



Marathon County Strategic Plan 2020 ANNUAL UPDATE



MEASURING OUR PROGRESS...

Welcome! We'd like to share with you our efforts and successes in 2019 to become the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin.

In 2018, the Marathon County Board of Supervisors embraced a transformative community-wide planning document by adopting the 2018–2022 Strategic Plan. This multi-department and agency effort, led by the County Board Vice-Chair and supported by community partnerships, served as a catalyst to strive to attain the goals and objectives identified in the Plan.

In order to fully leverage the impact of the Strategic Plan, the Annual Update highlights partnerships built and investments made in community resources. This Update also measures our progress in improving the quality of life for our residents and creating a more efficient government.

Marathon County is dedicated to aligning County resources to meet the needs of the community and our residents in order to become the most vibrant county in the state, where people prefer to live, work, visit, and do business.

2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TOPICS



SELECT A TOPIC TO CONTINUE ►



Health is not merely restored at the doctor's office, but instead starts in our families, in our schools and workplaces, in our playgrounds and parks, and in the air we breathe and the water we drink. We recognize that health and well-being are lifelong pursuits and that our communities can support positive, healthy lifestyles.



OBJECTIVE 3.3: Ensure that every child makes it to adulthood with health, stability, and growth opportunities.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 3.7: Ensure that every person has local access to effective mental health treatment.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 5.2: Promote sound land use decisions that conserve and preserve natural resources in decisions with economic development and growth.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 6.3: Protect and enhance the quantity and quality of potable groundwater and potable surface water supplies.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

Strategy A

Develop a plan to reduce childhood trauma.

Strategy B

Create a trauma-informed care system.

Strategy C

Develop a comprehensive risk-based assessment to address juvenile offenders to reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

Strategy D

Develop a framework for building resilient children.

Strategy E

The County Board will approve a plan that creates a trauma-informed response system for services we provide.



OBJECTIVE 3.3: Ensure that every child makes it to adulthood with health, stability, and growth opportunities.

By December 31, 2022, there will be an increase in high school graduation rates from 92% to 95% in Marathon County.

Baseline: 92% in 2015-2016
Source: 2017-2019 LIFE Report

Outcome Measure 1

By December 31, 2022, there will be a reduction in the number of out-of-home care days experienced by children in Marathon County.

Baseline: 136 in 2015; 184 in 2016; 200 in 2017 (year placement equivalent)
Source: Marathon County Department of Social Services

Outcome Measure 2

By December 31, 2019, at least one practice change will be implemented that is aimed at decreasing the number of young adults (age 17-21) in Marathon County jail who were the subject of a court order for services as a child.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: Marathon County Department of Social Services

Outcome Measure 3

Departments Contributing

- Clerk of Courts
- County Administration
- Corporation Counsel
- Health
- Library
- Parks, Recreation & Forestry
- Sheriff's Office
- Social Services
- UW-Extension

OBJECTIVE 3.3: PROGRESS

HOME

HEALTHIEST

NEXT PROGRESS ►

Actions taken to ensure that every child makes it to adulthood with health, stability, and growth opportunities:

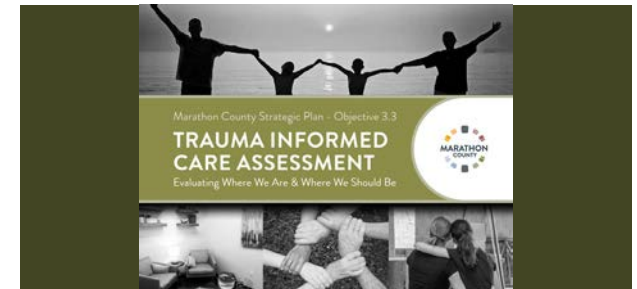
- **Implemented the School-Based Mental Health Consortium.** The Marathon County Health Department provides support and professional development for school staff to aid efforts to improve children’s mental well-being via an Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin endowment. This was instrumental in providing on-site mental health counseling to students in all Marathon County public school districts as of March 2018 (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-mhc>). Learn more through the 2017–2018 Impact Report (see: <http://healthymarathoncounty.org/priority-areas/behavioral-health>) and the Kids in Crisis Series (see: <https://wausaudailyherald.com/series/kidsincrisis>), which explore the causes of teen suicide and how to help youth.
- **Offered Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) Training:** STS is a form of stress that results from indirect exposure to trauma (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-sts>). Court personnel and employees in the Department of Social Services, Medical Examiner’s Office, Health Department, and the Sheriff’s Office are most vulnerable to STS. Staff receive a brief overview of STS at the new employee orientation and have the opportunity to learn more at an hour-long training provided annually. Since Fall 2018, 250 County staff participated in a three-hour training session on STS.
- **Supported LENA Start Marathon County.** Language Environment Analysis (LENA) technology is the industry standard for measuring talk with children ages birth to three years—a critical factor in early brain development (see: <https://lenastartmc.org>). Marathon County Public Library collaborated with more than a dozen partners and developed a sustainable LENA program (see: <https://mcpl.us/lena>). Since 2018, 11 groups—consisting of 109 families and 6 sites—have concluded with an 81% graduation rate (see: <https://www.lena.org?p=4728>).
- **Developed the Crisis Assessment Response Team (CART).** The purpose of CART is to interact with individuals who are in some form of crisis (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-cta>). The interactions build rapport, and the team works with other agencies to care for and maintain the person’s well-being without placing the person in emergency detention or jail. CART includes one Marathon County Sheriff’s Deputy and one Wausau Police Officer teamed with crisis counselors from North Central Health Care (pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-cart>). Prior to CART being implemented, 45% of calls regarding persons in crisis were detained by law enforcement at mental health facilities. In a three-year period ending in 2018, only 14% of the calls resulted in detentions.



CART members Officer David Bertram, Deputy Megan Sowinski, Stacey Rozelle, and Chuck Kerstell.

CONTINUED ►

- **Implemented the Pre-Arrest Diversion Program (PROXY).** The purpose of PROXY is to help guide law enforcement in their decision making at their first point of contact with an offender. The goal of the PROXY is to divert an offender from being arrested and booked into the county jail. The PROXY form can be utilized within the court system to assist in determining bond or decisions on subjecting the offender to another diversion or treatment program. This is a collaborative program between the Marathon County District Attorney's Office, the Marathon County Justice Coordinator, the Circuit Courts of Marathon County, and local law enforcement. Domestic-related violations, crimes against persons, most felony violations and crimes of terrorism do not fall under the PROXY.
- **Established the Handle with Care program.** The Marathon County Department of Social Services partnered with law enforcement and the Wausau School District to establish the Handle with Care program (*see: <https://wpr.org/node/1458891>*). The purpose of the initiative is to notify a child's educational setting of children who have been exposed to traumatic life events and to incorporate a trauma-informed approach in schools. Marathon County Corporation Counsel assisted in the completion of a Memorandum of Understanding to address confidentiality. Studies show 90% of children do well in a supportive school environment, while 10% need to be referred to trauma-informed therapy.
- **Partnered to deliver the Parent and Student Support (PASS) program.** PASS is an intervention program for youth identified in Grades K–5 who are beginning to exhibit problematic school attendance. The Marathon County Department of Social Services partnered with United Way of Marathon County and Wausau and D. C. Everest school counselors to support students and parents. Without intervention, the youth will likely meet the criteria for truancy and are more likely to remain truant through middle and high school years. To date, 25 children have been served by the PASS program, and participating schools have observed increased attendance.
- **Conducted a Trauma-Informed Care organizational assessment.** As requested by the Health and Human Services Committee, an assessment of trauma-informed care practices within trauma-facing County departments occurred during the last six months of 2019. County Administration led the initiative with support from the Department of Social Services, Health Department, and Office of Corporation Counsel. The goal of the assessment was to provide a framework to the Health and Human Services Committee for its evaluation on recommending a plan that supports Strategy E, Objective 3.3. The final report highlights the level of understanding departments have of trauma-informed practices, programs, and services, and identifies gaps (*see: <https://bit.ly/mc-tic>*).



