

Economic Environment



Economic Environment Subcommittee

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"Our economic environment is impacted by residents, businesses, education, government and every sector of the economy. As we evaluate our talent and businesses in the community, we have reason to be optimistic. We also will need to continue to work collaboratively to solve many of the challenges we face with our workforce and community. By rolling up our sleeves and leveraging our resources, the future is promising in Portage County."

*Todd Kuckkahn, Executive Director
Portage County Business Council*

Economic Environment Section Summary

Strengths and Progress

- Unemployment numbers have dropped since the last report, so now the challenge has shifted from reducing unemployment to finding employees to fill the open positions.
- Portage County continues to have a diverse economy that cushions economic downturns.
- Tourism numbers are trending upward, as evidenced by the 30% increase in room tax collections. Tourism has become an important component of the county's economic environment.
- Strong business and residential growth has increased tax revenues and significantly increased assessed values. However, many of the business gains have occurred in the retail sector, where wages typically do not address the needs of struggling families.
- Net commuting is basically neutral, although it would be beneficial if even more people lived and worked in Portage County (80% of residents stay here). Portage County does outperform other counties in our region.

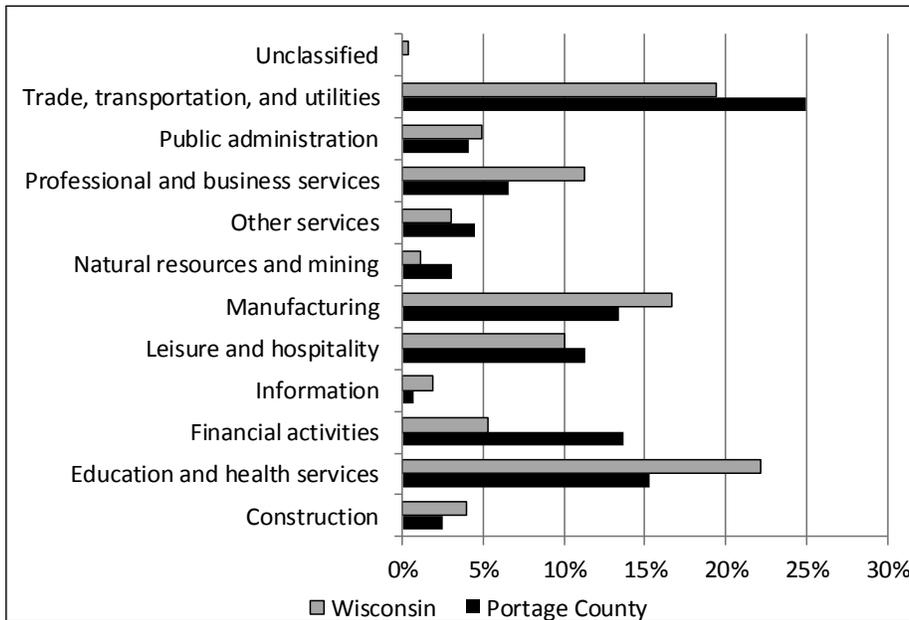
Challenges and Opportunities to Improve

- Local wages are low compared to those in the rest of the state and are magnified by even lower wages paid to women. Of LIFE Survey respondents who were dissatisfied with their jobs, 58% indicated it was due to low wages. The slowest growing occupations are paying the highest wages.
- Nearly 40% of the households in Portage County struggle to afford basic needs, which means a significant number of families are vulnerable to emergencies and unexpected expenses.
- A significant number of households are spending more than recommended (30% of income) on rent. Recent trends show that the gap between income and rent continues to widen.
- The majority of workers do not have a 4-year degree. This fact means more families could be earning at or below the minimum income level necessary in today's economy. Associate, technical and 4-year degrees enhance but do not guarantee the opportunity for higher wages.
- Free/reduced lunch rates remain above pre-recession numbers, indicating financial stress for many families.
- An increasing elderly population, low birth rates, and no growth in the school age population makes filling jobs a challenge.

Opportunities for Action

For Individuals	Utilize community resources to enhance personal financial knowledge. Enhance education and job skills through employer and/or educational systems. Participate in local, regional, and state government to facilitate change. Share stories about our community to attract others.
For Organizations	Connect with technical colleges and universities to find out what opportunities are available for employees. Share our quality of life with job applicants. Go beyond corporate onboarding and enhance community onboarding and engagement. Review pay and compare to competitors inside and outside our community. Engage in more partnerships to enhance resources.
For the Community	Share the positive story of our community to attract and retain individuals/employees. Support local business first. Support entrepreneurship. Advocate for affordable housing.

Key Measure: Non-farm Employment by Industry, Portage County and Wisconsin, 2015



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Top Employers in Portage County Based on Number of Employees (2016):
(alphabetical listing)

- AIG/Travel Guard
- Associated Bank
- City of Stevens Point
- Copps Food Centers
- Del Monte Corporation
- Donaldson Company
- HO Wolding
- Lands' End
- McCain Foods USA
- Ministry St. Michaels-part of Ascension
- Monogram Foods
- Portage County
- Sentry Insurance Group
- Skyward
- Stevens Point Area Public School District
- University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
- Verso Corporation
- Walmart
- Worzalla Publishing
- YMCA of Stevens Point Area

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The Portage County economy remains stable. The list of top 20 organizations based on number of employees indicates the diversity and the positive impact they provide to stabilize the economy.

Since the last LIFE Report in 2012, Monogram Foods has purchased Golden County Foods and is considering both employee and business expansion plans. Ministry and St. Michael's Hospital are now part of Ascension and remain a vibrant business. Skyward has moved into a new facility and has announced plans to add employees and expand within the next decade.

With the ever-growing competition for resources, many of these large businesses are forging partnerships to enhance community support. Sentry continues to support UW-Stevens Point through internships and co-op programs as well as through the financial support of the UWSP data analytics program. Portage County and Stevens Point government financially support the creative economy and work in close partnership with the Portage County Business Council, CREATE, Stevens Point Area Convention and Visitors Bureau and

CAP Services. Stevens Point Area Public Schools continue to enhance their partnerships with the business community and engage students in the business world.

Business, government, education, non-profits and the community are willing to partner and engage where needed. Partnerships will be even more important as our workforce transitions with the exit of the baby boomer generation and the associated general decline in available workers. We are currently living through the largest demographic shift in this nation's history.

Non-farm employment by industry reflects Portage County's employment strength when compared to the state in key areas (see graph). These numbers are consistent with those from 2010. Our community is strongest in trade, transportation, & utilities with manufacturing, financial activities and education & health services near 15%. This strong diversity of employment across industries helps make our community more resilient to challenges all Wisconsin communities face.

SOURCES

- **Bureau of Labor Statistics**
Quarterly Census of Earnings and Wages
<https://www.bls.gov/cew/>
- **City of Stevens Point Housing Study: Top 20 Businesses**
<https://stevenspoint.com/DocumentCenter/View/4563>
- **Portage County Business Council**
<http://portagecountybiz.com/economic-development/community-data>
- **State of Wisconsin**
<http://worknet.wisconsin.gov/worknet/largemp.aspx?menuselection=emp&area=097>

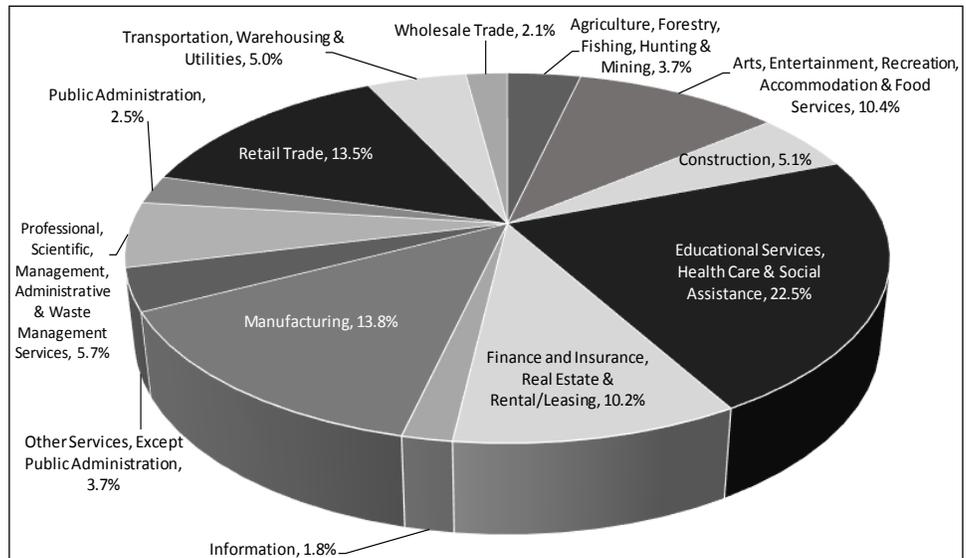
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Average monthly non-farm employment for Portage County was 32,372 in 2015, nearly 7% higher than in 2010.
- Of non-farm industries, 8 of 11 added employees from 2010 to 2015.
- Trade, transportation, and utilities remains the largest industry in terms of non-farm employment.
- In 2015, trade, transportation, and utilities; education and health services; financial activities; and manufacturing accounted for over 2/3 of non-farm employment in Portage County.
- Information and public administration employment declined from 2010 to 2015.
- Manufacturing and professional and business services employment grew by small margins.
- Construction employment grew from 2010 to 2015 but has not recovered to pre-Great Recession levels.

