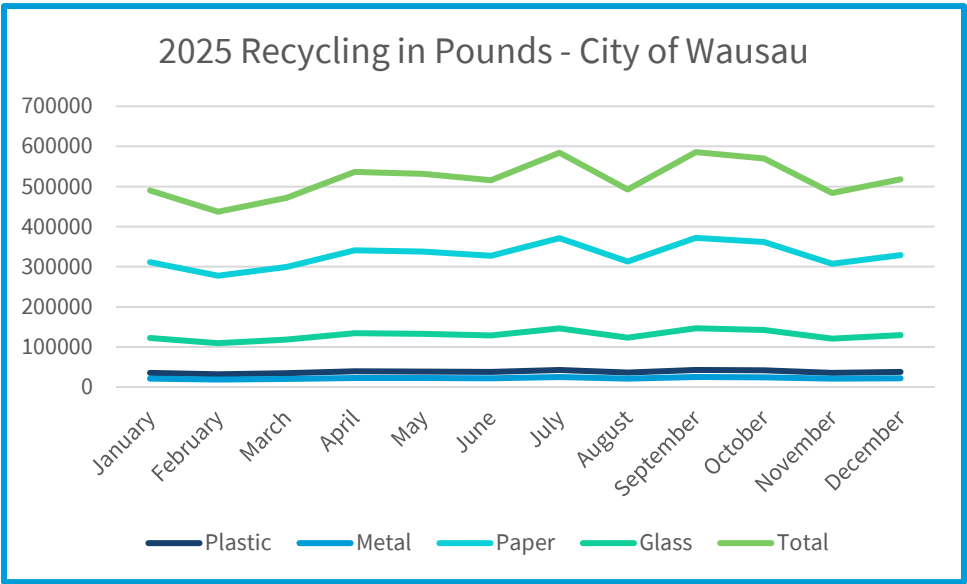
WASTE IN CITY

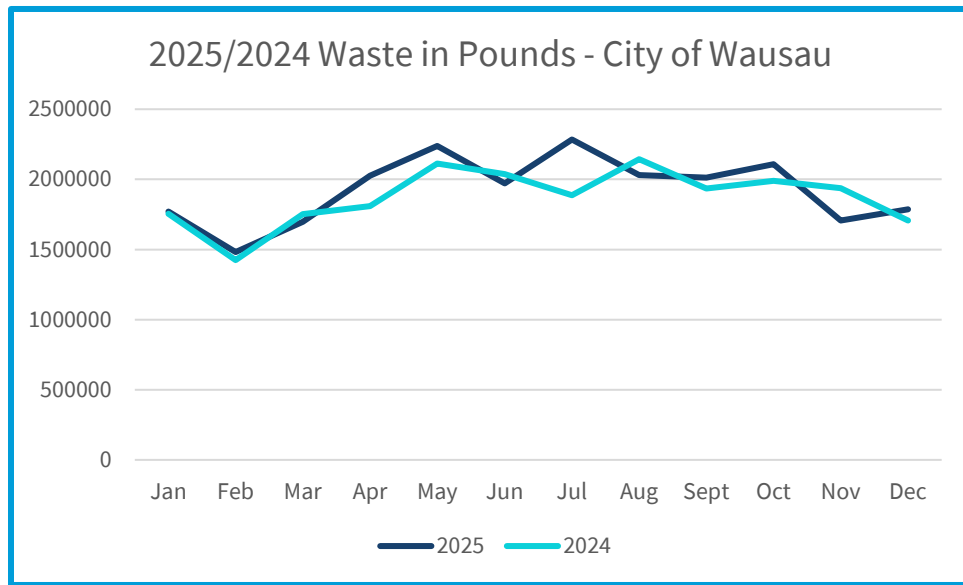
The City of Wausau contracts with Harter’s Fox Valley Disposal for residential and commercial waste and recycling. Collection is Monday through Friday on regularly scheduled routes. All residential households within City limits are served per the municipal contract and commercial accounts are contracted on an individual basis. In 2025, a total of 23,113,260 pounds or 11,556.63 tons of trash was collected in the City of Wausau. A total of 6,217,595 pounds or 3,108.8 tons of recycling was collected in the City of Wausau.