Strategy A

Develop a continuum of services within a therapeutic community.

Strategy B

Attract and retain qualified treatment providers and behavioral educators.

Strategy C

Develop more mechanisms to ensure access to treatment across the County.

Strategy D

Develop a more comprehensive approach to crisis prevention and serving people (adults and children) in crisis.

Strategy E

Develop comprehensive mental health treatment options for criminal justice populations and others with criminogenic treatment needs.

Strategy F

Conduct a Community Needs Assessment and create a plan to address identified gaps in service.



OBJECTIVE 3.7: Ensure that every person has local access to effective mental health treatment.

By December 31, 2022, Emergency Detentions in Marathon County will decrease by 25%.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: North Central Health Care

Outcome Measure 1

By December 31, 2022, the percentage of LIFE Report community survey respondents who reported not seeing a mental health provider when needed will be less than 15%.

Baseline: 21.5% in 2017
Source: 2017-2019 LIFE Report

Outcome Measure 2

By December 31, 2022, the percentage of high school students in Marathon County who felt so sad or hopeless every day for two or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing usual activities during the 12 months before the survey will be less than 20%.

Baseline: 23.6% in 2017
Source: 2017 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Outcome Measure 3

Departments Contributing

- Clerk of Courts
- County Administration
- Corporation Counsel
- District Attorney
- Emergency Management
- Health
- North Central Health Care
- Sheriff's Office
- Social Services
- Veteran's

OBJECTIVE 3.7: PROGRESS

HOME

HEALTHIEST

NEXT PROGRESS ►

Actions taken to ensure that every person has local access to effective mental health treatment:

- **Expanded North Central Health Care (NCHC) Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling.** This includes:
 - **Lakeside Recovery medically monitored treatment** is a 21-day substance abuse recovery program operated 24 hours a day in a community-based setting (see: <https://www.norcen.org/services/addiction/lakeside-recovery>). This program expanded from a 6- to 14-bed capacity in 2018 and enhanced programming and medication oversight with addition of a psychiatric nurse practitioner.
 - The **Crisis Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF)** is a therapeutic mental health and substance abuse stabilization program operated 24 hours a day in a voluntary setting. In 2018, the number of beds expanded from 6 to 12 (see: <https://www.norcen.org/services/mental-health/residential-services>).
 - **Intensive Outpatient (IOP) and Day Treatment programs** were revitalized in 2018, having 63 patients from Marathon County. IOP provides a group setting for clients who need more intensive substance abuse treatment than typical outpatient services (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-iop>), but who do not meet the level of care needed for Day Treatment. Day Treatment provides a more structured and intensive recovery program and requires a significant amount of support while individuals are obtaining treatment (see: <https://www.norcen.org/services/addiction/substance-abuse-day-treatment>).
 - The **Community Treatment Program** improved and added 24 case management staff to meet increasing client volumes. Individual Placement & Support or Supported Employment is provided to help promote the recovery of people who have a mental illness to find and keep a job and utilize their skills (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-ctp>). The program improved and added 24 case management staff to meet increasing client volumes.
 - In 2018, the **Linkage and Follow-Up Program** was created for individuals on commitment and settlement agreements.
- **Implemented the School-Based Mental Health Consortium.** The Marathon County Health Department provided support and professional development for school staff to aid efforts to improve children's mental well-being via an Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin endowment. This was instrumental in providing on-site mental health counseling to students in all Marathon County public school districts as of March 2018 (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-mhc>). Learn more through the 2017–2018 Impact Report (see: <http://healthymarathoncounty.org/priority-areas/behavioral-health>) and the Kids in Crisis Series (see: <https://wausaudailyherald.com/series/kidsincrisis>), which explores the causes of teen suicide and how to help youth.
- **Continued participating in the Central Wisconsin Psychiatry Residency Program.** NCHC partnered with the Medical College of Wisconsin to provide an inpatient and crisis experience for the Psychiatric Residency Program. In 2018, three new medical residents began their residency with Inpatient and Emergency rotations within the Behavioral Health Services Department. The residency partnership with the Medical College of Wisconsin is in year three, currently having nine residents that are in year one, two, or three of their residency (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-prp>).

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OBJECTIVE 3.7: PROGRESS

CONTINUED

HOME

HEALTHIEST

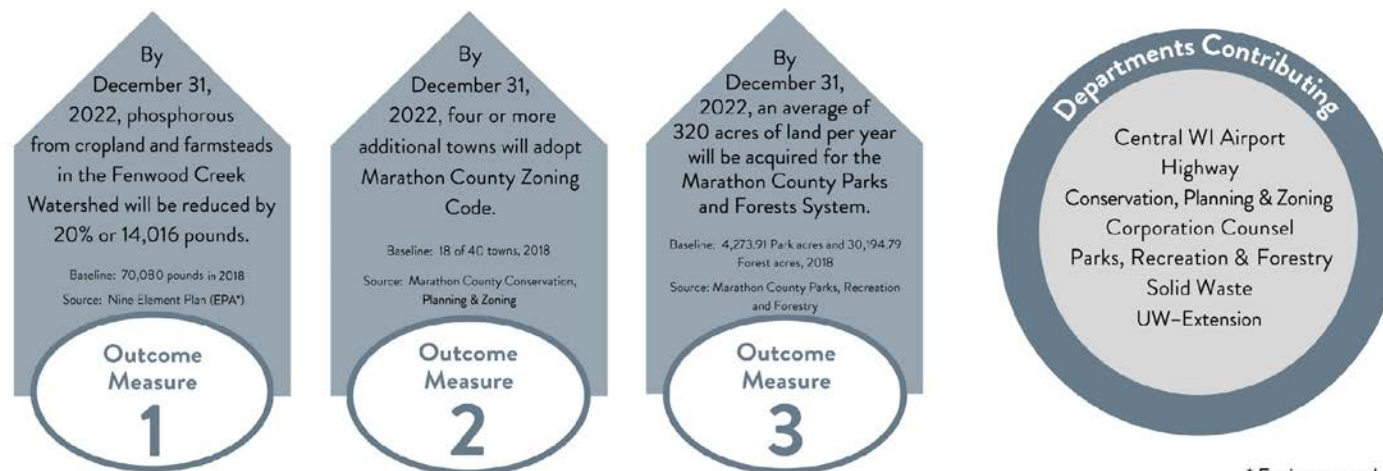
NEXT PROGRESS ▶

- **Developed the Crisis Assessment Response Team (CART).** The purpose of CART is to interact with individuals who are in some form of crisis (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-cta>). The interactions build rapport, and the team works with other agencies to care for and maintain the person's well-being without placing the person in emergency detention or jail. CART includes one Marathon County Sheriff's Deputy and one Wausau Police Officer teamed with crisis counselors from NCHC. Prior to CART being implemented, 45% of calls regarding persons in crisis were detained by law enforcement at mental health facilities. In a three-year period in 2018, only 14% of the calls resulted in detentions.
- **Began the North Central Health Care reconstruction project.** NCHC broke ground on the reconstruction project to expand the Community-Based Residential Facility (CBRF) and to build a Youth Psychiatric Hospital to open in late 2020 (see: <https://www.norcen.org/about-us/renovations>). The project will expand the number of CBRF crisis beds capacity to 16 and youth crisis beds to 8.
- **Secured a grant to create a Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program at the Marathon County Jail.** MAT is an evidence-based decision making initiative that combines behavioral therapy and medications to treat substance abuse. A coordination team was identified and has convened. The grant requires that at least one patient was served in the jail in 2019.