Key Measure: Portage County Employment by Industry, 2010-2015

Industry-Portage County	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Change 2010-2015
Construction	683	713	695	713	721	803	17.6%
Education and Health Services	4,579	4,499	4,647	4,605	4,888	4,961	8.3%
Financial activities	3,975	4,105	4,283	4,230	4,412	4,437	11.6%
Information	283	262	230	216	213	204	-27.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	3,245	3,289	3,275	3,423	3,370	3,656	12.7%
Manufacturing	4,245	4,198	4,254	4,103	4,333	4,321	1.8%
Natural Resources and Mining	872	818	864	854	884	998	14.4%
Other Services	1,470	1,444	1,445	1,433	1,433	1,457	-0.9%
Professional and Business Services	2,105	2,108	1,624	1,888	1,841	2,116	0.5%
Public Administration	1,510	1,523	1,528	1,481	1,311	1,321	-12.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	7,359	7,477	7,609	7,901	8,045	8,098	10.0%
Total Nonfarm Employment	30,326	30,436	30,454	30,847	31,451	32,372	6.7%

Key Measure: Portage County Employment by Industry, 2015



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Location quotients (comparing regional to national data) help determine export based industries. Relative to Wisconsin's employment, industries with a larger share of county employment are exporting industries.

The following industries form the export base: financial activities, leisure & hospitality, natural resources & mining, and trade, transportation, & utilities.

Likewise, industries that employ at a lower rate than the state are the non-basic industries and tend to provide support services to the basic industries.

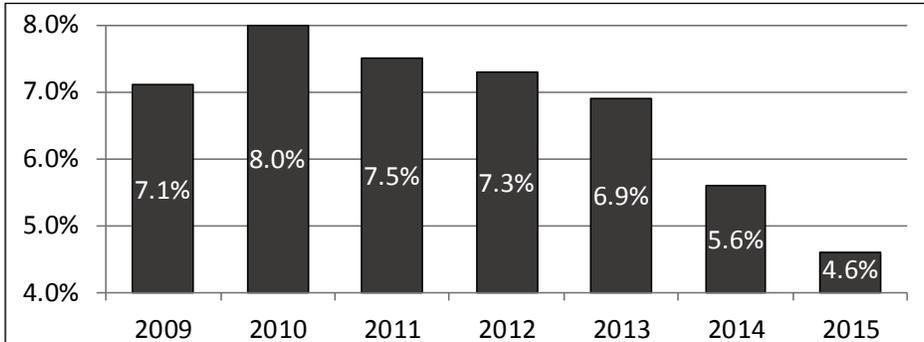
The non-basic industries are construction; education and health services; information; manufacturing; and professional and business services.

Basic industries tend to magnify economic fluctuations in relation to the state and national economies whereas non-basic industries are more sensitive to in-county fluctuations.

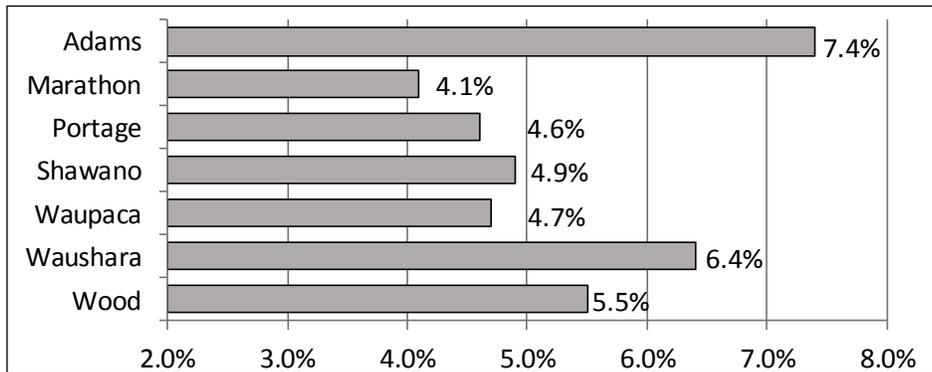
SOURCES

- **Bureau of Labor Statistics** Quarterly Census of Earnings and Wages <https://www.bls.gov/cew/>
- **Census Fact Finder** DP03, 2015 5 year <https://factfinder.census.gov>

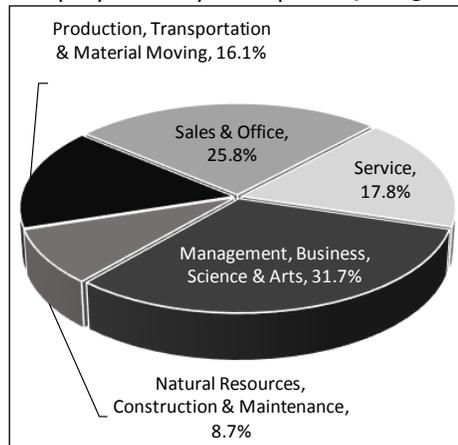
Key Measure: Portage County Annual Unemployment Rates, 2009-2015



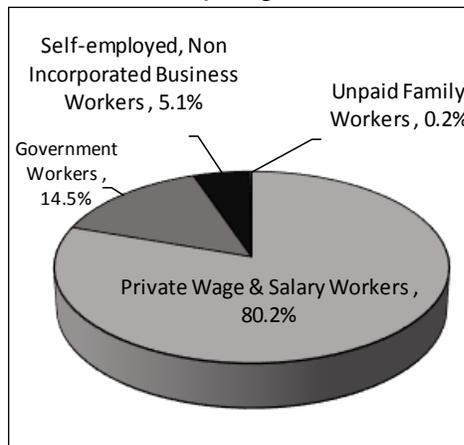
Key Measure: Central Wisconsin Unemployment Rates, 2015



Key Measure: Portage County Employment by Occupation, 2015



Key Measure: Portage County Class of Worker, 2015



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

From 2010 to 2015, service occupations, management, business, science, and arts occupations grew by 2% and 1% respectively. Production, transportation, & material moving occupations declined slightly.

Natural resources, construction, maintenance occupations, sales and office occupations were unchanged. The number of government workers grew while private wage and salary workers and self-employment contracted.

Unemployment rates in Portage County peaked at 8% during the depths of the Great Recession and have since recovered to 4.6%, a near pre-recession low.

The 2015 unemployment rate in Portage County is equal to the statewide rate of 4.6% and below the national rate of 5.3%. Portage County and Price County tied for the 33rd lowest unemployment rate among Wisconsin Counties in 2015.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Construction as a share of employment (5.0%) was below the shares of the state (9.1%) and the nation (6.2%).
- Finance & insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing employment shares (10.2%) are over 2 times that of Wisconsin (4.5%) and nearly 3 times the national average (6.6%).
- While the county's manufacturing share of employment (13.8%) is less than that of the state (21.3%), it remains above the national average (10.4%).
- In contrast, the professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services share of employment (5.7%) is greater than the state's (4.8%); yet, it remains below the national average (11.0%).
- The county's public administration employment share (2.5%) is below the state's (4.2%) and nation's (4.8%). The county retail employment share (13.5%) is above the state's (12.4%) and the nation's (11.6%).
- Employment in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining as a share of total employment in Portage County (3.7%) is over three times larger than the state's (1.2%) and nearly twice as large as the nation's (2.0%).
- Marathon and Portage Counties have the lowest unemployment rates in Central Wisconsin.

