



STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted by the Board of Supervisors
March 18, 2025



Winnebago County

INTRODUCTION

Winnebago County is a thriving, forward-thinking community committed to fostering economic growth, preserving natural resources, and enhancing the well-being of all residents. As we look to the future, we recognize the need for a strategic, balanced approach to our work - one that ensures sustainability, strengthens public services, and fosters a high quality of life. This strategic plan serves as a roadmap for progress, guiding our decisions and investments to build a stronger, more resilient county for generations to come.

Rooted in principles of leadership, responsible stewardship, and inclusive community engagement, this plan reflects our shared vision for Winnebago County: a place where businesses flourish, residents have the opportunity to thrive, and where investments are made with an eye to the future. Through thoughtful planning and collaboration, we will drive meaningful improvements in housing, transportation, economic development, government efficiency, and quality of life initiatives ensuring that our county remains competitive and adaptable in an ever-changing world.



This plan is more than just a vision - it is a commitment to action. By working alongside residents, businesses, and community partners, we will build upon our strengths, embrace new opportunities, and address the challenges ahead with confidence and purpose. Together, we will shape a future that honors Winnebago County's rich heritage while positioning it as a premier place to live, work, visit, and invest.

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Winnebago County is a thriving, forward-thinking community that embraces diversity, fosters economic growth, and preserves our rich natural resources. Through purposeful planning and collaboration, we provide a high quality of life, efficient government, and sustainable infrastructure to ensure long-term success and prosperity for all.

LEADERSHIP WITH VISION

We embrace a future-focused mindset, making proactive and strategic decisions that ensure long-term success. Our leadership values innovation, adaptability, and collaboration to create a thriving community for generations to come.

RESPONSIBLE GROWTH AND STEWARDSHIP

We are committed to balancing economic growth with environmental responsibility. Through careful planning, we ensure that our infrastructure, housing, and business sectors evolve sustainably while protecting our natural resources and enhancing quality of life.

INCLUSIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

We believe in the power of community participation and open communication. By fostering trust, transparency, and collaboration, we create a government that reflects the needs and aspirations of our residents, businesses, and visitors.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

We strive to build a community where every resident has access to safe housing, reliable transportation, and livable employment. By removing barriers and expanding opportunities, we empower individuals and strengthen our local economy.

VIBRANT AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY

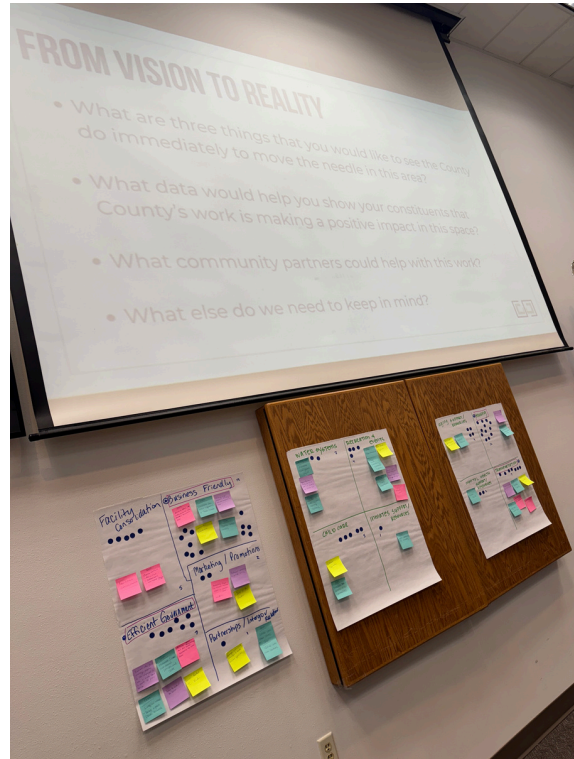
Winnebago County is a place where people want to build their future and where visitors feel welcomed. By investing in recreation, culture, and economic opportunity, we create a thriving and dynamic community that continues to attract and retain residents.

EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE

We are dedicated to delivering high-quality, efficient, and innovative government services. By using data-driven decision-making, technology, and strategic planning, we ensure that county resources are managed responsibly and efficiently.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To ensure the strategic plan reflects the priorities and aspirations of Winnebago County, the County partnered with public EverStrive Solutions to facilitate an engagement process. Input was collected through surveys, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups with county supervisors, county administration, department leaders, and key community partners. Representatives from local organizations, including city officials, the Oshkosh Economic Development Corporation, Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Discover Oshkosh, contributed valuable insights, helping to shape a vision that aligns with the county's evolving needs.



Additionally, a thorough review of existing documents, including the Priority-Based Budgeting framework, provided important context for informed decision-making. This collaborative process culminated in strategic planning workshops with both the Board of Supervisors and department leaders, ensuring alignment and shared ownership of the county's future direction.

By prioritizing open dialogue and stakeholder engagement, this plan represents a collective vision for a strong, sustainable, and forward-thinking Winnebago County.



A STRATEGIC, INFORMED, AND INTEGRATED PROCESS

Winnebago County plans to utilize a structured strategic planning and budgeting process based on clear annual milestones to align long-term objectives with practical implementation and resource management.



Four-Year Strategic Plan: The Board of Supervisors will develop a four-year strategic plan, outlining priorities that align with the county's comprehensive land use plan.

Annual Workshop: Annually, the Board of Supervisors and the County Executive will meet to review the progress and prioritize specific objectives from the strategic plan for the following year.

Departmental Work Plans: Departments will create annual work plans directly aligned with the priorities set during the workshop to ensure consistency and accountability.

Priority-Based Budgeting: Winnebago County will utilize priority-based budgeting to guide its budgeting process and transparently evaluate and allocate resources towards programs most effectively supporting strategic goals and community outcomes.

This integrated approach ensures clarity, efficiency, and responsiveness to community needs, reinforcing accountability and a strategic focus throughout county operations.

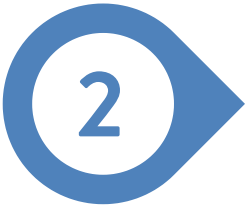


2025-2029 STRATEGIC PILLARS



TRANSPORTATION

Winnebago County will support an integrated, accessible, and sustainable transportation network that connects communities, supports economic development, and ensures safety for all.



HOUSING

Winnebago County will support the development of diverse housing to meet the needs of its growing and changing population.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Winnebago County is committed to fostering a thriving business climate that drives economic growth, supports innovation, and attracts long-term investment.



EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

Winnebago County will operate a streamlined, transparent, and modernized government that effectively serves its residents and businesses.



QUALITY OF LIFE

Winnebago County will foster a vibrant community by preserving natural resources, expanding recreational opportunities, and supporting cultural and social well-being.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 1:

TRANSPORTATION

Winnebago County is dedicated to developing a comprehensive and reliable transportation network that enhances mobility, strengthens the local economy, and connects communities. Well-maintained roads, accessible transit options, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure are essential for supporting commerce and improving residents' daily lives. By investing in innovative and sustainable transportation solutions, the County is preparing for future growth while ensuring access to essential services

GOAL 1: ENHANCE COUNTY-WIDE CONNECTIVITY

Develop a comprehensive and connected transportation network that links municipalities, businesses, and key services while addressing gaps in transportation access.

- **Conduct a County-Wide Transportation Audit:** Assess existing infrastructure, public transit, and connectivity gaps to prioritize investments and improvements.
- **Develop a Funding and Partnership Strategy:** Identify and secure additional funding sources for transportation projects, including public-private partnerships and grants.
- **Prioritize Multi-Community Connectivity:** Work with local and regional partners to strengthen regional transportation links between municipalities.
- **Increase Public Awareness and Engagement:** Promote multi-modal transportation options through education campaigns and community outreach.

GOAL 2: INVEST IN FUTURE-READY INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure transportation infrastructure investments are designed for long-term sustainability, adaptability, and innovation to meet evolving community needs and technological advancements.