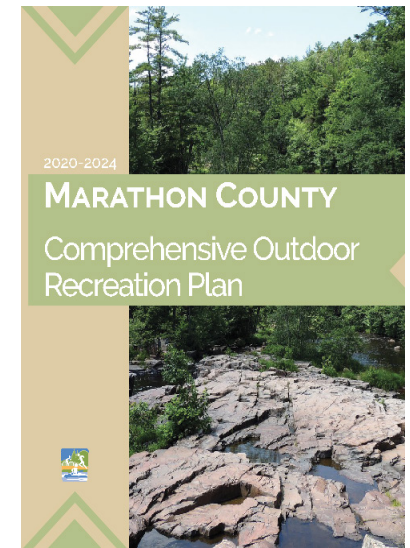
OBJECTIVE 5.2: Promote sound land use decisions that conserve and preserve natural resources in decisions with economic development and growth.



* Environmental Protection Agency

Actions taken to promote sound land use decisions that conserve and preserve natural resources in decisions with economic development and growth:

- **Developed a Metallic Mining Ordinance.** Conservation, Planning & Zoning (CPZ) staff along with Corporation Counsel drafted a zoning code amendment addressing metallic mining, which the County Board enacted in 2018. The zoning code amendment serves to protect the environment for the benefit of all Marathon County citizens (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-cl7>). To date, no applications for mining, exploration, prospecting, or bulk sampling have been received. A Metallic Mining Committee was established by the County to provide leadership to protect human health, safety, and general welfare, as well as long-term social and economic interests (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-mmcc>).
- **Utilized the County Forest and Parkland Acquisition Program.** The County Forest and Parkland Acquisition Program identifies and preserves unique areas and lands for natural resource protection by working with willing sellers through purchase, trade, or gift.
 - Marathon County received \$376,413.00 from the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant for the purchases of County Forest land in 2018 and 2019 (see: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/stewardship/grants>).
 - One property valued at \$170,000.00 was acquired by the Wausau and Marathon County Parks Foundation.
 - The Parks Recreation & Forestry (PRF) Department acquired 3.99 acres of land to add to the Eau Claire Dells Park in 2018 (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-ecd>). It also acquired 40 acres of land in 2018 and 199.84 acres of land in 2019 to add to the Harrison-Hewitt Forest Unit (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-hhfu>).
 - A donation of 79.64 acres in the Town of Easton created a new forest in 2019 named the Miller Forest Unit (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-mfu>).
 - The PRF Department is working on two additional land purchases in 2020 totaling 240 acres for an addition to County forests. The PRF Department also updated the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-orp>) and is currently updating the County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan for adoption in 2020.
- **Planned for landfill expansion.** The Solid Waste Department is planning for an expansion of the Bluebird Ridge Landfill (see: <http://www.marathoncountysolidwaste.org>) (video: <https://youtu.be/u7T5FQEpR98>). The first step is completing feasibility planning to prepare for future disposal needs. This includes a lengthy feasibility study and concludes in a public comment period. Feasibility study work is designed to ensure protection of not only the physical character of the land, but also of endangered species, critical habitat, wetlands, and significant historic/cultural features. Convenient, affordable disposal drives economic development—without options for disposal, businesses cannot grow and thrive (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-swd>).



Strategy A

Update the 2001 Groundwater Protection Plan.

Strategy B

Continue to develop and implement watershed management plans and Targeted Management plans to minimize the impacts on water quality.

Strategy C

Evaluate the County's role in conducting tests and analysis of contaminants in private wells and in evaluating whether such tests should be mandatory instead of voluntary.

Strategy D

Explore alternative methods for snow and ice removal from hard surfaces to reduce the impacts of salt on surface water and groundwater.

Strategy E

Create new partnerships with agencies and organizations to further efforts to protect surface water and groundwater.



OBJECTIVE 6.3: Protect and enhance the quantity and quality of potable groundwater and potable surface water supplies.

By December 31, 2022, the Marathon County Board of Supervisors will adopt a groundwater protection plan that provides stated outcome measures of groundwater quality and quantity.

Baseline: 2001 Groundwater Protection Plan
Source: Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning

Outcome Measure 1

By December 31, 2022, the number of Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) discharging sewage to the ground surface will be reduced by 750 systems or more.

Baseline: 1,250 systems in 2018
Source: Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning

Outcome Measure 2

By December 31, 2021, discharges of animal waste to surface and ground water will be reduced by ensuring all idle animal waste facilities are closed in compliance with ordinance requirements.

Baseline: 40 animal waste facilities
Source: Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning

Outcome Measure 3

Departments Contributing

- Central WI Airport
- Conservation, Planning & Zoning
- Emergency Management
- Health
- Highway
- Parks, Recreation & Forestry
- Solid Waste

OBJECTIVE 6.3: PROGRESS

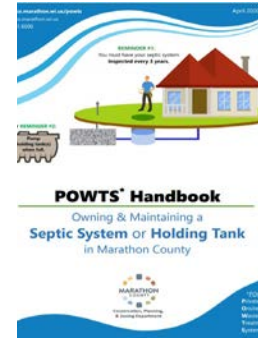
HOME

HEALTHIEST

NEXT PROGRESS ▶

Actions taken to protect and enhance the quantity and quality of potable groundwater and potable surface water supplies:

- **Adopted a private sewage system ordinance.** The ordinance assures the proper siting, design, installation, inspection, and management of Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-powts>), as well as timely repair or replacement of failing systems (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-ch15>). The Conservation, Planning & Zoning (CPZ) Department partnered with MCDEVCO to establish a low-interest loan program for low-income residents and some small businesses in Marathon County to help cover costs to replace systems (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-plp>). In 2018, 29 systems were replaced with approximately 7,000 systems expected to be inspected over the next six years and approximately 1,000 of those systems needing to be replaced.
- **Reduced salt usage.** The Marathon County Highway Department implemented new practices and equipment to reduce salt usage on roads (video: <https://youtu.be/6Gu1sdSmTts>). In fall of 2018, the department installed two high-capacity brine makers along with five blenders to produce a high-volume salt brine and blending brine with additives to lower its effectiveness. All plows have pre-wet systems on them that reduce the loss of salt due to bounce by 30% and that activate the salt so it can melt ice more quickly. Based on a salt use analysis from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Marathon County saw the eight highest reduction in Wisconsin, a 21.24% reduction in usage on state highways, and a savings of \$221,451.00.
- **Protected the Fenwood Creek Watershed.** The Fenwood Creek Watershed drains roughly 39 square miles of predominantly agricultural land in Marathon County (video: <https://youtu.be/UojNblZxqps>). Through the Fenwood Creek Watershed Management Plan, CPZ has worked to improve soil health and to protect water quality within the watershed by working with landowners (pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-fcwmp>). Over the past two years, CPZ received grants from the Wisconsin DNR and the B. A. and Esther Greenheck Foundation to assist with this aim (pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-fcw>). CPZ provides monetary incentives and technical assistance to farmers who adopt specified best management practices. In 2019, the total phosphorus reduction was 5,111 pounds per year due to management practices including reduced tillage, no tillage, cover crops, nutrient management plans, and grass waterways.
- **Collaborated with Eau Pleine Partnership for Integrated Conservation (EPPIC).** A group of stakeholders formed in fall of 2017 to discuss water and soil resource concerns within western Marathon County. EPPIC hopes to create a community where all farmers are using conservation practices to achieve the County's long-term phosphorus goal. EPPIC has received funding through a Wisconsin DNR Lake Grant, the B. A. and Esther Greenheck Foundation, and a Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection Producer-Led grant. Learn more about EPPIC through either of the following videos and their Facebook page (video: <https://facebook.com/522497311843302>) (video: <https://facebook.com/518675075632958>) (see: <https://facebook.com/EauPleinePartnership>).
- **Utilize the Health Department's Water Testing Lab.** The Water Testing Laboratory provides water testing services to residents and municipalities with the goal of safer drinking water (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-wt/>). Among 176 public facilities tested, 164 (93%) water supplies tested safe, while 12 (7%) were found bacteriologically unsafe. The unsafe systems were ordered closed until a safe water supply is identified.