SOURCES

- **Bureau of Labor Statistics**
Local Area Unemployment Statistics
<https://www.bls.gov/lau/>

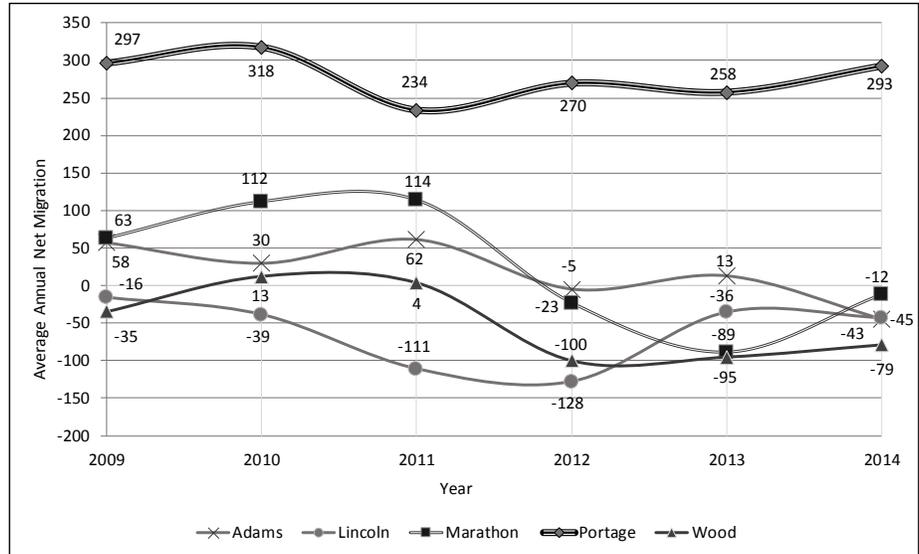
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- About 80% of employed Portage County residents work within the county borders. 6,863 workers flow into the county from other counties and 6,917 residents commute out of the county for employment.
- In Portage County, the working-age population is expected to decline 9.3% between 2010 and 2040 and the retirement-age population (65+) is expected to increase 101.7%.
- The youth population (0-19) in Portage County is expected to increase by 9.9%, which is higher than the state's projected increase of 3.6%.
- In 2016, our county had 703 births, an increase from 663 births in 2015. The number of births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 (the general fertility rate) remained steady for Wisconsin in 2015.
- The 2015 general fertility rate for Wisconsin was 61.7 births compared with 61.8 in 2014. In 2015 Portage County's fertility rate fell below 60 births, which is lower than the state's general fertility rate and lower than all surrounding counties besides Adams County.

SOURCES

- **American Community Survey**
<https://factfinder.census.gov/>
- **Central Wisconsin Economic Research Bureau (CWERB)**
<https://www.uwsp.edu/busecon/pages/cwerb/economic.aspx>
- **Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development**
Office of Economic Advisors and Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI) - Educational Attainment Overview, Q1 2017 Data Set
<http://www.economicmodeling.com/developer-workforce/>

Key Measure: Portage County Regional Labor Shed Map, 2013



Key Measure: County Specific Population Projections, 2010-2040

	2010	2040	% Change
Youth Population (0-19)			
Portage County	17,846	19,610	9.9%
Wisconsin	1,502,196	1,556,915	3.6%
Working-age Population (20-64)			
Portage County	43,218	39,190	-9.3%
Wisconsin	3,407,476	3,399,355	-0.2%
Retirement-age Population (65+)			
Portage County	8,955	18,065	101.7%
Wisconsin	777,314	1,535,365	97.5%
Total Population			
Portage County	70,019	76,865	9.8%
Wisconsin	3,471,850	3,860,965	11.2%

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Portage County is a regional economic hub that provides job opportunities for residents and commuters from outside the county. The draw of the county's urban center is seen in county-to-county commuting patterns.

Domestic migration is a flow of people into a region while others move out. Net domestic migration is the difference. Portage County outperformed the other counties in the Central Wisconsin region in regards to both attraction and retention.

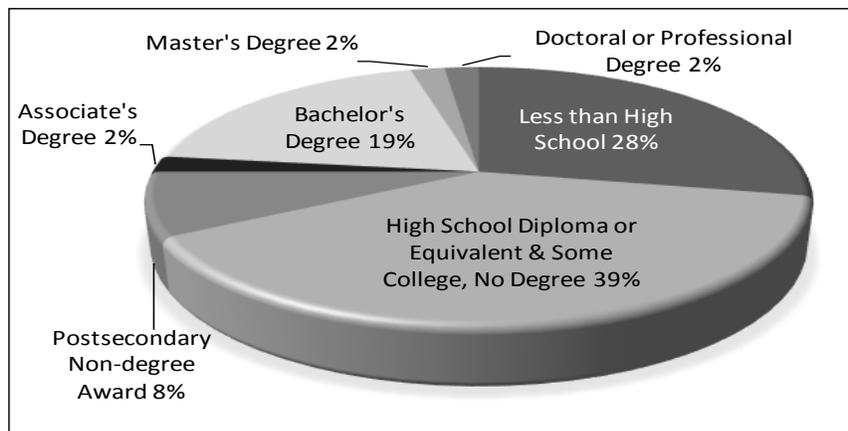
The retirement of the baby-boom generation will have significant effects on Wisconsin's economy over the next 30 years. The size of the workforce will stall; the working-age population (20-64) is expected to decline 0.2% between 2010 and 2040.

There are many factors that challenge our future employment picture. "For Hire" signs appear all over our communities, region and country. You can use any social media to see hiring posts. Businesses are now reaching into elementary schools to educate future employees on local job opportunities. There are stories around the country of businesses creating alumni organizations and off boarding employees in the hopes they might come back again. Businesses are looking to any resources they can find to fill the talent gap.

Key Measure: Fastest Growing Occupations (Median Wage), 2016

Rank	United States	Wisconsin	Portage County
1	Personal Care Aides (\$10.38)	Personal Care Aides (\$10.30)	Farmers, Ranchers, & Other Agricultural Managers (\$12.59)
2	Combined Food Prep & Service, Fast Food (\$9.46)	Real Estate Sales Agents (\$18.67)	Combined Food Prep & Service, Fast Food (\$8.99)
3	Real Estate Sales Agents (\$18.04)	Combined Food Prep & Service, Fast Food (\$9.09)	Retail Salespersons (\$10.49)
4	Retail Salespersons (\$11.09)	Personal Financial Advisors (\$30.03)	Personal Care Aides (\$9.84)
5	Personal Financial Advisors (\$35.68)	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers (\$13.57)	Farmworkers & Laborers, Crop, Nursery & Greenhouse (\$10.35)
6	Registered Nurses (\$33.73)	Retail Salespersons (\$10.22)	Cashiers (\$9.25)
7	Customer Service Representatives (\$15.75)	Sales Reps., Wholesale Manufacturing, Except Technical & Scientific Products (\$26.94)	Real Estate Sales Agents (\$18.51)
8	Commercial Janitors & Cleaners (\$12.11)	Managers, All Other (\$10.40)	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers (\$12.75)
9	Home Health Aides (\$10.76)	Commercial Janitors & Cleaners (\$12.11)	Postsecondary Teachers (\$28.35)
10	Property, Real Estate, & Community Association Managers (\$20.99)	Home Health Aides (\$10.40)	Nursing Assistants (\$10.69)

Key Measure: Training to Job Demand: Projected Employment in Portage County by Education



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Each occupation is assigned to one of eight education paths. The assignment only gives a general indication of the education typically needed in the occupation. There may be other pathways into the occupation, as well as additional educational, training, or licensing requirements.

Among the job openings anticipated in the North Central Wisconsin region between 2014 and 2024, 39% fall into high school or equivalent category. Some examples of occupations in these categories are truck drivers, customer service representatives, and childcare workers.

Of the openings, 28% will typically require less than a high school diploma. Occupations in this group include food

preparation, retail sales, waiters, and bartenders.

