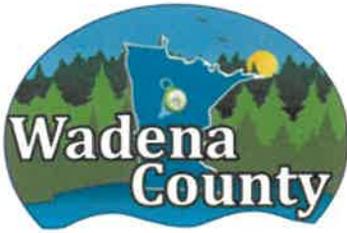


# Wadena County, MN Board Action Form

---



Action Requested	
<input type="checkbox"/> Action/Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Item <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Agenda Item	<input type="checkbox"/> Report <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input type="checkbox"/> Other

<b>2025 Department(s) Report: Zoning/Parks/GIS/Maintenance</b>	
Date of Meeting: 2-10-2026	Total time requested: 10
Department Requesting Action: All of the above	
Presenting Board Action/Discussion at Meeting: Deana Malone	
<b>Background</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting Documentation enclosed	
Department Reports	
<b>Options</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Documentation enclosed	
<b>Recommendation</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Wadena County Board of Commissioners approves the following by Motion:	
Financial Implications	Comments
Funding Source: (see comments)	
Budgeted: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Action	Voting in Favor	Voting Against
Motion:	<input type="checkbox"/> Noon	<input type="checkbox"/> Noon
Second:	<input type="checkbox"/> Winkels	<input type="checkbox"/> Winkels
<input type="checkbox"/> Passed	<input type="checkbox"/> Stearns	<input type="checkbox"/> Stearns
<input type="checkbox"/> Failed	<input type="checkbox"/> Kreklau	<input type="checkbox"/> Kreklau
<input type="checkbox"/> Tabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Kangas	<input type="checkbox"/> Kangas

**Signatures**

STATE OF MINNESOTA}  
 COUNTY OF Wadena}

I, Heather Olson, County Auditor/Treasurer, Wadena County, Minnesota hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of the proceedings of the County Board of said County with the original record thereof on file in the Administration Office of Wadena County in Wadena, Minnesota as stated in the minutes of the proceedings of said board and that the same is a true and correct copy of said original record and of the whole thereof, and that said motion was duly passed by said board at said meeting. Witness my hand and seal:



**PLANNING & ZONING  
PARKS, GIS, & PASSPORT ACCEPTANCE  
Report for 2025**

**PLANNING & ZONING**

**TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED: 216** (216 in 2024 & 226 in 2023)  
*(Numbers below will not total 226 because some septic systems were not stand-alone permits)*

New Dwellings (27 complete new sites up from 23 in 2024)	30 (31 total in 2024) Est. Value: \$6.5 million
Blueberry CIC	2 Est. Value: \$750,000
Other Buildings/Addn's	106 (91 in 2024) Est. Value: \$65,534,750
Commercial Buildings	1 (1 in 2024) Est. Value: \$400,000
Septic Systems Permitted	108 (104 in 2024)
Septic System Installs	100 (94 in 2024)
Variance Applications	5 (5 in 2024) all granted
Conditional Use Permits Approved	3 (1 in 2024) all approved
Rezoning	2 (1 in 2024)
New Plat (County Only)	2 (1 in 2024)
Other: Shoreland Alteration, Change Of Use, etc.	4 (6 in 2024)

**Total Permits Inspected for Compliance and Certificates Issued 122**  
*(Total includes any spill-over from 2024. Projects not inspected may not have been started when the township was toured or may not have been completed, or was in a township that may not have been reviewed. This is down considerably from what has been completed in previous years, due to lack of time spent out in the county. The plan is get last year's cleaned up this spring, early summer, and 2026 can be reviewed late summer and into the fall.)*

**Compliance Inspections on Existing Systems: 98**  
*(82 were compliant/16 received NONC)*

**Total Ordinance Violations Addressed: 93**

**Total Ordinance Violations Resolved: 79**

*(Violations not resolved are mostly septic related. Some will be in the 10 month period to replace, so in the process of being resolved. Some are due to the winter conditions, as well as demand on contractors, the systems could not be installed within the time frame allowed by ordinance and the County is working with individuals & contractors on alternative installation time frames for 2026, as well as assistance with funding to replace in some instances. Most other violations in 2025 are resolved, with the exception of a couple for which we are working to bring a resolution soon.)*

**2025 Total Revenue Generated from All Permit Fees: \$34,550.00**  
**(Total Revenue from Permits in 2024: \$36,950.00)**

**OTHER REVENUES:**

- \$21,200 SSTS Program Grant from MPCA *(applied to dept. budget)*
- \$ 4,210 Shoreland Program Grant from DNR *(applied to dept. budget)*
- \$ 50,000 Grant for Low Income Septic Replacement – Reserve  
*(Grant assisted in replacing 8 systems for low income property owners – average cost of a septic system across the board was around \$12,500 with the grant contributing 50%.)*