Safety starts in our families, in our schools and workplaces, and in our communities. Safety in Marathon County means living in confidence, without undue fear of crime, disorder, danger, injury, or harm, and knowing that you will receive the right response from the right person or entity if needed. Our communities proactively plan and have systems in place to ensure our safety.



OBJECTIVE 7.1: Provide cost-effective and high-quality public safety services.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 7.2: Mitigate the impacts of heroin and methamphetamine epidemics in Marathon County through evidence-based practices.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 8.7: Strive to provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access throughout the County.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

Strategy

A

Consider the potential to consolidate emergency service agencies.

Strategy

B

Respond to maltreatment allegations and provide protective services for vulnerable populations.

Strategy

C

Report every 2 years on the response time with advice for municipalities (ex: consolidation, realignment, or targeted education).



OBJECTIVE 7.1: Provide cost-effective and high-quality public safety services.

PROGRESS ►

By December 31, 2022, emergency response times for public safety services (law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical services) will decrease.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: Emergency Management & Sheriff's Office

Outcome Measure

1

Departments Contributing

- Central WI Airport
- Corporation Counsel
- County Administration
- Emergency Management
- Finance
- Library
- North Central Health Care
- Sheriff's Office
- Social Services

Actions taken to provide cost-effective and high-quality public safety services:

- Working with the E-911 Committee to revise Marathon County Communications Division's policy on notification or call-outs of fire and ambulance services for an emergency call. The revised procedure specifies that, after a fire or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) request is received in E-911 Dispatch, telecommunicators use the following protocol:
 1. Notify the emergency response agency as they have in the past. That agency is now expected to acknowledge the page for a fire or ambulance response in their jurisdiction.
 2. If the agency does not acknowledge after the first page, dispatch will page again. However, even if a member of the response agency does acknowledge the page, dispatch will page again at two minutes after the initial page to ensure wide notification.
 3. If the page is not acknowledged within four minutes after the first page, an attempt will be made to make radio contact with the agency paged.
 4. If the agency does not acknowledge the two pages or does not go enroute within eight minutes, dispatch will request a response from a different fire or EMS agency.
- Utilized the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) for extra assistance during emergencies (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-mabas>). This brought together many fire departments and other agencies within Marathon County. Those in MABAS have the benefit of using pre-designed run cards when mutual aid is needed within their jurisdiction, as well working under a common operating picture.
- Installed a new Computer-Aided Dispatch and Records Management Software System at the Sheriff's Office and all other law enforcement agencies in Marathon County in November 2018 (see: <https://www.centalsquare.com>). The previous system was 13 years old, did not have a viable Mobile Data Module, and was no longer supported by the vendor. Also, not all law enforcement agencies were on the old system, making information sharing and reporting very difficult. The new Superior Records Management System permits greater interoperability with all law enforcement agencies in Marathon County by tracking response times, call volumes, types of calls, and locations of calls.
 - This data assists with metrics related to potential staff increase needs; reassignment of staff during identified heavy-use call periods; and case management to determine consolidations of services. Superior data collection is also based off of Incident-Based Reporting standards instead of the archaic Uniform Crime Reporting Program. All law enforcement agencies in the country will be required by the Federal government to adopt and implement the Incident-Based Reporting system by 2022.
 - All Marathon County residents were served by this new records system as it made capturing and tracking crimes much more efficient, and it placed the resources we needed right when we needed them. This ultimately saved Marathon County taxpayers money. These statistics are used for grant applications along with reporting State and Federal crime statistics. Gathering these statistics took less time than in the past due to the highly detailed reporting system of Superior.



Strategy A

Develop a comprehensive approach to address use of heroin and meth.

Strategy B

Complete an inventory of programs, services, and community initiatives in relationship to best practices led or supported by Marathon County Government that contribute to mitigating and preventing drug misuse and abuse.

Strategy C

Identify gaps in programs/services and community initiatives and opportunities for public/private partnerships to further efforts to mitigate and prevent drug misuse and abuse.

Strategy D

Identify and advance public policy that would support the mitigation and prevention of drug misuse and abuse among residents of Marathon County.

Strategy E

Identify and track data points to measure the impact of drug misuse and abuse among residents of Marathon County.



OBJECTIVE 7.2: Mitigate the impacts of heroin and methamphetamine epidemics in Marathon County through evidence-based practices.

By March 1, 2019, an outcome measure will be established to measure the quality of life for adults in counseling, mental health, or AOD related treatment programs seen at North Central Health Care.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: North Central Health Care

Outcome Measure 1

By December 31, 2022, 3% or less of high school students in Marathon County will report having taken prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription one or more times in the past 30 days.

Baseline: 4.6% in 2017, 3.8% in 2015
Source: 2017 YRBS* Survey

Outcome Measure 2

By December 31, 2022, the rate of overdose deaths among residents in Marathon County will hold steady or decrease.

Baseline: 9.8 per 100,000 residents/40 deaths, 2014-2016
Source: WISH**

Outcome Measure 3

Departments Contributing

- Clerk of Courts
- Corporation Counsel
- County Administration
- District Attorney
- Health
- North Central Health Care
- Sheriff's Office

* Youth Risk Behavior Survey
** Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health

Actions taken to mitigate the impacts of heroin and methamphetamine epidemics in Marathon County through evidence-based practices:

Treatment

- **Lakeside Recovery** is a medically monitored, 21-day, substance abuse treatment and recovery program, operated 24 hours a day in a community-based setting (see: <https://www.norcen.org/services/addiction/lakeside-recovery>). The program provides observation, medication monitoring, and treatment by a multidisciplinary team under the supervision of a physician. The program expanded from a 6- to 14-bed capacity in 2018 and enhanced its programming and medication oversight with the addition of a psychiatric nurse practitioner to the Behavioral Health Services. As of July 2019, the program switched to the Hazeldon curriculum (considered the gold standard of substance abuse treatment and used for individuals who are dual-diagnosed).
- The **Crisis Community-Based Residential Facility (CBRF)** is a therapeutic mental health and substance abuse stabilization program operated 24 hours a day in a voluntary setting. This 12-bed program provides observation, medication monitoring, basic case management, and planned activities under the supervision of specially trained CBRF staff. In 2018, the number of beds expanded from 6 to 12 beds.
- **Intensive Outpatient (IOP) and Day Treatment** programs were revitalized in 2018, having 63 participants from Marathon County. IOP provides a group setting for clients who need more intensive substance abuse treatment than typical outpatient services, but who do not meet the level of care for Day Treatment. The program focuses on skills needed to be successful in recovery, whether the individual is new to recovery or has a knowledge base but experienced a relapse. Substance Abuse Day Treatment provides a more structured and intensive recovery program and requires a significant amount of support while individuals are obtaining treatment. Substance Abuse Day Treatment utilizes a multidisciplinary approach in treating chemically dependent individuals. Each client is set up with appropriate aftercare treatment with a substance abuse counselor, as well as an introduction to the recovery community.
- Within the **Community Treatment Program**, 24 case management staff were added to meet increasing client numbers and to improve overall quality of service delivery. Individual Placement & Support (IPS) or Supported Employment is provided to help promote the recovery of people who have a mental illness by helping them find and keep jobs that allow them to utilize their skills. Employment is a primary goal of most people with serious mental illness. It has been proven that finding suitable work can help people with mental illness feel empowered, value themselves more, and drastically reduce mental health symptoms. IPS employment specialists offer long-term, ongoing support to employers and their new employee, either on- or off-site. On-site job coaching for orientation, training, or job tasks can be utilized until the employee and employer are both comfortable.