Both residential and commercial trash is delivered to the Marathon County Landfill. Single stream recycled material, for both residential and commercial routes, is transferred at the Harter’s location in Ringle, Wisconsin, into tractor-trailers and transported to the Republic Services sorting facility in Eagle River, Wisconsin. Where possible, clean cardboard routes are established for applicable commercial customers. Clean cardboard is delivered to the IROW facility in Mosinee.

Hsu’s Growing Supply in Wausau provides food waste recycling curbside pickup. The goal of their Food Waste Recycling Program is to divert food waste from the landfill and turn it into compost that provides direct benefit to the community.

Figure 7a and 7b – Recycling and Waste Data – City of Wausau





Renewable Energy Resources

SOLAR RESOURCE

A community's solar resource is the amount of sunlight that can be captured and converted to electricity. Using Google Project Sunroof, the solar resource was calculated for rooftops in Wausau. The total capacity of the economic rooftop solar resource in Wausau includes 19.6 million square feet of roof space, for 446 MW DC capacity, 501K MWh AC per year. Additional solar could be captured through ground-mount systems or community solar systems.

In 2025, the City of Wausau became a SolSmart Silver community. This national designation recognizes local governments that have taken steps to address barriers to solar energy and helps to accelerate the development of local solar markets. This designation highlights the fact that Wausau has implemented best practices in permitting and inspection, planning and zoning, government operations, community engagement, and market development. With SolSmart designation, the City is advancing the following goals:

- Education and encouragement of residents and businesses to explore solar opportunities
- Education of staff on solar options, process, and streamlined permitting and inspections
- Advance the City of Wausau's sustainability and clean energy goals.

Additionally, the City partners annually with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) on their Grow Solar Central Wisconsin group buy program. This program provides in person and virtual technical assistance on solar power and options. Additionally, it provides the opportunity for group purchase which includes an already vetted contractor and lower cost.

Figure – 8 Estimated Rooftop Solar Potential for Wausau, WI

Source: Google Project Sunroof



Overall

Total estimated size and solar electricity production of viable roofs for Wausau, WI

Roofs
77%

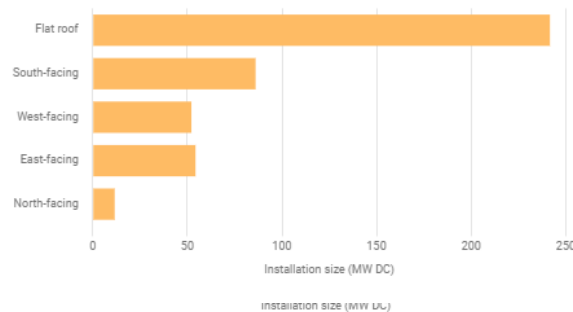
Roofs
15.5K

Roof space
19.6M
sq ft

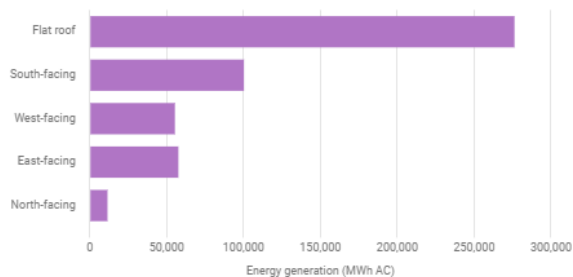
Capacity
446
MW DC

Electricity
501K
MWh AC per yr

Total installation size (MW DC)



Total yearly energy generation potential (MWh AC)



