



# MARATHON COUNTY EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

## AGENDA

Date & Time of Meeting: **Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room, (B105), Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI**

Committee Members: Sara Guild, Chair; Ka Lo, Vice-Chair; Gary Beastro; Becky Buch; Tom Rosenberg; Rick Seefeldt, Chris Voll

**Marathon County Mission Statement:** *Marathon County Government serves people by leading, coordinating, and providing county, regional, and statewide initiatives. It directly or in cooperation with other public and private partners provides services and creates opportunities that make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business. (Last updated: 12-20-05)*

**Committee Mission Statement:** *Provide the leadership for implementation of the Strategic Plan, monitoring outcomes, reviewing and recommending to the County Board all policies related to educational and economic development initiatives of Marathon County.*

The meeting site identified above will be open to the public. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health directives, Marathon County encourages Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee members and the public to attend this meeting remotely. Instead of attendance in person, Committee members and the public may attend this meeting by **telephone conference**. If Committee members or members of the public cannot attend remotely, Marathon County requests that appropriate safety measures, including adequate social distancing, be utilized by all in-person attendees. Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the **telephone conference beginning five (5) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number:**

**Phone #: 1-408-418-9388**

**Access Code: 146-159-7938**

**If you are prompted to provide an "Attendee Identification Number," enter the "#" sign.** No other number is required to participate in the telephone conference. When you enter the telephone conference, **PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!**

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment (15 Minutes)
3. Approval of the Minutes of the January 7, 2021, Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee Meeting
4. **Policy Issues** Discussion and Potential Committee Determination
  - A. Identification of Date for a Public Hearing related to the Marathon County Public Library Board's Recommendation to Seek Membership in the South Central Library System
  - B. UW Extension 2021 Situational Analysis Development Processes (Jason Hausler)
5. **Operational Functions** required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution:
6. **Educational Presentations** and Committee Discussion
  - A. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to give a Presentation on Regional Recovery Work (Carrie Edmondson)
  - B. County Administration to Report on Work of Historical Society in 2020 Pursuant to Budget Allocation
  - C. Reports from Committee-Affiliated Departments and Organizations
    1. UW-Stevens Point Wausau
    2. UW-Madison Division of Extension
    3. Marathon County Public Library
    4. MCDEVCO
7. **Announcements and Future Meetings:**
  - A. Committee Member Announcements and Future Agenda Recommendations
  - B. Future Committee Calendar
    1. Next meeting Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 4:00 pm
8. **Adjourn**

**Any person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation in order to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 715-261-1500 one business day before the meeting.**

**SIGNED** /s/ Sara Guild  
Presiding Officer or Designee

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE

FAXED TO: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages,  
FAXED TO: and Other Media Groups  
FAXED BY: T. Ranallo  
FAXED DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
FAXED TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

BY: T. Ranallo  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
TIME: \_\_\_\_\_



**MARATHON COUNTY  
EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, January 7, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

**Courthouse Assembly Room, (B105), Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI**

<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Sara Guild, Chair	W	
Ka Lo, Vice Chair	W	
Gary Beaström	W	
Becky Buch		excused
Tom Rosenberg	X	
Rick Seefeldt	W	
Chris Voll	W	

**Others Present:** Lance Leonhard, Jason Hake, Kurt Gibbs, Toshia Ranallo

**VIA WEB/Phone:** Vicki Resch, Ralph Illick, Jason Hausler, Lee Webster, Ann Herda-Rapp, John Robinson, and Mike Puener

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

The Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair Guild.

**2. Public Comment:**

Lee Webster indicated the Wausau School District is discussing another referendum for the Spring Election due to ongoing struggles.

**3. Approval of the Minutes** of the November 5, 2020, Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee Meeting

**MOTION BY ROSENBERG, SECOND BY VOLL, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2020, EXTENSION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. Policy Issues Discussion and Potential Committee Determination:** None

**5. Operational Functions required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution:** None

**6. Educational Presentations** and Committee Discussion

**A. Recap of UW Extension programming based on 2018 Situational Analysis**

***Discussion:***

In 2018, Extension embarked on a statewide Developmental Situational Analysis (DSA) to gain an updated understanding on existing and emerging issues and opportunities in the state that Extension programming could address. Additionally, Jason Hausler met with previous Administrator Brad Karger and Chair Gibbs to discuss the needs of the county and identify the top priorities including Broadband, Opioid Crisis, Agriculture (water quality & sustainability Workforce Development (EC Development Emphasis and Criminal Justice Reform. The full presentation can be accessed in the [packet here](#).