Typically, 19% of openings will require a bachelor's degree. Some examples of occupations in these categories are school teachers, accountants, and Human Resource specialists.

An associate's degree will be required for 2% of openings. Some examples of occupations are nurses, operations managers, preschool teachers, and dental hygienists.

Finally, 8% of openings will typically require a postsecondary non-degree award. Examples are nursing aides, hairstylists, production managers, emergency medical technicians and paramedics.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Of the ten fastest growing occupations, eight fall below or very close to the living wage for the county.
- In 2016, of the county residents over the age of 25, 34% had a high school diploma, 9% had an associate's degree, 19% had a bachelor's degree, and 10% had a graduate degree or higher.
- A high school diploma is the education required for the highest percentage (39%) of jobs in our region. One-third of the jobs (33%) will require education beyond high school.

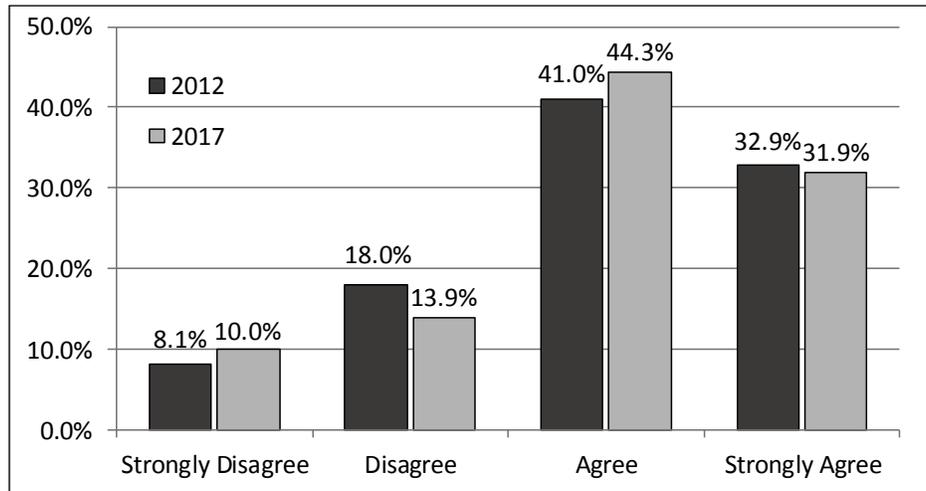
SOURCES

- **Economic Modeling Specialist Internationals (EMSI), Q1 2017 Data Set**
<http://www.economicmodeling.com/economic-development/only>
 available through subscription)

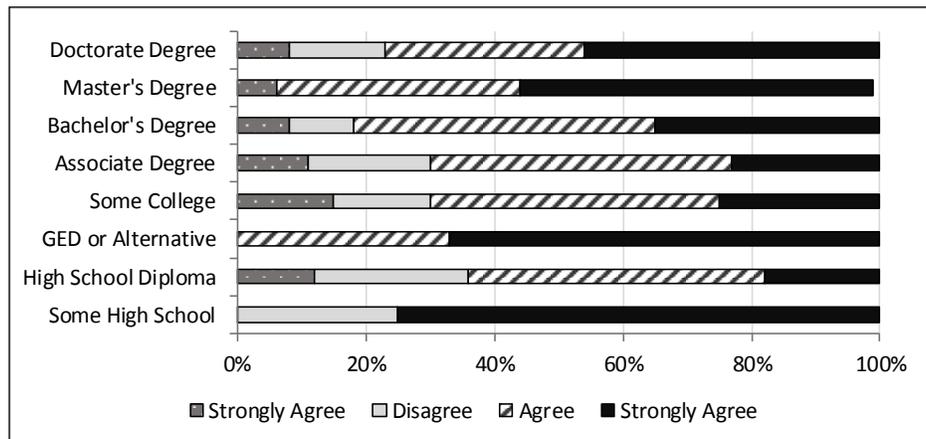
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In the 2017 LIFE Community Survey, 76.2% of respondents indicated agreement or strong agreement that they are satisfied with their full-time or part-time jobs.
- At 54.7%, "low wages" was the most frequent explanation selected by LIFE Survey respondents who are dissatisfied with their job.
- Of dissatisfied LIFE Survey respondents, 34.9% cited "poor work environments" and 31.4% cited "lack of benefits" as contributing to their dissatisfaction.
- The most common "other" reason for job dissatisfaction cited issues with management or owners.

Key Measure: Job Satisfaction in Portage County from LIFE Survey Question: "I am satisfied with my full time or part time job", 2012 & 2017



Key Measure: Job Satisfaction in Portage County from LIFE Survey Question "I am satisfied with my job" by Education Attainment Levels, 2017



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

On the whole, 2017 LIFE Survey respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with their current full-time or part-time jobs. More than three-quarters of survey respondents (76.2%) indicated job satisfaction. This is a slight increase over 2012, where 73.9% of LIFE Survey respondents indicated satisfaction with the jobs.

Generally, job satisfaction trends aligned with educational attainments levels, with higher job satisfaction among more educated Portage County residents; however there was a dip in job satisfaction among respondents with their doctorate.

Among the dissatisfied, "low wages" was the most commonly selected reason at 58%. "Lack of benefits" and "poor work environments" tied for the second most

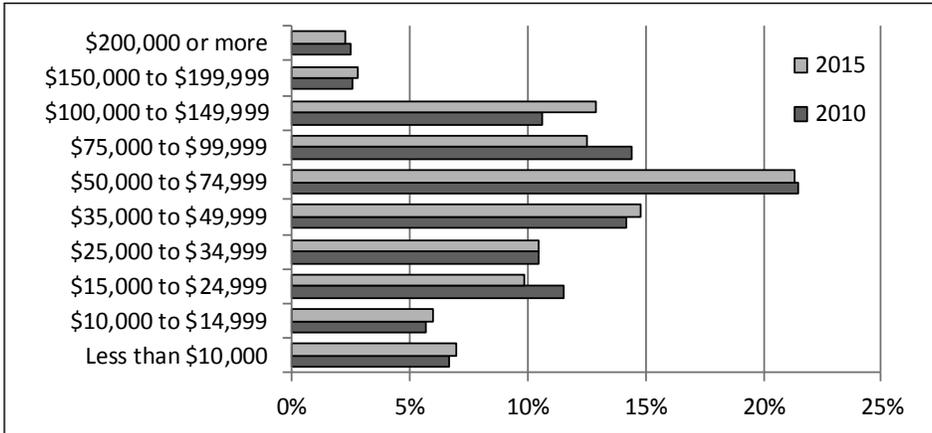
common reason for dissatisfaction at 33%.

Readers of this data should consider demographic anomalies of LIFE Survey respondents when considering the results. LIFE Survey respondents had higher levels of educational attainment than Portage County Census data, and the average age of survey respondents skewed higher than actual population trends. Moreover, some educational attainment categories did not have a statistically significant response rate.