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- **Implemented the Marathon County Drug Recovery Court.**

- Marathon County Drug Treatment Court is operated through a contract with ATTIC Correctional Services and Marathon County Justice Programs (*see: <https://correctionalservices.org>*). The program is grant funded at \$150,000 per year through Wisconsin Department of Justice Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) Grant Funds and a tax levy match of \$50,000. It follows the National Association of Drug Court Professionals' 10 key components and is an evidence-based program.
- The program provides a minimum of 14 months of treatment services, case management, sober housing, drug testing, and community supervision. The Drug Court Team includes judicial participation and representation from justice programs, ATTIC Correctional Services, Wisconsin Probation and Parole, State Public Defenders Office, Marathon County District Attorney's office, Marathon County Sheriff's Office, Marathon County Social Services, City of Wausau Police Department, and Marathon County Corporation Council.
- The Drug Recovery Court Program serves high-risk and high-need drug-dependent individuals facing felony drug-related charges. All participants are admitted into the program as a plea agreement in place of a prison sentence. Priority is given to individuals with children in out-of-home placement.
- Since the program began in March 2018, 32 people have been served and 6 participants have been reunited with their children, affecting a total of 10 children. Three participants are actively working toward reunification with their 5 children. The collaboration of accountability and treatment greatly increases active participation in the recovery process and significantly reduces drug use and further criminal activity.



Harm Reduction

- **Expanded access to naloxone (Narcan) treatment products to law enforcement personnel.**

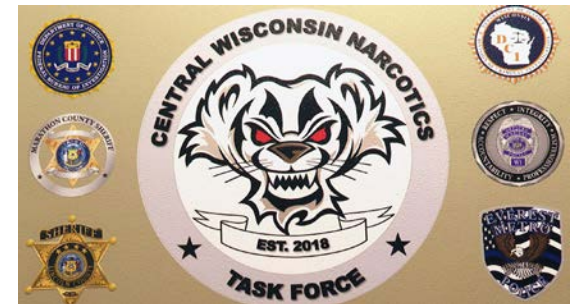
- Collaborative efforts have been made across all forms of County government with the purpose of reducing the number of overdoses resulting in emergency medical care and/or death. Overdose numbers continue to ebb and flow. Naloxone products have been identified nationwide as a lifesaving tool when applied as soon as possible to an individual in an opiate induced overdose state. Local law enforcement partnered with the Wausau Fire Department to secure naloxone products for area patrol cars. Naloxone products have an expiration date, so this partnership continued further in ensuring doses available are not outdated by a swapping process between medical providers and first line responders.
- The availability of naloxone products in the field deployed by area law enforcement has resulted in overdosing individuals to be recovered and saved rather than result in a fatality. Saving a person who made a poor choice in using an opiate-based product permits the opportunity to cause lifestyle changes and potentially assist the subject in transitioning from controlled substance abuse to a healthier lifestyle, which benefits the medical community, law enforcement, and especially the person saved and his or her family members.
- Another reason for law enforcement officers to carry naloxone products is that in the environments they frequent, they could come in contact with, ingest, or inhale opiate-based products, resulting in the officers and/or K9 partner needing a naloxone treatment to survive. Accidental overdoses by either personnel or K9s in the law enforcement community is a frequently occurring event. Providing these products helps keep our community and those who serve in the law enforcement profession safer.

CONTINUED ►

- **Expanded medication drop box locations.**
 - The Marathon County Medication Drop Box Program takes unwanted or expired prescriptions, along with over-the-counter medications intended for people and pets, and disposes of them (*pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-mdb>*). The program provides a safe place to dispose of medications, decreasing the risk for medications being misused, ingested accidentally, or ending up in our groundwater.
 - In 2018, the program expanded by adding two new locations in Edgar and Spencer, bringing the total number of locations to eight in Marathon County. Athens, Mosinee, and Stratford added medication drop box locations in 2019, leading to all municipalities in Marathon County participating in the program.
 - The program collects between one and two tons of medications. 100% of pharmacies in Marathon County promote the locations of the medication drop boxes (*see: <http://aodpartnership.org/resources>*). The program was established in 2010 through a collaboration of the Health Department, Law Enforcement, Solid Waste, and Alcohol and Other Drugs Partnership.

Law Enforcement

- **Expanded the Central Wisconsin Narcotics Task Force (CWNT).**
 - The Marathon County Sheriff's Office developed a specialized unit to investigate controlled substance trafficking in this area in the late 1970s. The team was identified as the Special Investigations Unit (SIU). SIU has evolved from two Sheriff's Office staff to now include staff from the Sheriff's Office, Wausau Police Department, and Everest Metro Police Department. SIU was an effective unit, with cases being prosecuted at the Federal level on a frequent basis. This success resulted in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) wanting to partner with SIU in developing CWNT.
 - CWNT members are from the FBI, Marathon County Sheriff's Office, and Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, and they recently added a member from the Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation. CWNT is headquartered and supervised by the Marathon County Sheriff's Office. The purpose of CWNT is to conduct criminal investigations against individuals trafficking in controlled substances, in particular opiates and methamphetamine in central Wisconsin and also to provide case information to law enforcement at the Federal, State and local levels throughout the nation. Discussions are occurring with other area law enforcement agencies to assign staff to CWNT (*see: <https://bit.ly/mc-cwnt>*).
 - Success is measured by the disruption of controlled substances flowing into this community, the number of traffickers arrested, and the successful prosecution of those persons in the Federal or State system. Local interdiction efforts and information sharing is having national-level implications by identifying traffickers and taking effective action against them before they can impact this community with their illegal trade.
- **Explored options for diversion program expansion for methamphetamine and heroin:**
 - The District Attorney's Office is offering Deferred Entry of Judgment agreements on felony possession charges if the defendant starts Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse treatment in the pretrial stage. The goal is to encourage individuals to obtain treatment as early as possible in the criminal justice system and to reward individuals who are self-motivated to change. The program is collaborating with community partners to make treatment more accessible to this population.



Strategy A

Develop a comprehensive approach to county-wide high-speed internet access, including: fiber, copper, powerline, cellular, Wi-Fi, new radio frequencies, and other emerging technologies.

Strategy B

Promote partnerships between carriers/providers and government through MCDEVCO.*

Strategy C

Develop financial incentives to encourage carriers/providers to commit to helping accomplish this objective in Marathon County.

Strategy D

Establish a dig-once policy for county roadway reconstruction and bridge projects that engages providers in a discussion about whether to include conduit for fiber.

Strategy E

Marathon County Government will invite all carriers providing services in Marathon County to present their current coverage, speeds, and costs.



OBJECTIVE 8.7: Strive to provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access throughout the county.