- **Explore Smart and Emerging Transit Solutions:** Evaluate innovative and sustainable transportation options to enhance connectivity, accessibility, and regional mobility.
- **Improve Digital and Physical Navigation Tools:** Upgrade tools and systems like GIS to provide seamless access to information, improve user experience, and support efficient travel throughout the county.

GOAL 3: MAINTAIN & ENHANCE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Implement proactive maintenance strategies and asset management plans to preserve and improve the condition, safety, and efficiency of transportation infrastructure and systems.

- **Continue Investing in Road and Trail Maintenance:** Maintain roadways, walking paths, and trail networks for safety and longevity.
- **Strengthen Transportation Asset Management:** Implement data-driven maintenance plans, including Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) monitoring and GIS mapping.
- **Improve Safety and Response Times:** Ensure road and transit infrastructure supports efficient emergency response times for law enforcement, EMS, and fire services.

GOAL 4: ENHANCE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY FOR ALL USERS

Enhance Transportation Safety for All Users: Ensure a safe, reliable, and well-maintained transportation network that prioritizes the well-being of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists while reducing traffic-related risks and improving emergency response capabilities.

- **Improve Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety:** Work with municipalities to implement safer crosswalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian pathways at high-traffic areas and roundabouts.
- **Strengthen Emergency Preparedness and Response:** Improve road network planning to ensure timely emergency response, including fire, EMS, and law enforcement access.

DEFINING SUCCESS

Success in transportation means that residents and businesses can move safely and efficiently throughout the county. Roads and bridges are well-maintained, reliable, and accessible to all. Investments in pedestrian and bike infrastructure create a safer, more connected community. Emergency response times improve as infrastructure supports law enforcement, EMS, and fire services.

- **Road & Bridge Quality Ratings:** Track PASER scores to ensure infrastructure is well-maintained.
- **Emergency Response Accessibility:** Track law enforcement, EMS, and fire response times, particularly in rural areas.
- **Highway Master Plan Implementation:** Track percentage of transportation infrastructure projects completed in alignment with priorities identified in the County's Highway Master Plan.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 2:

HOUSING

A diverse and accessible housing market is fundamental to the county's economic vitality and overall quality of life. Winnebago County is committed to ensuring that residents have access to a variety of quality housing options that support a range of income levels and lifestyles. By streamlining development processes and promoting innovative housing solutions, the county will cultivate strong communities and provide opportunities for residents to establish long-term roots in the county.

GOAL 1: ENSURING HOUSING FOR ALL

Create vibrant communities so residents of all income levels and backgrounds have access to safe, accessible housing options.

- **Conduct a Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment:** Evaluate current and future housing demands by analyzing data on affordability, availability, and population trends to inform strategic planning.
- **Develop a Strategic Housing Implementation Plan:** Use findings from the housing assessment to guide targeted investments and policy changes that align with community needs.
- **Streamline Housing Development Processes:** Reduce regulatory barriers to encourage new development aligned with identified needs.

GOAL 2: CULTIVATE COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR HOUSING INITIATIVES

Build a culture of inclusivity by promoting the benefits of diverse housing opportunities and ensuring that all residents feel a sense of belonging.

- **Combat Negative Perceptions of Housing Options:** Educate the public about the economic and social benefits of diverse housing.
- **Encourage Public-Private Housing Partnerships:** Work with municipalities, developers, nonprofits, and local agencies to implement innovative housing solutions.
- **Increase Access to Housing Support Services:** Expand homelessness prevention programs and tenant assistance resources.

DEFINING SUCCESS

Winnebago County will know it is making a difference in housing when a greater variety of housing options are available for all income levels, homeownership becomes more attainable, and homelessness is rare and brief. Partnerships with developers, nonprofits, and municipalities ensure that affordable and workforce housing is being built where it is needed. Rental costs stabilize, and housing development processes are streamlined, making it easier to meet growing demand.