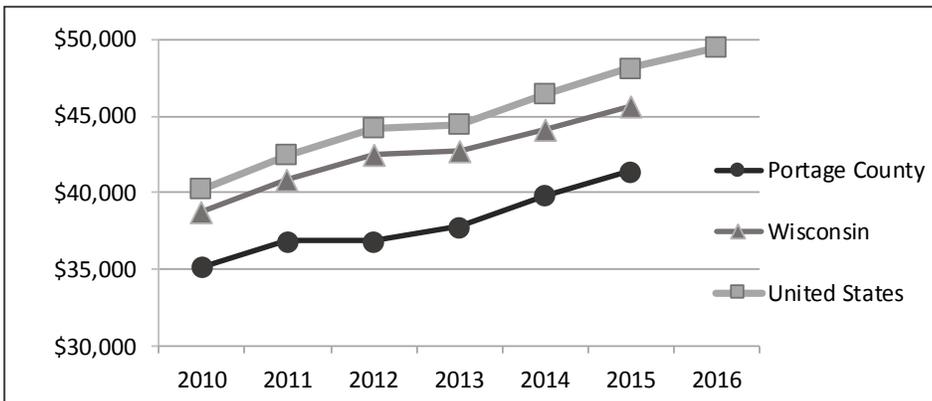
SOURCES

- 2017 LIFE in Portage County Community Survey Question 17

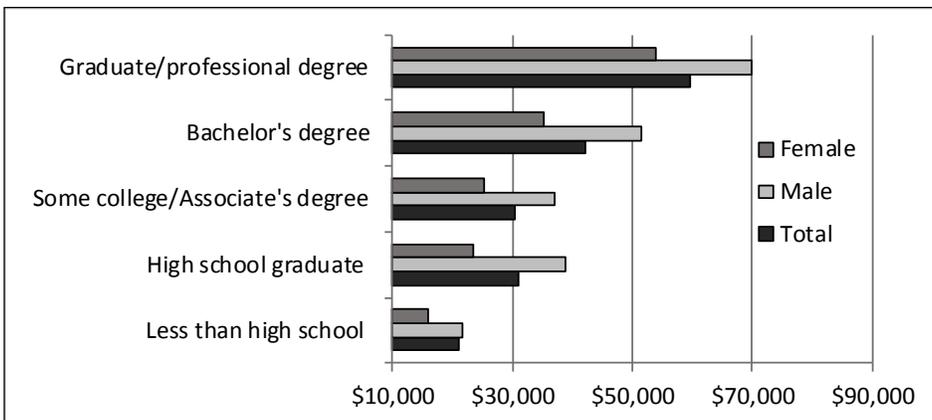
Key Measure: Portage County Household Income Distribution, 2010 & 2015



Key Measure: Portage County, State, & U.S. Per Capita Income, 2010-2016



Key Measure: Portage County Income by Educational Attainment, 2014



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Per capita income is personal income divided by population. Historically, the per capita income in Portage County sits well below the state and national measures. The most recent data from 2015 indicate the per capita income gaps between the county and the state as well as between the county and the nation were at 9¢ and 14¢ on the dollar,

respectively. Relative to Wisconsin, Portage County workers earned 91¢ on the dollar in 2010. In the same period, Portage County's per capita income was 87¢ on the dollar when compared to the United States.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Between 2010 and 2015, 4 out of the 10 household income brackets declined.
- The largest decline in income occurred in households earning \$15,000-\$24,999 and \$75,000-\$99,999.
- The percent of households earning \$0-\$14,999 grew by small margins while the percent of households earning \$100,000-\$149,999 grew by a large margin.
- Per capita incomes grew from \$35,158 in 2010 to \$41,434 in 2015, a 17.9% increase; that is slightly above the state (17.5%) and well below the nation (19.5%).
- Advanced education equates to greater earning power for Portage County residents.

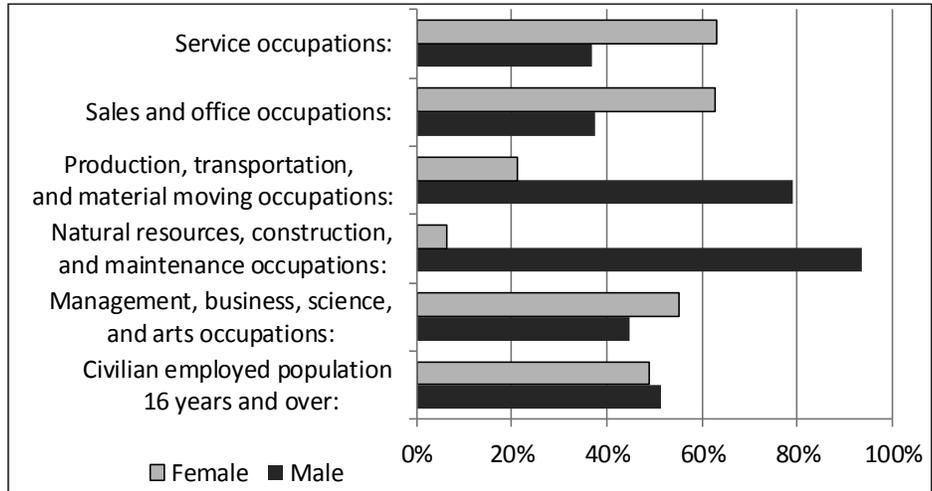
SOURCES

- **Census Fact Finder - DP03, 2015 5 Year**
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>
- **Federal Reserve Economic Data - St. Louis FED**
<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- With the stagnating growth in 2011 of Portage County's per capita income, these income gaps widened to 87¢ and 83¢ on the dollar.
- Male college graduates earn 1.3 times more and female college graduates earn 1.5 times more than their high school educated counterparts.
- Female college graduates on average earn \$0.32 less for every \$1.00 earned by their male counterpart.
- Excluding sales and office occupations, females continue to face median incomes well below those of males employed in the same occupation: between 22¢ and 61¢ less per \$1 earned by males.

Key Measure: Portage County Industry by Gender, 2014



Key Measure: Portage County Income by Gender and Occupation, 2014



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

At the state and national level, per capita income growth slowed in 2012. The growth rates have since recovered. The annual income per capital growth rate has exceeded the state and nation since 2012, suggesting Portage County is a 'leading' county.

Portage County female workers annually earn 65¢ on the dollar relative to their male counterparts; that is well below the pay of male workers in the state and nation, respectively 71¢ and 70¢. Pay gaps can arise with discrimination and benign gender-based differences in occupation and educational attainment. Be that as it may, female median earnings in Portage County were significantly below those of males at every level of educational attainment and in all but one occupation.

The U.S. Department of Labor, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the American Association of University Women all agree that the gender pay gap exists even after adjusting for years of experience and the number of hours worked but to varying degrees.

In addition, the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee reports the gap tends to increase with age. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the gap is slowly improving at a national level, but at its current pace, the gender pay gap will persist through 2059. To pull women from poverty and reduce income inequality, policy should target the gender pay gap and improve access to services ensuring women can work full-time.

SOURCES

- **Census Fact Finder - S2401, 2014 5 Year**
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

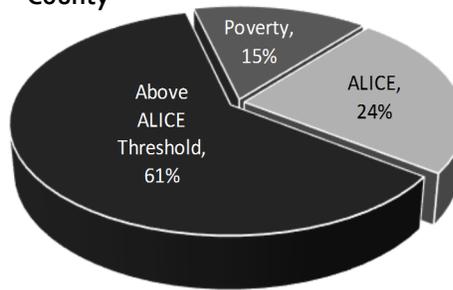
Key Measure: Portage County Survival Budget, 2014

Household Survival Budget, Portage County		
	SINGLE ADULT	2 ADULTS, 1 INFANT, 1 PRESCHOOLER
Housing	\$415	\$693
Child Care	\$-	\$1,251
Food	\$176	\$533
Transportation	\$351	\$702
Health Care	\$147	\$587
Miscellaneous	\$165	\$435
Taxes	\$561	\$584
Monthly Total	\$1,815	\$4,785
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$21,780	\$57,420
Hourly Wage	\$10.89	\$28.71

A Household Survival Budget identifies the minimum cost option for the basic items needed to live and work in today's economy. This budget does not allow for savings, which leaves a household vulnerable to emergencies and

ALICE, an acronym for **A**sset Limited, **I**ncome Constrained, **E**mloyed, are households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). Combined, the number of poverty and ALICE households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs.

Struggling Households in Portage County



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Key findings from the United Way's ALICE Report indicate that Wisconsin's economic recovery from the 2007 recession continues to lag. From 2007 to 2014, economic conditions worsened for many households in Portage County.

With 39% of the households in Portage County striving to afford basic necessities, (15% at the Federal Poverty Level and 24% at the ALICE Threshold level), many residents continue to struggle to find affordable and convenient housing, along with higher wage jobs in the same location.

The impact of the challenges faced by these households is felt by individuals, families, and the greater community. Individuals often have to make difficult trade-offs, having to choose between quality childcare and education, food, transportation, and health care. These choices affect the level, type, and availability of community resources. Childcare represents one of the most

important and most expensive budget items for families. In Wisconsin, 91% of all families with children had all available parents in the workforce in 2013 (one of the 10 highest rates in the county), which indicates the depth of this issue.

Health care is often a luxury for many households. Lower paying jobs and part-time employment do not usually provide benefits that include mental health services, medical, dental, or vision care, frequently causing these households to have poorer health in general.