By December 31, 2019, the number of households with high-speed internet access will increase by 9,800.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: City-County Information Technology Commission

Outcome Measure 1

Departments Contributing

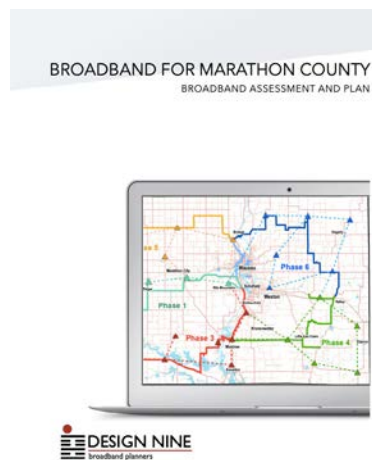
- City-County IT Commission
- County Administration
- Highway
- Library
- Sheriff's Office

* Marathon County Development Corporation

Actions taken to strive to provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access throughout the county:

- Partnered with Frontier on a grant application. The grant would help extend high-speed internet service to approximately 8,900 households.
- Completed a broadband feasibility study. The study provides an analysis of the most cost-effective way to increase high-speed internet access county-wide. The study analyzed infrastructure necessary to expand high-speed internet access and the costs associated with expansion. The study can form a base for any future County or municipal grant applications for State or Federal funding (*pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-bb>*).
- Examined the development of a Dig Once policy. Extension Marathon County assisted the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization to facilitate communication between utility purveyors and local government. Once adopted, a Dig Once policy can lead to a better understanding of utility location and can assist with the coordination of utility and road improvements.
- Established 24-hour Wi-Fi access at all Marathon County Public Library (MCPL) branches. Providing the public with Wi-Fi access from MCPL parking lots after hours was considered an interim measure to facilitate increased internet access in rural areas with poor access (*see: <https://bit.ly/mc-wi>*).

Additional information on the County's activities to increase access to high-speed internet can be found at <http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/InformationTechnology/PlanningforHighSpeedInternet.aspx>.



Marathon County Library Offering Free 24/7 WiFi Access

Thursday, June 13, 2019 7:36 p.m. CDT



Image on the front door of the Marathon County Public Library. Image taken 6/16/2019.

MARATHON COUNTY
City-County I:T. Commission

You are here: [Departments](#) > [Information Technology](#) > [Planning for High Speed Internet](#)

Information Technology

- Working Remotely
- Planning for High Speed Internet

Planning for High Speed Internet

Marathon County's overarching goal is to be the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin. Recognizing that access to broadband is an integral component of County health and prosperity, Marathon County established **Goal 8.7: Strive to provide affordable, reliable, high-speed internet access throughout the County** in the Strategic Plan 2018-2022. It is becoming increasingly clear that access to high-speed internet is a necessity for community and economic development.

Marathon County's consultant has completed the Broadband Assessment Study. The [Full Study](#) and associated [Executive Summary](#) can be viewed.

As part of achieving Goal 8.7 and developing a comprehensive approach for the provision of high speed internet service, the Marathon County Extension, Education, and Development and Infrastructure Committees, issued a [Request for Proposals](#) on April 7, 2019 for preparation of a Broadband Feasibility Study. Once complete, it is anticipated that the Study will provide guidance to Marathon County and its municipalities on the most efficient and cost effective method to develop a countywide high-speed internet network.



Prosperity is not a function of what or how much we possess or consume. Nor is prosperity a function of net worth. Instead, prosperity is realized when our future is marked with opportunity and when we see ourselves as part of a larger community. Every individual can belong, participate, and thrive. Prosperous communities are committed to “one table” where public, non-profit, philanthropic, and business entities come together to focus on people, place, and opportunity.



OBJECTIVE 10.6: Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 10.8: Encourage development and redevelopment of key employment centers in areas that possess strong market potential, provide good transportation access for workers, and promote the efficient movement of goods.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 10.10: Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurial-supportive environment.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 10.12: Maintain infrastructure to support economic growth.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

OBJECTIVE 12.3: Promote cost-effective public services.

[STRATEGIES ►](#)

Strategy
A

Work with the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to ensure a well-trained workforce.

Strategy
B

Seek out additional opportunities to partner with local education providers (secondary and post-secondary).



OBJECTIVE 10.6: Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies.

By December 31, 2022, the current workforce participation rate will increase by 5%.

Baseline: 68.6% in 2018
Source: American Community Survey

Outcome Measure
1

By December 31, 2022, the number of vacant positions within Marathon County will be reduced.

Baseline: 9,255 in 2017
Source: EMSI*

Outcome Measure
2

Departments Contributing

- Conservation, Planning & Zoning
- Corporation Counsel
- County Administration
- Emergency Management
- Library
- Marathon County Development Corporation
- Parks, Recreation & Forestry

* Economic Modeling Specialists International

Actions taken to ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies:

- **Supported the Heavy Metal Manufacturing Tour.** MCDEVCO collaborated with the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to develop and execute this event highlighting heavy manufacturing in Marathon County. Almost 4,000 eighth-grade students in north central Wisconsin had the opportunity to visit two manufacturing facilities, view state-of-the-art technology, and learn about the variety of career opportunities available in the manufacturing industry.
- **Increased workforce diversity and inclusion.** County staff participated in Toward One Wausau and Toward One Wisconsin program development (see: <https://wipps.org/toward-one-wausau>). Toward One Wausau brought together community members from all walks of life to talk openly, listen earnestly, and act in unity to make the greater Wausau area a safe, welcoming, and attractive place for a diverse people. The work of the Toward One Wausau program was featured at the 2019 Toward One Wisconsin Conference.
- **Enhanced Marathon County Government's workplace benefits.** To ensure that Marathon County Government continues to attract and retain a talented and dedicated workforce, the following actions were taken:
 - **Modified internal workforce policies.** The Personal Time Off policy was increased to allow for a maximum of 320 hours, and the maximum comp time accrual was increased to 160 hours. Additionally, several County departments offer telework and/or flexible schedules for positions that lend themselves to these options.
 - **Expanded the County Education Expense Reimbursement Program.** To encourage professional development for all regular full- and part-time Marathon County employees, the expanded program (pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-eeer>) provides financial assistance to eligible employees who take college or technical college courses during their off time to complete an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, or master's degree related to a County position.
- **Funded the Marathon County Early Years Coalition's Family-Friendly Workplace Survey.** The survey was conducted by the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS) and was open to the entire Marathon County workforce (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-eyc>). Survey results will be used to guide how to approach work-life balance in the community and assist County employers in developing strategies to attract and retain workers in our area. The survey was conducted in Spring 2020 and the final report is anticipated to be released in 2020.



Strategy
A

Support efforts to engage the public and private sectors to provide leadership for county economic development efforts.

Strategy
B

Engage local municipalities on how county infrastructure development can contribute to business and industrial park growth.



OBJECTIVE 10.8: Encourage development and redevelopment of key employment centers in areas that possess strong market potential, provide good transportation access for workers, and promote the efficient movement of goods.

By December 31, 2022, utilization of available, vacant business and industrial park space will increase by 5%.

Baseline: 823 unfilled acres in 2017
Source: North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Outcome Measure
1

By December 31, 2022, the number of full-time and part-time employee positions in Marathon County will increase or be maintained.

Baseline: 76,826 in 2017
Source: EMSI*

Outcome Measure
2

Departments Contributing

- Conservation, Planning & Zoning
- Corporation Counsel
- County Administration
- Highway
- Marathon County Development Corporation

* Economic Modeling Specialists International

OBJECTIVE 10.8: PROGRESS

HOME

MOST PROSPEROUS

NEXT PROGRESS ►

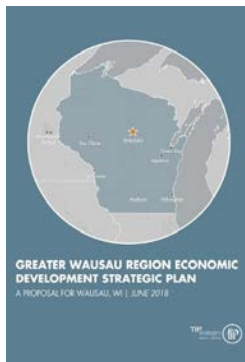
Actions taken to encourage the development and redevelopment of key employment centers in areas that possess strong market potential, provide good transportation access for workers, and promote the efficient movement of goods:

- Supporting inter-organization economic development activities.
 - Partnered with the Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce. Marathon County is a proud member and financial partner with the Wausau Region Chamber of Commerce. The Conservation, Planning & Zoning (CPZ) Director serves on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and assists in decision making for the Chamber of Commerce with various other community stakeholder members.
 - Provided funding, Board membership, and assistance in development of the Greater Wausau Region Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Plan was completed in spring 2019 (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-edp>). As a first step in implementing the Plan, the County supported and provided funding for development of www.greaterwausau.org. The website highlights each community within Marathon County and assists Marathon County employers with talent recruitment.
 - Supported the work of the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Marathon County Development Corporation (MCDEVCO).