- **FYI: Grant Funding for SSTS replacement for low income property owners for 2026:**
  - **MPCA – \$27,633**
  - **Red Eye Watershed - \$20,000 allocated for biennium**
  - **Crow Wing River Watershed - \$15,090 remaining for biennium**
- **\$ 198 Platbooks – Zoning Share (11 books in 2025 - 23 books sold 2024)**

**GENERAL OVERVIEW OF OTHER WORK in 2025:**

- Work with Northern Waters Land Trust and DNR on the transfer of The Conservation Fund Parcels in the County
  - Removal of parcels from the State Sustainable Forest Incentive Act program
- County Zoning Map Amendments – B-1 Districts
- County Zoning Ordinance Amendments – in all commercial districts & Signs
- County Septic Inspectors completed recertification for 3 years
- Began process to link a folder to the GIS map with the septic information for individual parcels – still in process
- 1W1P for the Red Eye Watershed – Attend TAC meetings
- Work with multiple counties and SWCD's on 1W1P for the Crow Wing Watershed – recently approved by Board of Soil & Water Resources
- Successful application for and administration of program grants and Low Income Fix It Septic grants
- Work Plans for all Grants set up on E-link, administration of each & close out those expiring prior to Dec 2025
- 2026 Budgets developed & accepted (Zoning –GIS)
- Continued work to implement online access to permitting – set up and completion in 2026
- Completion and submission of Annual Reports to BWSR, MPCA, and DNR
- Assist with Letters of Map Amendment for property owners in a flood plain through FEMA, as well as building issues related to being in a flood plain
- Numerous onsite, pre-construction meetings to do one or some of the following: evaluate/verify soils for onsite septic system installation, assist in measuring setbacks from ordinary high water level, bluffs, roads, and/or property lines, as determined by property owners, dispute resolutions on soil evaluations, review of shoreland alteration projects prior to permitting, impervious surface determination, bluff determination
- Schedule, complete process for, attend, and provide technical assist to the Board of Adjustment/Planning Commission for all public hearings and work sessions
- Address and resolve building/septic violations throughout the County
- Attend and participate in MACPZA trainings, annual conference, District C meetings, and Regional Zoning Administrator Forum
- Attend and participate in Pollution Control Agency meetings/training on SSTS & DNR meetings/trainings Shoreland & Flood Plain
- Monthly review of departmental budgets to ensure balanced budget or that any overages were kept to a minimum
- Attend and actively participate in Management Team meetings
- Attend and participate in County Board meetings as needed or when requested
- Annual evaluations completed for staff
- Assist other departments/agencies and County Board upon request
- Assist property owners, realtors, attorneys, abstractors, and potential property owners with questions of all sorts and provide guidance in a timely, kind, and professional manner
- Address all other issues as they arise for prompt resolution

## PASSPORTS

**Total Fees Collected for Passport Acceptance 2025 (2024 - \$18,265.00):  
\$25995.00**

- Acceptance of 717 Passport Applications (522 in 2024)
- Assisted with 314 Passport Renewal applications (223 in 2024) – no funds generated – strictly customer service (Majority of new applications were from Wadena County, then OTC, then Todd & other Counties with renewals stacking up about the same)
- Successful recertification of Acceptance Facility
- Successful training/testing and recertification of department staff
- Successful onsite facility inspection and review by the Department of State
- Lots of positive feedback on the availability of this service & how helpful Wadena County is compared to other places that offer this same service

## PARKS

**Total Fees Received including Pavilion rentals (approx. 1595 campsite rentals):        \$24,067.00**  
**There were 3 Old Wadena Pavilion rental besides Rendezvous'**  
**(2024 Camping Fees: \$24,210.00)**

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW OF WORK IN 2025:**

- Upper Campground at Tree Farm Landing is near completion and will be ready for at the beginning of the season
- Added concrete planks to landings at Frames & White Dog due to receding water levels
- Park equipment, vehicle, and tools moved to County building in Nimrod
- General maintenance of the parks was done satisfactorily – mowing, trimming, outhouse maintenance, grounds cleaning, garbage removal, fallen tree removal from access roads, camping fee collection
- Coordinate blading of park roads as needed
- No firewood cut with STS crew to supplement the slab wood in the campgrounds
- Still coordinating with Solid Waste Transfer Station to stage slab wood for distribution to County Campgrounds – continues to be successful
- Continue communicating with David Mather from the MN Dept. of Administration on getting started with an Archeological Survey at Old Wadena
- All parks wells tested for nitrate and coliform bacteria, treatments where necessary, and all passed
- Successful licensing of all campgrounds
- Annual Park Board meeting April 2025 - Fall tour cancelled
- Monthly review of department budget for 2024 to ensure balanced budget or that overages were kept to a minimum
- Weekly meet with Parks Maintenance Tech for report on work done, work planned, & budget
- Periodic onsite review of parks' conditions and progress on improvements
- Address issues as they arise for prompt resolution