- **Housing Affordability:** Measure the availability of housing at different price points throughout the county.
- **New Housing Development:** Track the number of new housing units built, including affordable and workforce housing.
- **Homelessness Rate:** Monitor the number of individuals experiencing homelessness and their time to stable housing.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 3:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A thriving business climate is essential to economic growth, job creation, and community prosperity. Winnebago County is dedicated to fostering an environment where businesses can succeed, entrepreneurs can innovate, and industries can expand. By streamlining regulatory processes, enhancing workforce development initiatives, and strengthening economic partnerships, the county will position itself as a premier destination for business investment and long-term growth.

GOAL 1: POSITION WINNEBAGO COUNTY AS AN ECONOMIC LEADER

Showcase the county's strengths as a hub for business, entrepreneurship, and workforce development, making it a premier destination for investment.

- **Implement a Targeted Business Marketing Campaign:** Partner with economic development organizations to promote Winnebago County as a prime location for business investment, highlighting its workforce, infrastructure, and quality of life advantages.

GOAL 2: CREATE AN ECOSYSTEM FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

Develop a supportive business environment that nurtures new ventures, strengthens existing industries, and fuels long-term economic vitality.

- **Expand Childcare Access:** Support childcare initiatives to improve workforce participation and assist working families.
- **Invest in Infrastructure to Support Business Growth:** Work with community partners to expand broadband access and improve transportation connectivity for businesses.
- **Develop Policies to Encourage Business Growth and Investment:** Streamline regulations and develop policies that support business expansion, entrepreneurship, and long-term economic sustainability.
- **Leverage Waterfront and Natural Assets for Economic Growth:** Capitalize on Winnebago County's waterfront and natural resources to enhance tourism, attract investment, and elevate the quality of life for residents and visitors.

GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS FOR GROWTH

Leverage relationships with businesses, state agencies, and regional partners to drive economic opportunity and create a thriving marketplace.

- **Expand Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborate with local businesses, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and industry leaders to foster innovation, workforce development, and investment opportunities.
- **Enhance Collaboration with State and Regional Agencies:** Partner with state economic development offices, regional planning commissions, and workforce programs to align initiatives and maximize funding opportunities.
- **Facilitate Cross-Community Economic Development Initiatives:** Work with municipalities to develop regional strategies for business attraction, infrastructure investment, and workforce mobility.

DEFINING SUCCESS

Economic success is reflected in a thriving and diverse business community where entrepreneurs, small businesses, and major employers all find opportunities to grow. The county attracts new businesses while retaining and expanding existing ones. Job opportunities increase, median incomes rise, and commercial spaces are actively utilized. Waterfront and natural assets are leveraged for economic and recreational purposes, enhancing tourism and quality of life.

- **New Business Growth:** Track the number of new business registrations annually.
- **Employment & Workforce Participation:** Monitor unemployment rates and job creation trends.
- **Median Household Income:** Measure changes in income levels to assess economic stability.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 4:

EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

Winnebago County is committed to fostering a responsive, transparent, and forward-thinking government that efficiently serves its residents. By modernizing operations, embracing technological advancements, and strengthening leadership, the county will enhance public trust and improve service delivery. A well-functioning government ensures that resources are used effectively, policies remain relevant, and there are opportunities for citizens to actively engage in the governance process.

GOAL 1: ENHANCE GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY & ENGAGEMENT

Foster trust and accountability through open communication and public engagement processes.

- **Expand Public Communication and Outreach Efforts:** Implement a strategic approach to public communication that ensures timely, transparent, and accessible updates on county initiatives and decisions through digital platforms, community engagement efforts, and targeted outreach strategies.
- **Increase Public Participation:** Utilize engagement opportunities like citizen surveys, advisory boards, town hall meetings, and feedback forums to encourage and facilitate input.

GOAL 2: MODERNIZE OPERATIONS & SERVICES

Foster a dynamic and forward-thinking government that embraces innovation, adapts to changing needs, and enhances the overall experience for residents and businesses.

- **Expand Digital Government Services:** Continue to implement online platforms for key county services to improve efficiency and accessibility.
- **Improve Customer Service Across County Departments:** Establish clear service standards, training programs, and feedback mechanisms to ensure high-quality interactions with residents.
- **Leverage Technology for Process Efficiency:** Adopt automation, data analytics, and modern software solutions to streamline workflows and reduce redundancy.
- **Foster a Culture of Innovation:** Promote cross-department collaboration to drive efficiency, embrace new ideas, and continuously improve county operations.

GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Optimize the structure of the Board of Supervisors to foster collaboration, accountability, and effective decision-making.

- **Evaluate and Optimize the Board of Supervisors' Structure:** Assess the size and organization of the Board to determine if changes could improve efficiency and decision-making.
- **Implement Comprehensive Training for Elected Officials:** Develop ongoing education programs on governance best practices, fiscal responsibility, and strategic leadership.
- **Enhance Coordination Between the Board, County Executive, and Staff:** Establish clearer roles, communication channels, and decision-making protocols to align priorities.
- **Develop a Leadership Pipeline for Local Government:** Create mentorship programs, leadership academies, and youth engagement initiatives to encourage civic participation and succession planning.

GOAL 4: ENSURE RESPONSIBLE FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Uphold a commitment to financial stewardship by aligning resources with community priorities, ensuring long-term sustainability, and maximizing public value.

- **Implement Priority-Based Budgeting (PBB) Countywide:** Fully integrate PBB into financial planning to ensure tax dollars are allocated based on community needs and impact.
- **Expand Public Awareness of County Finances:** Enhance transparency and accessibility of financial information to help residents better understand county budget decisions and priorities.
- **Pursue Diversified Revenue Sources:** Reduce reliance on property taxes by identifying grants, public-private partnerships, and innovative funding mechanisms to support county services.
- **Strengthen Internal Financial Controls:** Enhance auditing procedures, financial reporting transparency, and accountability measures to prevent waste and inefficiency.



GOAL 5: OPTIMIZE COUNTY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Create a well-planned and future-ready built environment that enhances accessibility, efficiency, and the overall quality of public services.

- **Evaluate County Facilities for Efficiency and Accessibility:** Conduct a comprehensive assessment of county buildings to evaluate space needs, maintenance priorities, and modernization opportunities, while exploring the potential for consolidating services into centralized hubs to improve efficiency and accessibility.
- **Improve Energy Efficiency & Sustainability in Public Buildings:** Implement energy-efficient upgrades, explore renewable energy options, and promote sustainable design in future projects.
- **Enhance Public Safety and Accessibility in Government Facilities:** Upgrade security systems, ADA compliance, and emergency preparedness measures in all county-owned buildings.
- **Align Infrastructure Investments with Future Growth Needs:** Ensure that facility planning and infrastructure upgrades anticipate population growth and evolving community needs.

DEFINING SUCCESS

A well-run government is one that delivers high-quality services efficiently and transparently. Success is demonstrated by residents having easy access to county services, decision-making being data-driven and inclusive, and the county staying fiscally responsible while continuing to invest in priority areas. Departments operate without redundancy, government services are modernized and accessible, and strategic planning guides long-term improvements.

- **Budget Adherence & Efficiency:** Track the percentage of departments operating within allocated budgets.
- **Public Satisfaction with Government Services:** Conduct surveys to assess resident satisfaction with county services.
- **Service Delivery Timelines:** Monitor the average time taken to process permits, licenses, and other public services.
- **Transparency & Engagement:** Measure public participation in town halls, surveys, and digital platforms.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 5:

QUALITY OF LIFE

Winnebago County is dedicated to enhancing the overall well-being of its residents by investing in recreational opportunities, cultural experiences, and public health initiatives. Access to parks, waterways, and community programs enriches residents' lives and fosters a strong sense of community. By prioritizing environmental sustainability, inclusivity, and public health and wellness, the county will continue to be a desirable place to live, work, and play.

GOAL 1: EXPAND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Invest in parks, trails, and open spaces to enhance outdoor recreation for residents and visitors.