The MPO, staffed by CPZ, assisted local communities in receiving \$3.4 million for roadway improvement projects (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-mpo>). These funds were provided by the Federal Surface Transportation Planning Grant program to enhance business opportunities within the Wausau metro area. The MPO also created a new Citizens Transit Advisory Committee to investigate and enhance business opportunities within the metro area by expanding bus services.

Marathon County is both a financial supporter and partner promoting elements of MCDEVCO (see: <http://mcdevco.org>). MCDEVCO facilitates a monthly municipalities meeting to ensure that the municipalities agreement is still in place; that County departments are included in monthly discussions to ensure coordination and collaboration with infrastructure, planning, zoning; and that there is a coordinated approach, plan, and strategy to bring new businesses into the county and a process for locating them throughout the area, with the understanding that all municipalities benefit from additional income generated.

CONTINUED ►



- **Researched economic development opportunities and strategies.**

- **Provided funding for an indoor sports facility feasibility study.** Marathon County, in cooperation with MCDEVCO, Wausau/Central Wisconsin Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Village of Weston retained Victus Advisors to conduct a Market & Financial Feasibility Study for a new multi-purpose sports and entertainment events center for the City of Wausau and Marathon County (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-vasc>). The consulting firm gathered information through local interviews and analysis of local and regional facilities and demand for a multi-purpose venue. The report also included facility amenity suggestions, event and attendance projections, operations and management assessment, and economic and fiscal impact. The report was presented to stakeholders and the public on August 6, 2019.
- **Examined economic development strategies in comparable counties.** The Conservation, Planning & Zoning Department conducted a survey to examine economic development strategies used in comparable counties. The survey was distributed through the Wisconsin Counties Planning Director's Association, with 17 counties responding. The results will help define the potential role for Marathon County regarding economic development considerations.



Strategy A

Respond to changing economic conditions and opportunities through periodic review and updating of economic development strategies, policies, investments, and programs.

Strategy B

Work with MCDEVCO* to support a low-interest loan fund to finance new farmer startups and adoption of new technology by existing farmers.

Strategy C

Enhance awareness of MCDEVCO* as the primary point of contact for business expansion and startup information.



OBJECTIVE 10.10: Create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurial-supportive environment.

By December 31, 2022, the number of businesses in Marathon County will increase.

Baseline: 3,428 business locations in 2017
Source: EMSI**

Outcome Measure 1

By December 31, 2022, 90% of businesses that receive assistance from Marathon County Development Corporation will be sustained for 3 years.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: MCDEVCO*

Outcome Measure 2

Departments Contributing

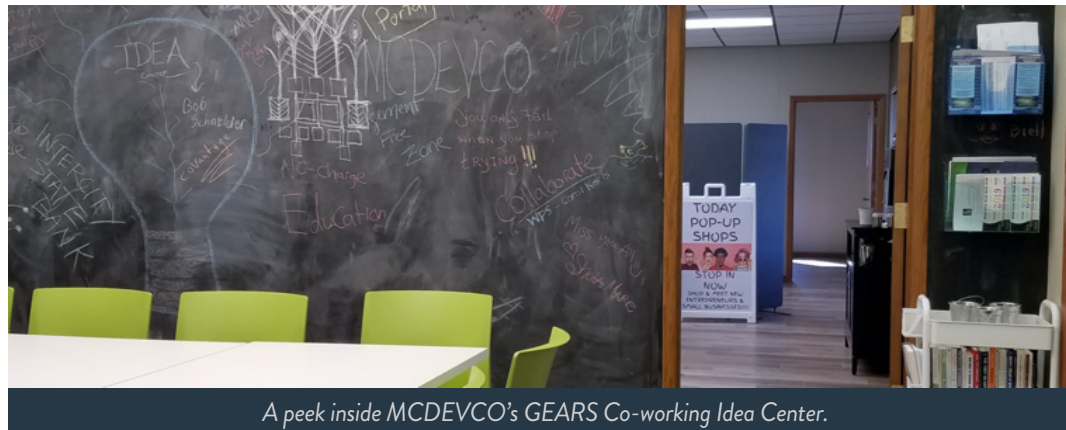
- Central WI Airport Corporation Counsel
- County Administration
- Conservation, Planning & Zoning
- Education & Entrepreneurial Center
- Library
- Marathon County Development Corporation

* Marathon County Development Corporation
** Economic Modeling Specialists International

Actions taken to create an innovative atmosphere to foster an entrepreneurial-supportive environment:

- Built capacity and provided space for innovation through the work of the Marathon County Economic Development Corporation (MCDEVCO) (see: <http://mcdevco.org>).
- Provided educational programs for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and businesses expanding or relocating to Marathon County to stimulate and grow the economy.
- Developed the Women Mentoring Women program and Women’s Small Business Month in October in recognition of the social impact of women entrepreneurs.
- Ran 28 no-charge educational programs with the assistance of volunteers from the Marathon County business community. Between 2017 and 2019, 335 entrepreneurs and businesspeople attended the programs, with an average age between 33 and 55 and with 34% of participants from a low or moderate income level.
- Provided one-on-one mentorship to 120 entrepreneurs to assist them with obtaining funding, education gaps, finances, and business plan development.
- Opened a co-working center—GEARS—for entrepreneurs, independent contractors, small businesses, and remote workers (see: <http://mcdevco.org/gears-center>). This state-of-the-art co-working environment aims to spur new business startups and to provide a space for like-minded people to collaborate, connect, and create.

[CONTINUED ►](#)



A peek inside MCDEVCO's GEARS Co-working Idea Center.

OBJECTIVE 10.10: PROGRESS

CONTINUED

HOME

MOST PROSPEROUS

NEXT PROGRESS ▶

- Supported the development of a low-interest loan fund to finance new farmer startups and adoption of new technology by existing farmers by contacting all Marathon County financial institutions.
- Scheduled a training session about the value of GAP financing, a working partnership with MCDEVCO, and the economic impact to the County, while continuing to collaborate with the Small Business Administration and Central Wisconsin Economic Development Fund (as MCDEVCO sits on its Board).
- Enhance awareness of MCDEVCO as the primary point of contact for business expansion and startup information through collaborations with the Entrepreneurial Education Center, Centergy, and Municipalities, and by speaking to business groups/networking, attending conferences and one-on-one meetings.
- Formed a new loan program with the Marathon County Conservation, Planning & Zoning (CPZ) Department to help offset costs associated with replacing a failing Private On-site Wastewater Treatment System (POWTS). The development of the POWTS Loan Program included collaborating and meeting with the CPZ Department, attending committee and council meetings, researching the program and qualifications, developing a loan application and process, and designing a brochure and handout.
- Enhanced awareness of MCDEVCO as the primary point of contact for business expansion and startup information by launching new website in April 2019 and building MCDEVCO's social media presence (see: <https://facebook.com/MCDEVCO>).



Strategy A

Maintain a safe highway network to provide access to all communities in the County.

Strategy B

Support technology in the workplace, particularly through access to broadband.

Strategy C

Work with municipalities to maintain a competitive inventory of serviced industrial land and office sites.

Strategy D

Provide appropriate access for trucks and employees for all business and industrial park sites.

Strategy E

Pursue federal & state funding to develop a county-wide revolving loan fund to assist communities with cleanup of contaminated sites.