This data also supports the need for developing full-time job opportunities that offer adequate benefits and pay living wages, defined as \$10.89/hr. for a single adult or a combined wage of \$28.71/hr. for two working adults in a family of 4. It also demonstrates the need to continue public and private efforts to provide support services for those with the greatest needs.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- U.S. Census Bureau data estimates that the percentage of the Portage County population at the poverty level in 2014 was 12.6% which is lower than it had been in 2010.
- There are nearly 670,922 ALICE households in Wisconsin, more than double the official poverty rate. Together with those in poverty, there are 960,131 households unable to make ends meet in Wisconsin.
- More than two-thirds of Wisconsin's municipalities have over 30% of households unable to afford life's basic necessities.
- In 2015, Feeding America identified 12.4% of Wisconsin's population as being food insecure.
- Despite working and receiving financial supports, ALICE households still face a 21% gap in the income needed to be able to survive and afford the basics in Wisconsin.
- In Wisconsin, 36% of the state's 2.7 million jobs pay less than \$13.70 per hour, which is not enough for two working parents to support their family.

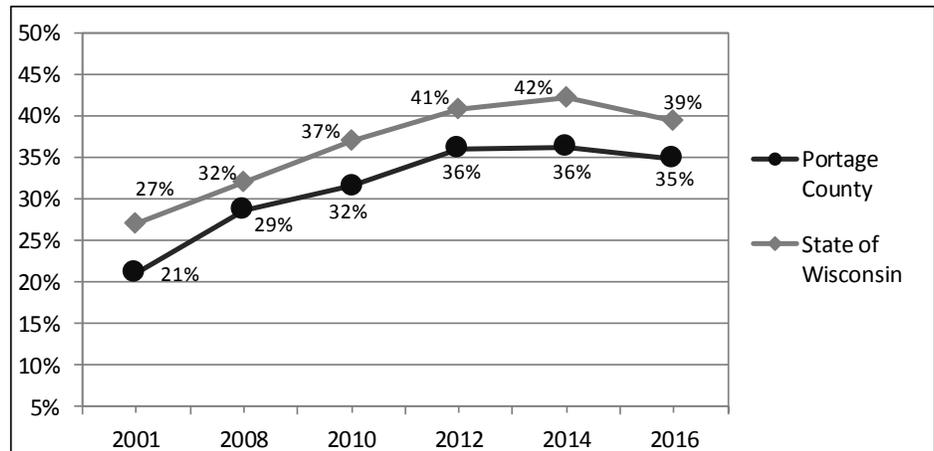
SOURCES

- **United Way's 2014 ALICE Report**
<http://www.unitedwaypoco.org/ALICE>
- **Childcare-Supporting Families Together Association**
<https://supportingfamilies.together.org/>
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture**
<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/USDAFoodCost-Home.htm>
- **United States Census Bureau**
Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates
<https://www.census.gov/did/www/saie/data/statecounty/index.html>

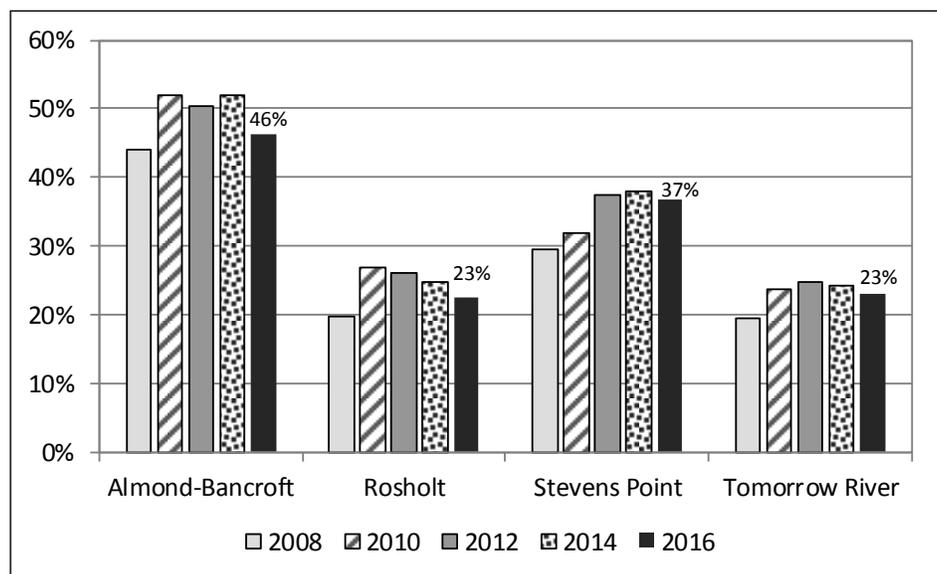
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The percentage of students in public schools eligible for free or reduced meals has risen to 35% in 2016 from 21% in 2001.
- Between 2008 and 2016, the percentage of public school students eligible for free or reduced meals has remained 3% to 5% below the state average. Data for both Portage County and the state indicate a reduction (1% and 3%, respectively) between 2014 and 2016, after recording increases between 2008 and 2014.
- Of the four public school districts operating within Portage County, the Almond-Bancroft and Stevens Point Districts have historically had the highest percentage of eligible students. In 2016, these districts had 23% and 14% more eligible students, respectively, than the Rosholt and Tomorrow River Districts.
- Participation among the three schools in the Almond-Bancroft District is fairly consistent (10% difference). Participation in the Stevens Point District varies widely by school, ranging from 22% to 67%.

Key Measure: Percentage of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price School Meals in Portage County and Wisconsin, 2001-2016



Key Measure: Percentage of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals in Portage County by District, 2008-2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Free and reduced-price school lunches are a part of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The NSLP is a federally funded meal program that dates back to 1946. The program operates in public and nonprofit private schools as well as residential child care operations. The program is administered at the state level by the Department of Public Instruction and on the local level by school districts.

Children in families with incomes of less than 130% of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those children in families with incomes between 130% and 185% of the poverty level qualify for reduced price meals.

These data can help provide additional insight into the economic conditions faced by Portage County residents, both from an overall program utilization perspective, and also from a geographic perspective. Information is reported “by school,” allowing understanding of variation in participation among districts as well as across the county, and can shed light on income earned within the neighborhoods that provide students for the schools.

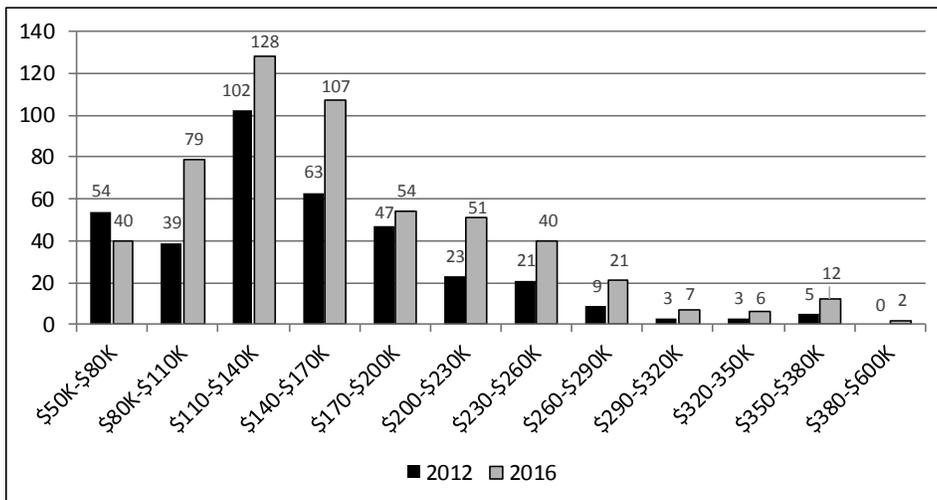
SOURCES

- **Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**
Program Statistics: Wisconsin School Free/Reduced Eligibility Data
<https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/program-statistics>

Key Measure: Portage County Housing Units by Unit Type, 2010 & 2015

Units in Structure	2010 Count	2015 Count	2010 Percent	2015 Percent
1-unit, detached	20,172	2,104	68%	69%
1-unit, attached	1,000	1,040	3%	3%
2 units	2,015	1,246	7%	4%
3 or 4 units	1,391	1,325	5%	5%
5 to more units	3,333	4,288	11%	14%
Mobile home	1,690	1,384	6%	5%
Total housing units	29,601	30,287	100%	100%

Key Measure: Portage County Real Estate Comparison, 2012-2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Housing unit statistics indicate whether a community is growing, has a stable population or is experiencing a population decline. The housing statistics show that the number of Portage County housing units is increasing, suggesting that the county's population is also increasing.