## **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)**

**Total Fees Collected for GIS on 911 Signs (46 total signs/42 in 2024):** **\$ 1,437.50**

**Total Fees for Services:** *(Reimbursements from Sheriff's Department on 911 Addresses, & Digital Data Requests)* **\$ 3,939.36**

**Total Fees Collected for Color Copy Maps** **\$ 30.00**

### **Other revenue:**

**Riparian Protection Aid** **\$ 30,000.00**  
*(\$10,000 of these funds are included in the GIS Budget for wages for the staff. The rest is put into the reserve for GIS at the end of the year for upgrades, additional hardware costs, and Pictometry)*

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW OF WORK IN 2025:**

- Continue working on conversion from Arc Map to Arc GIS Enterprise (which is now a web-based mapping system) Arc Map will no longer be supported after 2026
- Completed 44 parcel splits/ 7 combinations completed and 2 plats on the parcel map in coordination with the Auditor's Office Tax Specialist (41 in 2024 and 4 plats in 2024)
- 46 locates for new E911 signs, address generation (42 in 2024)
- Work with Highway and H2Overviewers on County Ditch on County and Judicial Ditch Information
- NG911 data cleanup for statewide E911 digital data map
- Continue to update Atlas program and plat book pages
- Completed 4 Requests for Data
- Created maps for proposed new zoning districts
- Continue working on updating the SSTS compliance layer on the map
- Work with
- Work with ProWest to get septic compliance layer information linked to the map
- Work with Highway Department and Contract Surveyor on Re-monumentation in Aldrich Township, as well as with sign placement and replacement
- Work with Recorder and ProWest to get corner certification linked to map – in process
- Work with Snow Mobile Club on amendments to trail
- Work with realtors/attorneys on land split approval prior to document recording
- Work with ProWest & IT on server/program changes - ongoing
- Made updates to Atlas program and plat book pages for continual run of plat book - ongoing
- Updates to map overlays & information: SSTS Compliance, ownership changes, added & removed irrigation wells as information is made available, snowmobile trails (ongoing)
- Set up quarterly updates for the Sheriff's Department with CIS - ongoing
- Continue working on NG911 data cleanup for statewide digital data map - ongoing
- Address all other issues as they arise for prompt resolution

## MAINTENANCE

- After 7 mos. we are getting acclimated to some structure, and services are being provided satisfactorily for the most part and I am hearing some nice things
- In the first 6 months 189 tickets came in and were addressed in a timely manner with the exception of one in the jail that requires time and special supplies
- We have had 3 full staff meetings and starting in 2026, the team lead and I will meet monthly to review projects and needs
- My door is open to all staff at any time – I believe we have a good team, we just need to get some of the wrinkles ironed out
- We are working on:
  - Some updates to the ticketing system that will be helpful to staff with IT assistance
  - Central location for:
    - Contracts
    - All Contractors frequently used with their contact information
    - All Vendors frequently used with their contact information
  - Some minor projects for 2026:
    - Recorder's Office is nearly completed – shelving is all installed and books added – a countertop needs to be reattached and finished and some minor adjustments in location
    - CH Family Bathroom – was repainted due to staining from the auto air freshener and the faucet screen cleaned to fix the water spray (faucet heads will be monitored so screen cleaning becomes a more frequent task)
    - Back Stairwell of the Courthouse will be repainted as it is badly marked up and in need
    - Jail Entry – repaint ceiling and walls
    - Tunnel Hallway to North Annex – repaint due to water staining
    - Window Washing for the upper level window of the courthouse this spring
    - Organization & cleaning of the Maintenance shop & storage areas
  - Long range for the department:
    - It is clear that, besides a job description, there needs to be some basic instruction written down for new or fill-in staff.
    - Be fully staffed and able to provide the truly good service in a kind and professional manner.

## GOALS FOR 2026

In addition to daily workloads for the year, the following are areas of focus in each department:

### 1. Planning & Zoning:

- a. Complete work for public ability to apply for various permits online, as well as in-person
- b. Work on moving various Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance amendments through the planning process
- c. Work with DNR on adoption of new Flood Plain Ordinance to coincide with new Flood Zone maps from the DNR projected to be delivered in 2026 – ordinance needs to be adopted prior to implementation of the maps

**2. 'Parks:**

- a.** Continue to work on landscape at Old Wadena including ground leveling, tree planting, and weed control, fence reconstruction, & more clean up on the trail to the Battle Site. Replanting to the north will also take place.
- b.** Old Wadena - landing deck constructed at the bottom of the new stairway

**3. GIS:**

- a.** Continue to work on migration from Arc Map to Arc Pro so we are fully operational before ArcMap is no longer supported in 2026
- b.** Begin training, when available, and be ready to start implementing the information received through the re-monumentation project in Aldrich Township.