- **Enhance and Expand Trail Networks:** Improve existing trails and create new multi-use paths that connect communities and provide diverse recreation options.
- **Invest in Park and Open Space Development:** Expand and upgrade parks, green spaces, and outdoor amenities to accommodate a growing population and evolving recreational needs.
- **Increase Accessibility to Recreational Facilities:** Ensure parks, trails, and outdoor spaces are inclusive and accessible for individuals of all abilities.
- **Foster Community Engagement in Recreation Planning:** Collaborate with residents and stakeholders to align investments in recreational opportunities with community preferences.

GOAL 2: ENHANCE WATER ACCESS AND CONSERVATION

Promote responsible stewardship of the county's extensive water resources.

- **Improve Public Access to Waterways:** Expand boat launches, fishing areas, and shoreline access to enhance recreational use of lakes and rivers.
- **Protect and Restore Water Quality:** Support conservation efforts, reduce pollution, and implement best practices to maintain clean and healthy water resources.
- **Expand Education and Outreach on Water Stewardship:** Increase awareness of conservation efforts, responsible recreation, and the importance of protecting natural water systems.

GOAL 3: SUPPORT ARTS, CULTURE, AND EVENTS

Encourage community connection through festivals, concerts, recreation opportunities, and cultural initiatives.

- **Expand Public Art and Cultural Programming:** Support initiatives that bring arts and cultural experiences to public spaces and community events.
- **Strengthen Partnerships with Local Arts Organizations:** Collaborate with artists, cultural groups, and businesses to create and sustain vibrant arts programming.
- **Invest in Event Infrastructure and Promotion:** Enhance venues and marketing efforts to attract and support festivals, concerts, and cultural events that bring people together.
- **Ensure Accessibility and Inclusion in Arts and Cultural Events:** Develop programming that reflects the diversity of the community and provides opportunities for all residents to participate.

GOAL 4: PROMOTE WELL-BEING & BELONGING FOR ALL

Invest in public health, recreation, and inclusive spaces to ensure every resident has access to the resources, programs, and environments that support physical, mental, and social well-being

- **Expand Access to Health and Wellness Programs:** Support initiatives that promote mental health, physical activity, and community well-being.
- **Enhance Public Spaces for Social Interaction:** Design parks, plazas, and community hubs that encourage gathering and engagement among residents.
- **Support Housing and Services for Vulnerable Populations:** Partner with organizations to address homelessness, food insecurity, and other social determinants of health.
- **Strengthen Community Partnerships for Public Health:** Collaborate with healthcare providers, nonprofits, and community groups to deliver resources and services where they are needed most.



GOAL 5: ENSURE A SAFE & RESILIENT COMMUNITY

Strengthen public safety, emergency preparedness, and disaster response capabilities through strategic investments, collaborative partnerships, and proactive community engagement.

- **Provide Effective and Efficient Emergency Response:** Ensure timely dispatch of emergency services while optimizing resources to protect lives and property in a cost-effective manner.
- **Strengthen Crime Prevention and Justice Administration:** Utilize best practices in law enforcement, investigation, and diversion programs to reduce crime and enhance community safety.
- **Enhance Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Resilience:** Improve coordination among public safety agencies, local government, and community partners to ensure a swift and effective response to emergencies and disasters.
- **Integrate Public Health and Social Services into Community Safety Efforts:** Collaborate with healthcare providers, nonprofits, and housing organizations to expand mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and housing support, reducing the factors that contribute to crime and emergency response demands.

DEFINING SUCCESS

Winnebago County's success in quality of life is measured by thriving parks, cultural events, and recreation opportunities that draw residents and visitors alike. Environmental quality improves, with cleaner air, water, and protected natural spaces. Public health outcomes trend positively, with better mental health support, increased physical activity, and fewer people experiencing food insecurity or homelessness. The county is a place where people choose to live, work, and invest because of its vibrant community and welcoming environment.

- **Recreational Facility Usage:** Track attendance at parks, trails, and community programs.
- **Public Health Indicators:** Monitor trends in mental health, chronic disease rates, and physical activity levels.
- **Environmental Quality Measures:** Assess water quality indices to track conservation efforts.
- **Community Engagement:** Measure participation in local events, arts programs, and civic activities.
- **Public Safety Response Time:** Average response time for emergency calls received.





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