Per roof

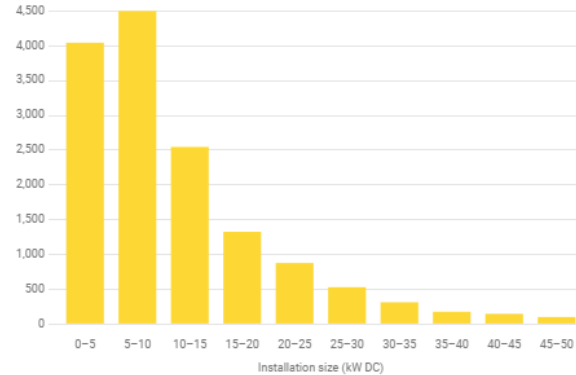
Median estimated system size and solar electricity production per viable roof for Wausau, WI

Roof space
388
sq ft

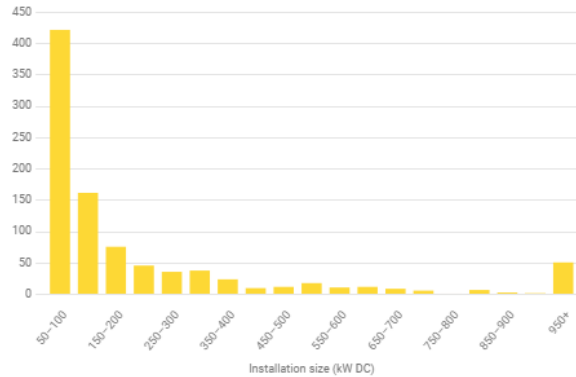
Capacity
9.1
kW DC

Electricity
9.5K
kWh AC per yr

Rooftop solar capacity distribution (number of roofs, < 50kW)

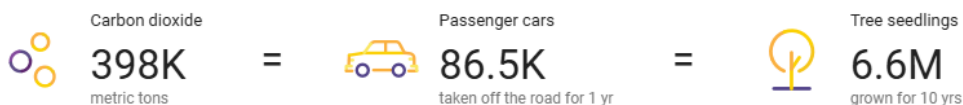


Rooftop solar capacity distribution (number of roofs, > 50kW)



POTENTIAL IMPACT

If all the viable solar installations were implemented, the amount of avoided CO₂ emissions from the electricity sector in Wausau would be:



Project Goal: The SEEC will educate the community by engaging our neighbors, youth, residents, & businesses through sustainability-focused programming and provide opportunities for involvement culminating in Earth Week, April 2027

Project Team members: Carrie, Jean, Britnie, Lauren, Jesse, Christine, Carol

Target date of completion =
04/01/2027

What does success look like? A week full of activities &, opportunities that are highlighted by the City of Wausau, the local media with an target attendance of XXX

Target Conditions

SEEC Committee members will plan a week of fun, educational, and engaging initiatives that revolve around caring for our Earth

Obstacles:

City of Wausau has not formally presented or supported a week long city-wide initiative to keep our earth clean and cared for and engage citizens in participation.

Responsible individual / Resou

Priority : High – Medium – Low

Target Completion date: Status

Art Project

Event Planning

What if we tied the Sustainability Award to earth week/month?

Friday Entertainment?

Promote local initiatives (Ghidorzi Clean and Green, etc)

Waste Management will help with a clean-up (I have spoken with them in the past and they have expressed interest)

Sustainability in Action Tours (Kolbe, native planting initiatives, etc)

Tree Planting

Reach out to Milwaukee

Trash fashion show

Staff the farmer's market through April

trash/recycle at the art festival/hang tablecloth in April

Art in the Park/Night Market

Do we conduct all events throughout the week or highlight events that have occurred throughout the year?

Lauren presented idea at the July meeting about integrated art project with a SEEC initiative

Britnie/Lauren to bring ideas next meeting move to Earth Week

Already happening

Lauren

Jesse connected with Emerald and they would be interested

Jesse will gauge interest/availability

Christine will gauge interest/availability

Christine to follow-up

Not Started

Not Started

Not Started

Not Started

Not Started

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Not Started

Not Started

youth related/schools (project would culminate during Earth Week)