For years 2012 and 2015, the percentage of occupied housing units in Portage County that were occupied by the owners remained constant at 69%, suggesting that Portage County may have found its bottom in the declining real estate market. It also indicates that large inventories of homes have begun decreasing, and new home construction is on the rise.

The introduction of new, residential developments in the Portage County area suggests a renewed confidence in the single family housing market by area developers and home builders alike. The new housing developments appear to be focusing on new home starts in the

\$250,000 to \$400,000 price range. In early 2017 the demand for new housing developments outpaced current inventory with regards to single family residential lots.

Wisconsin home ownership is consistently higher than the rest of the country. Portage County home ownership continues to outpace both state and national levels, which is a significant point as it says something for the ability of the population in Portage County to own a home. With the changing economy in the past several years, home ownership has dropped nationally and continued to do so after 2010.

However, a high percentage of homeowners are still paying 30% or more of their income on housing which makes home ownership more difficult or risky.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2017, Portage County's existing home sales continue to run at robust pace for the lower end to moderate price ranges, (\$90,000 to \$250,000) with demand outpacing the current supply.
- In 2016, there were a total of 676 single family housing units sold, an increase of 22% from the 2012 total of 531. This statistic includes single family houses, zero lot line homes and condominiums.
- In 2015, a slightly higher percentage of homeowners (26.3%) are spending 30% or more of their household income on home costs, compared to 2010 (25.3%).

Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income

% Income Paid on Housing	Percentage of Households	
	2010	2015
Less than 20%	41.9%	46.4%
20.0-24.9%	19.6%	17.3%
25.0-29.9%	13.2%	10.0%
30-34.9%	7.5%	8.3%
35% or more	17.8%	18.0%
Total Units Listed	11,891	11,831

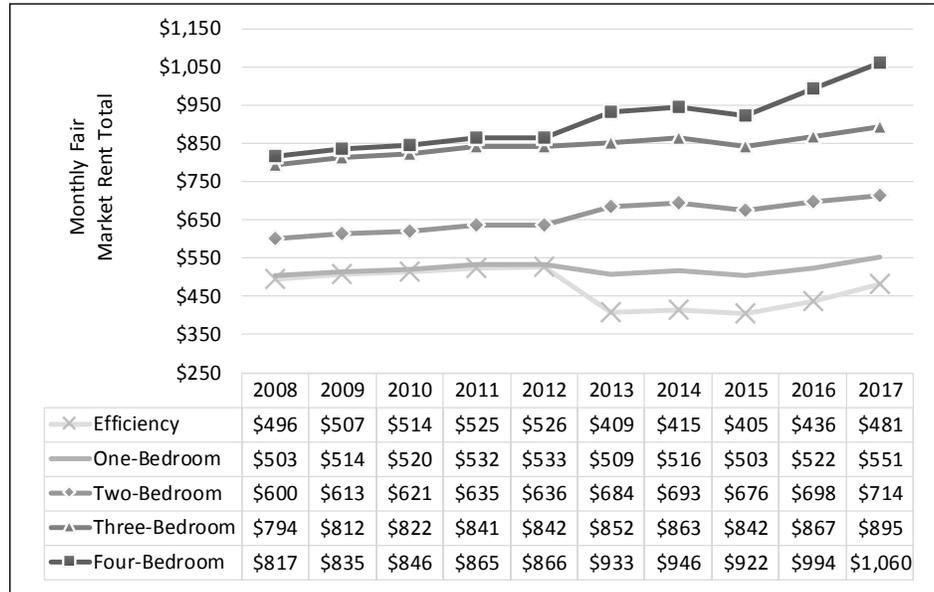
SOURCES

- Census Fact Finder - DP04 2105 5 Year**
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>
- Stevens Point Area MLS Residential Sales Data**

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Fair market rent for all unit sizes increased by an average of 15% from 2008 to 2017.
- The greatest increase from 2008 to 2017 was in 4-bedroom units which experienced a 30% increase. The fair market rent percentage increase for other units are as follows:
 1-Bedroom-9.5%
 2-Bedroom-19%
 3-Bedroom 13%
 The only units to decrease in rent were Efficiency units (3% decrease).
- The number of households spending more than 30% of their income on housing increased from 32.3% of families in 1999 to 46.5% of families in 2015.
- According to the 2017 LIFE in Portage County Community Survey, an average of 42.9% of respondents indicated that they spend over the 30% household income guideline for housing costs.

Key Measure: Portage County Fair Market Rents, 2008-2017



Key Measure: Portage County Affordability Comparison: Renter-Occupied Units, 1999 vs. 2010 vs. 2015

Gross Rent as % of Household Income	1999		2010		2015	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Less than 20%	2,675	37.9%	2,248	27.9%	2,420	27.8%
20.0% to 24.9%	886	12.5%	1,018	12.7%	809	9.3%
25.0% to 29.9%	863	12.2%	729	9.1%	937	10.8%
30.0% to 34.9%	485	6.9%	713	8.9%	468	5.4%
35.0% or more	1,791	25.4%	2,896	36.0%	3,585	41.1%
Not Computed	361	5.1%	442	5.5%	495	5.7%
TOTAL Units Listed	7,061	100%	8,046	100%	8,714	100%

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Data for Portage County indicate a steady rise in rental rates for most unit sizes during the past ten years with a sharper increase over the past two to three years. This increase may reduce the stock of affordable housing and could be due to a number of factors, including a shortage of rental units and an improving economy coming out of the Great Recession.

When rental rates for the 3-bedroom and 4-bedroom units grow faster than household income, larger families bear an increased burden as a larger share of income is allocated to housing. Alternatively, smaller families are potentially better off financially because the rental rate for smaller units has not increased at the pace of the larger units.

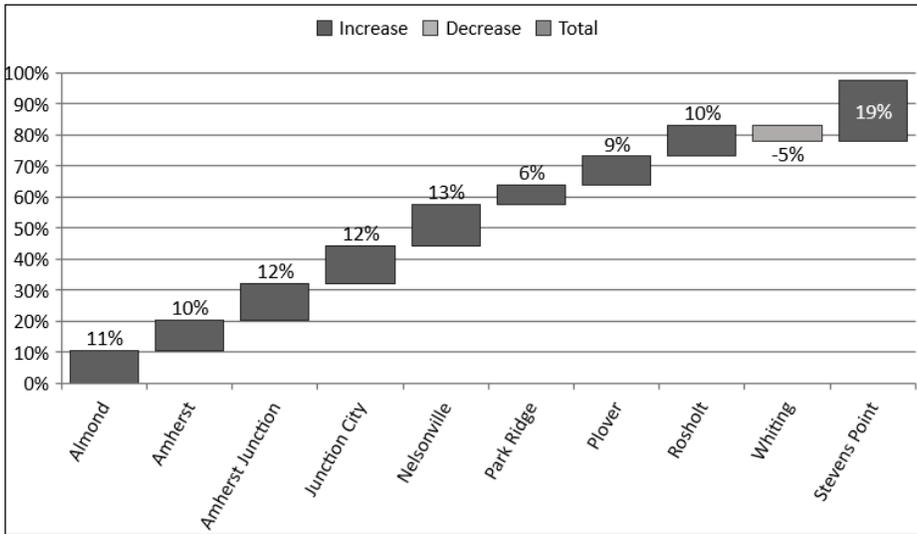
The gross rent as a percentage of household income over the past few decades is of particular concern.

Typically, a household should spend no more than 30% of its income on housing. However, the number of households spending more than 30% on gross rent increased significantly from 1999 to 2015. This circumstance can increase the risk of losing housing through either eviction or foreclosure. It is important to note that the number of households spending less than 20% of their income on housing has decreased substantially from 1999 to 2010 and slightly from 2010 to 2015.