Since the time the team completed its work (August 2018), numerous events both locally and nationally impacted the success in some areas as well as diverted resources (local and state) to other areas that were not pressing as that time. Ex. Broadband and Public Health.

During the Spring of 2021, conversations will be had with all Area 7 Extension oversight committees, along with County Board Chairs, County Administrators and Executives. From spring into summer, an area Work-Team will begin to compile data sets/reports/etc. to help complete the picture of the situation in Central Wisconsin. The information generated will help to inform/shape plans of work for 2021-2022. Hausler would like to conduct new interviews to initiate conversations to see if there is a

shift in priorities previously identified. What do we see as the major needs in Marathon County currently and moving forward, what does that look like, and what processes will we need to take?

**Follow Through:**

Discuss processes at the February meeting. Jason will provide additional information and links which will be available in the packet. Chair Guild encouraged the committee to review these documents prior to the meeting.

A Supervisor mentioned concerns about operating during COVID, and the need to revisit priorities to discuss our future after COVID.

Administrator Leonhard reminded the committee of their four strategic plan objectives (8.7, 10.6, 10.8, and 10.10) they will also need to focus on. He also mentioned that county staff is not always available for economic activities and we rely on other entities such as MCDEVCO for that kind of assistance.

**B. 2021 Situational Analysis development discussion**

1. What process will we use to determine the UW Extension programming focus over the next 12-24 months

**Discussion:**

See above.

**Follow Through:**

See above.

**C. Recommendation from the MCPL Task Force to seek membership in the South Central Library System**

1. Task Force Report Vote Results

**Discussion:**

Director Ralph Illick informed the committee that the Public Library Task Force met on December 21, 2020 and a vote was performed in a 3 to 1 favor to move from the WI Valley Library Service and join the South Central Library System. It will be an item for discussion at the next Library Board meeting scheduled for January 25, 2021. If approved, it will eventually make its way back to this committee for discussion and then a recommendation to the full County Board.

Illick indicated they received a list of fifteen reasons to move, which were in Marathon County's best interest. The South Central Library System is better equipped for our size and we would be better served in a larger system.

A Supervisor expressed concerns about cost. Illick indicated, currently they pay for services they do not need such as technical support, because they have been supporting their own computers. The WI Valley Library Service system doesn't have the staff capacity to support our library. The membership would increase by \$100,000 but ultimately the library would save \$200,000 in other staffing that would be supported by the South Central Library System.

Illick shared there will be exterior improvements soon.

**Follow Through:**

No follow through needed. This was for educational purposes only.

**D. Reports from Other Committee-Affiliated Departments and Organizations**

1. UW-Stevens Point Wausau

**Discussion:**

Ann Herda-Rapp gave a brief update: COVID testing of students and staff; the facility could be a spot for vaccinations since they are already set up; an increase of students registering and enrollment of high school students; courses offered are also increasing.

**Follow Through:**

No follow through needed.

2. MCDEVCO

**Discussion:**

Vicki Resch gave a brief overview of the following: Their move to the EEC and MCDEVCO taking over managing the services which fits into their strategic planning of entrepreneurial and business development. This will enable MCDEVCO to work with the new entrepreneur, the GEARS Center, office space and then out into the Marathon County Municipalities to either lease or own their own

buildings for the business.

The kitchen adds another dimension to their educational classes that they will be able to offer that are specific to that business sector.

MCDEVCO is applying to become a CDFI which adds another dimension to their GAP financing for low to middle income and minorities.

MCDEVCO would like to become a women's business center for SBA.

Their Entrepreneurial Leadership Program begins Feb 16 through May 2021. Classes include: lean business, business plan, finances, marketing/advertising, sales taxes, leasing verses purchasing property, how to set up your business, HR, insurance, financial panel, and ending with their dolphin tank presentations.