Strategy F

Secure state and federal funding to maintain infrastructure and support economic growth.



OBJECTIVE 10.12: Maintain infrastructure to support economic growth.

Through December 31, 2022, the county highway overall Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating Score will maintain an average annual rating of 7.0.

Baseline: 7.03 in 2018
Source: Marathon County Highway Department

Outcome Measure 1

By December 31, 2022, the total automobile crash rate will be reduced by 5% in Marathon County to improve traffic flow, efficiency, and safety.

Baseline: New Measure
Source: Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Outcome Measure 2

Departments Contributing

- Central WI Airport
- City-County IT Commission
- Conservation, Planning & Zoning
- County Administration
- Facilities & Capital Management
- Highway

Actions taken to maintain infrastructure to support economic growth:

- Began long-term infrastructure planning.
- Marathon County Highway Department currently maintains 614 miles of roadway on the county trunk highway system (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-hwy>). Their roadway resurfacing and reconstruction projects provided the area with a transportation system that enhances safe traffic flow, eases congestion, and ensures efficient mobility. Such efforts also protect the investment that taxpayers have put into our roadway system by extending pavement life.
- The current financial climate dictates that Marathon County plan for funding roadways to achieve a financially sustainable transportation network for Marathon County. The Marathon County Infrastructure Committee will be developing a long-term sustainability plan to address issues that will include decisions to better serve the department in long term planning. This plan will include future resurfacing and reconstruction projects, as well as expected best-practice maintenance work. The plan aims to determine the level of funding necessary to improve, enhance, and continuously invest in a safe, reliable, accessible, and well-maintained transportation infrastructure.



Internal Policy Changes

- A unified ordinance outlining the use of ATVs and UTVs on Marathon County highways was deployed allowing citizens the opportunity to better connect to existing trails within the county (see: <https://bit.ly/mc-atv>). The Highway Commissioner has worked to identify roads that would be best suitable for safe travel to connect to the current ATV/UTV trail system. Local municipalities have been partners in this venture to better communicate which roads are available for ATV/UTV use.

CONTINUED ►



- Utilized GPS, real-time weather updates, pavement sensors, and snow and ice control technologies.
 - The Marathon County Highway Department increasingly has been using technology pertaining to winter snow and ice control. With the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) technologies like real-time weather and pavement sensors, the department is better informed to make best use management decisions. In addition, there has been a reduction in road salt usage due to new practices, mainly pre-wetting salt prior to being placed on the highway. Pre-wetting reduces the loss of salt due to bounce by 30% and starts the process of melting sooner, as salt needs moisture to activate it. In the fall of 2018, the department installed two high-capacity brine makers along with five blenders, allowing the production of a high volume of salt brine, along with blending the brine with additives to lower the effectiveness of the brine.
 - In 2019 Marathon County successfully applied for and was granted \$200,611 from the State of Wisconsin for these high-capacity brine makers and blenders. Based on a salt-use analysis from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Marathon County saw the eighth highest reduction in the state, a 21.24% reduction in salt usage on State highways (*pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-wmr>*). The reduction equals a savings on the State highways of \$221,451. These numbers are based on a five-year winter severity, meaning it takes into account what we would normally use for the same winter prior to our use of the makers.
- Upgraded to high-speed fiber optic internet at the Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA).
 - This project consisted of installing high-speed fiber internet to replace the airport’s legacy DSL system. This was identified as an opportunity for improvement years ago, but was not available until recently. The need for the project was two-fold: First, to support the operation and management of the major regional airport in Central Wisconsin, and second, to meet or exceed the level of customer amenity expectations of any airport, regardless of size or location. The increase in expense is paid for by airport revenue.
 - Regarding the operation of CWA: Airport management is becoming more internet based. Many services and products are transitioning to a cloud-based platform, easily allowing airports to access the products from any browser. Some of these products require substantial bandwidth to work effectively, a level that DSL could not support. Transitioning to high-speed internet has allowed or will allow us to improve the airport’s training, security functions, work orders, email services, and more.
 - From a customer service standpoint, our slogan and our responsibility is, “Fly CWA, It’s Easier from Here.” When it comes to internet, DSL was not easy. Charge-by-the-minute internet wasn’t easy. Complicated login processes weren’t easy. So we chose to give away completely free, no strings attached, high-speed internet to all of our 250,000+ customers that fly CWA. Business travelers can now video-conference with no interruptions. Families with young children can instantly stream movies. And sports fans can watch live games with no buffering.



Strategy A

Support efforts by local municipalities to establish cooperative service and joint facility arrangements.

Strategy B

Continue to enhance E-911 dispatch services for all police, fire, and EMS* agencies in Marathon County.

Strategy C

Work with local municipalities and other government agencies to explore opportunities to share costs and/or consolidate public services.

Strategy D

Address solid waste management issues on a regional basis, cooperating with other counties.

Strategy E

Implement a plan to increase the number and nature of services accessible to the public online and identify achievable measures to track our progress at engaging the public.



OBJECTIVE 12.3: Promote cost-effective public services.

By December 31, 2020, all county departments will have employees with knowledge of continuous improvement and skills for facilitating improvement.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: Marathon County Administration

Outcome Measure 1

By December 31, 2022, the number of county employees who have completed the Marathon County Leadership Development Program will increase by 25%.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: Marathon County Administration

Outcome Measure 2

By December 31, 2020, a framework will be developed to share services with a local municipality, nearby county, or non-governmental entity to reduce cost and increase effectiveness, and thereafter meet at least once a year to discuss joint ventures.

Baseline: To Be Determined
Source: Marathon County Administration

Outcome Measure 3



* Emergency Medical Services

Actions taken to promote cost-effective public services:

- **Increased online public engagement platform usage.**
 - The Conservation, Planning & Zoning Department implemented a public website for the Uniform Addressing project with progress maps, FAQs, handbooks and support (see: <http://www.mymarathoncountyaddress.org>).
 - Marathon County Government is completing a website redesign and is increasing its social media engagement (see: <https://www.co.marathon.wi.us>).
 - The Wausau and Marathon County Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department consolidated their City and County websites into a single point of access (see: <https://www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/ParksRecreationForestry.aspx>).
- **Bolstered internal focus on continuous improvement.**
 - Marathon County launched IDEAS Academy Training (pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-ideas>). To date, 450 employees in 23 departments have been trained on process improvement basics, and 18 individuals from 8 departments have gone through a more advanced Innovator Training course.
 - Focus was also put on efficient project execution through the automation of a pay stub retrieval process to reduce human effort and processing time. This included implementation of electronic forms, approvals, and reporting.
- **Enhanced intergovernmental cooperation.**
 - A regional forensic lab was created with the Wausau Police, Everest Metro Police, Langlade County Sheriff, Antigo Police, Clark County Sheriff, and Marshfield Police Departments to share resources and reduce wait times.
 - The Employee Health and Wellness Clinic with Aspirus was established to offer convenient, high-quality, and cost-effective care for Marathon County employees (pdf: <https://bit.ly/mc-hwc>).
 - There was discussion on joint management of the pool and fieldhouse facilities with the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point at Wausau (see: <https://www.uwsp.edu/wausau/campus/athletics/Pages/fitness-center.aspx>), as well as discussion on joint park and pool operations with the Village of Weston, Village of Kronenwetter, and City of Schofield. These discussions are ongoing and will be worked on further for the 2021 budget.
 - The Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department met with the Wausau School District and D. C. Everest School District to discuss future joint usage agreements of City/County/School District facilities. It also assisted Youth Soccer in finding a solution to additional synthetic turf fields.





Marathon County's goal is to be the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin.

Marathon County Strategic Plan: 2020 Annual Update

Information about the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan is available online at www.co.marathon.wi.us/Excellence/StrategicPlan.aspx