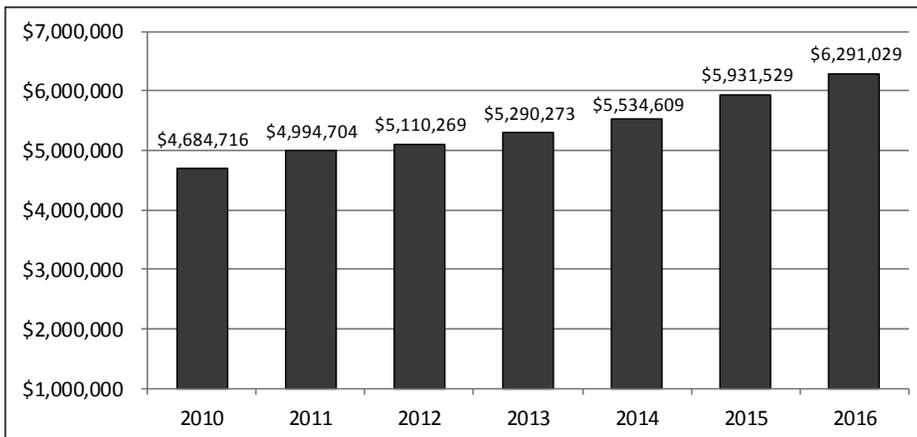
SOURCES

- **Census Fact Finder - DPo4 2105 5 Year**
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Key Measure: Portage County Tax Revenue Percent Increase, 2012-2016



Key Measure: Portage County Sales Tax Revenues, 2010-2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

When county sales tax revenues are up, consumer spending is up and county sales tax revenues trend upward, leading to a growth in business income. County sales tax revenue is the sale of all goods, services, and merchandise taxable under Wisconsin law.

Portage County's sales tax revenues increased significantly from 2012 through 2016. This growth can be attributed to expansion of retail in the Stevens Point urban area, along with growth in existing businesses' income. The strong growth from 2012 to 2016 may indicate an increase in disposable income for residents or in county exports attributed to tourism.

Equalized Value is an estimate of the fair market value of all residential, commercial, and other personal

property. Increasing equalized values indicate property values are increasing due mostly to new residential, commercial, or manufacturing growth. When equalized values increase, most property owners are able to at least maintain their homes and businesses.

Portage County's equalized valuation has increased substantially from 2012 to 2016. The only community to lose equalized valuation was the Village of Whiting as a result of the closure of the New Page Corporation and the Whiting paper mill.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Nearly half of Portage County's increase in equalized value between 2012 and 2016 occurred in the City of Stevens Point (48%). Townships comprised 35.8% of the increase between 2012 and 2016 and the villages comprised 16.1%.
- Assessed values recovered quickly from the great recession of the late 2000's and early 2010's, as evidenced by the significant increase in the County's equalized valuation between 2012 and 2016.
- Of Wisconsin's 72 counties, 62, including Portage County, levy a 0.5% county sales and use tax. The total county sales tax revenue in these 62 counties totaled \$355.1 million in 2016.
- Portage County sales tax revenue has risen 23.1% since 2012. The sales tax revenue accrues to the County's general operating budget to provide county services.
- Statewide, county sales tax revenues increased by 19.3% from 2012 to 2016.
- The average countywide sales tax per capita, for counties that impose a tax, was \$77.76 in 2015. Portage County, with \$85.61, was one of 20 counties in 2015 that exceeded that amount.
- Retail purchases accounted for 47.9% of taxable sales and purchases in Wisconsin in 2016 and 52.4% in Portage County.

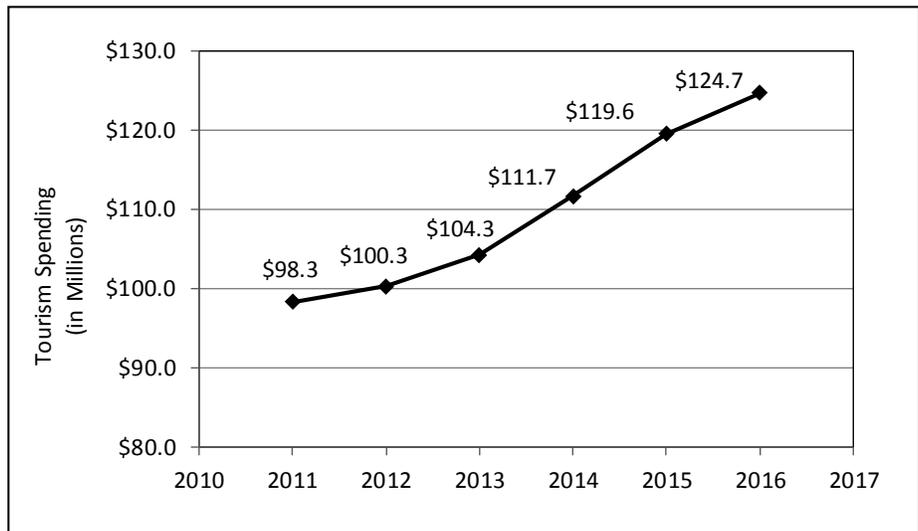
SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Revenue**
State and Local Sales and Use Tax Report: Revenues, From Sales in Calendar Year, 2005-2010
<https://revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Report/s.aspx#sales>

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- Portage County tourism spending soared to \$127.4 million in 2016 from \$119.6 million in 2015, increasing 4.27%. Since 2011, there has been a 27% increase.
- Portage County saw the largest growth in visitor spending when compared to neighboring counties in Central Wisconsin.
- Portage County ranked 23rd among all 72 counties in Wisconsin, as it relates to 2016 tourism spending data.
- Tourism-related full time equivalent positions in Portage County totaled nearly 2,216 on 2016. The number of full time equivalent positions attributed to tourism has increased 2.87% from 2015.
- Portage County occupancy rates have increased more than 6% and average daily rates (ADR) have seen more than 14% growth over the same five-year time period, based on Smith Travel Research data.
- Room tax collections, the amount visitors pay during overnight stays that is collected by the municipality, has grown more than 30%.
- Statewide visitor spending growth was led by spending on lodging with strong growth in all non-transportation sectors as lower gas prices, growing wages, and strong consumer confidence meant growth in both travel and spending per trip.

Key Measure: Estimated Tourism Spending in Portage County, 2011–2016



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Tourism generates a positive impression of the state, which is critical for economic development in our communities. According to Longwoods International, Wisconsin ranks #1 among its Midwest competitors in fun, family friendliness, uniqueness, affordability, outdoor recreation and welcoming atmosphere. A study conducted by Tourism Economics shows the impact of tourism on the state’s economy reached \$20 billion in 2016, an increase of 3.5% from 2015. The total 6-year growth of tourism activity is up more than \$5.2 billion, a 35% increase from \$14.8 billion. Wisconsin’s key selling points for visitors to the state are its fun and authentic travel experiences that visitors can’t get anywhere else in the world.

Visitors spent \$124.7 million in Portage County in 2016, the fifth year in a row that traveler expenditures topped \$100 million in the county, according to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

The \$124.7 million in visitor spending was an increase of 4.27% from the amount visitors spent in Portage County in 2015. Ranked 23 out of all 72 counties in the state, Portage County saw the largest growth in visitor spending when compared to neighboring counties in Central Wisconsin. The spending

continues to drive the local employment base. There were 2,216 full-time equivalent tourism related jobs reported in Portage County in 2016.

Growth in visitor spending locally can be attributed to several factors, including growth in arts and culture related events and attractions, an exploding culinary scene, an expanding craft beverage industry, successful marketing campaigns, numerous sports events and a strong meeting and convention market.

Since 2012, the region has seen other positive indicators that extend beyond the report by Tourism Economics including increases in occupancy rates, Average Daily Rates (ADR) and room tax collections.

Portage County is a destination that combines small-town charm and warm, friendly service with big-city amenities. Nestled in the center of Wisconsin, the Stevens Point Area’s central location coupled with beautiful facilities make it an ideal location for meetings, group gatherings and tournaments. The Stevens Point Area has a vibrant community culture intertwined with the love of outdoor recreation, craft brewing and the arts making it a great place for a getaway, with plenty of amenities for the budget savvy and easy access to major highways.

SOURCES

- **Wisconsin Department of Tourism and Tourism Economics**
Tourism Impact Research
<http://industry.travelwisconsin.com/research/economic-impact>
- **Smith Travel Research Data**
<https://www.strglobal.com/>