***Follow Through:***

No follow through needed.

**7. Announcements and Future Meetings:**

A. Committee Member Announcements and Future Agenda Recommendations

B. Future Committee Calendar

1. Next meeting Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 4:00 pm

**8. Adjourn**

There being no further business to discuss, **MOTION BY VOLL, SECOND BY LO TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:45PM MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted by,  
Toshia Ranallo

# Situational Analysis Update

*Marathon County Update—Jan 2021*



Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



# Area 7 Situational Analysis

In 2018, Extension engaged in a statewide situational analysis, led locally within Areas, to determine current and emerging needs in our communities. Once completed, Extension educators, state teams and program leaders would develop strategies to address those needs systematically. Process for gathering data was multilayered:

- Conversations with County Board Chairs/Administrators/Committees
- Examine existing research, reports, assessments within the area (LIFE Report, etc)

# What a couple of years can do

Since the time the team completed its work (August 2018), numerous events—both locally and nationally – have impacted our success in some areas as well as diverted resources (local and state) to other areas that were not pressing at that time. Examples = Broadband & Public Health

# Area Priorities in 2018

<b>Developmental Situational Analysis; UW Cooperative Extension: AREA 7</b>
Quality of workforce (training for available jobs)
Incomes decreasing compared to cost of living (living wage)
Decline in water quality in both surface and groundwater
Mental Health Resources
Diversity of employment sectors/ Quality of jobs in part of Area 7
Lack of planned development to manage impacts of growth (natural resources, quality of life...)
Disconnect with the importance of forestry to Area 7
Access to Broadband
Alcohol and Substance Abuse/Drug epidemic
Need for Healthy Activity and Food Environments (bike paths, food systems)
Positive Health outcomes (preventative screenings, check-ups)
Lack of community resources (organizations and services??) ALICE populations
Access to farmland for small & medium farms (avg size 200-300ac)



# Marathon County's Situation

In 2018, here is what Marathon County (through conversations with County Board members and County Administration) identified as high priorities

- What do you see as major needs in this county currently and moving forward?
  - **Broadband, Opioid Crisis, Agriculture (Water Quality & Sustainability), Workforce Development (EC Development Emphasis), Criminal Justice Reform**

# What have we (Extension) done to address those issues?

- **Broadband**
  - Assist with the Broadband Task Force; Design Nine Study and peripherals; conversations with ISP's, Towns, Villages, etc. regarding Broadband; Broadband policy research; etc.



- **Opioid Crisis/Criminal Justice Reform**

- Horticulture Education focusing on Therapeutic Horticulture

*(reduce recidivism through meaningful outlets while promoting job skills)*

- Gaining Grounds Garden on Grand Ave (working with the jail);

ATTIC Services Partnership; Juvenile Detention Center; etc.

- **Agriculture (Water Quality)**

- Ag: Farm Succession/ Estate Planning; Emerging Agriculture Industries

- WQ: Collaborations with Farmer Led Coalitions (ex. EPPIC) to educate and change Ag Practices; regional efforts throughout the Center Wisconsin River Watershed

# Other Items

- **Healthy Eating/Active Living ( FoodWise Program)**
  - Food Gleaning initiatives; Strong Bodies
- **Youth Development (4-H Program)**
  - Life Skill Development = job skill development

# Area 7 Situational Analysis Update

So – what next?

- During the Spring of 2021, conversations will be had with all Area 7 Extension oversight committees, along with County Board Chairs, County Administrators and Executives.
- From Spring into Summer, an AreaWorkteam will begin to compile and synthesize data sets/reports/etc. to help complete the picture of the situation in Central Wisconsin.
- The information generated from this situational analysis will help to inform/shape colleagues plans of work for 2021-2022.



**So... What's the Situation now and moving forward?**

*What do you see as the major needs in Marathon County currently and moving forward?*



**FINDINGS FROM 2018**  
**SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**

Please contact your Area Extension Director or Jenna Klink ([jenna.klink@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:jenna.klink@ces.uwex.edu)) with any questions or for more detail.

## Process

In 2018, Extension embarked on a statewide Developmental Situational Analysis (DSA) to gain an updated understanding on existing and emerging issues and opportunities in the state that Extension programming could address.

1. In Part 1 of the DSA, 22 Area Work Groups, made up of colleagues, reviewed existing local data and resources and engaged county funding partners<sup>1</sup> (500+ sources reviewed), and then summarized findings into a Developmental Situational Analysis Report per Area.
2. Office of Program Support Services analyzed the 22 reports and developed this coding framework of issues (pages 2-3) that reflects the circumstances across the state as mentioned by Area Work Groups.
3. Current status and next steps: Extension’s Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources and Department of Youth Family & Community Development are forming work groups of colleagues, including specialists, who will review data at the statewide scale to build on this framework. The end goal of this process is to clearly prioritize issues for each of our Extension Institutes; this will aid us in communicating impacts, identifying strategic partnerships and interdisciplinary opportunities, supporting educators, and developing programs. Work groups and program leadership will incorporate statewide trends and data with the local input and data to inform the prioritization of Extension Institute issues/needs.

## Reading the Results

- We have arranged the issues through key themes and sub-themes. The key themes are in bold font, below. Each key theme’s sub-themes are listed under that key theme.
- The language used below in describing these issues is typically not the exact wording used by Area Work Groups, but was derived and synthesized from Area Work Groups’ language. We acknowledge that the wording we chose has its limitations and multiple interpretations, and we see this as a starting point. We made a choice to frame each issue as a “need” which includes more negative language, rather than as an “opportunity,” which would be more positive framing. This is how most work groups described the issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Every Area Extension Director (AED) made an effort to engage county funding partners through a Qualtrics survey, in-person or phone conversation, or during a facilitated process at a committee meeting unless they had very recently asked for similar input and therefore did not ask again, or if it proved difficult to get on committee meeting agendas. Examples of who was engaged include Board Chairs, Administrators, Executives, Administrative Coordinators, and Extension Committees.



<i>Issues as Key Themes</i>	<i>Number of Area Reports mentioning this issue (n=22)</i>
<b>Workforce &amp; Workplace Development</b>	<b>22</b>
Workforce Shortage	21
Insufficient Wages/Low Income Rate	11
Farm Viability and Sustainability	21
<b>Population Health</b>	<b>22</b>
Limited Access to Health Necessities	18
Chronic and Ongoing Health Issues	17
Trauma	15
AODA & Mental Health	18
Environmental Health	2
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>17</b>
Transportation	13
Housing	13
Broadband	6
<b>Environment &amp; Stewardship</b>	<b>16</b>
Natural Resource Economies	7
Poor Water Quality	14
Land Stewardship	8
<b>Social Infrastructure &amp; Systems</b>	<b>22</b>
Life Skills	8
Violence and Aggression	7
Limited Capacity of Organizations	15
Ways to Interact, Cope, Adapt	14
Social Cohesion	15

*Do not interpret the numbers below as “X issue only exists in Y number of areas.”*

*Interpret the numbers instead as “Y number of work groups wrote about X issue in their Summer 2018 report.”*

*For more detailed definitions of the themes, see the table on the following page.*





<i>Issues as Key Themes</i>	<i>Definitions of Issues</i>
<b>Workplace &amp; Workforce Development</b>	<b>Work and working are not viable enough.</b>
Workforce Shortage	There are not enough people to fill jobs.
Insufficient Wages/Low Income Rate	Jobs do not pay enough to make them financially feasible.
Farm Viability and Sustainability	Tight profit margins and a changing operational environment limit farms' fiscal viability.
<b>Population Health</b>	
<b>Population Health</b>	<b>Our residents experience significant mental and physical health challenges related to access, trauma, behaviors, and exposures.</b>
Limited Access to Health Necessities	Residents have limited access to health necessities.
Chronic and Ongoing Health Issues	Many residents do not have appropriate resources to prevent, manage, and heal chronic and ongoing health issues.
Trauma	Many residents suffer from the effects of traumatic experiences.
AODA & Mental Health	Residents suffer from high rates of alcohol and drug use/abuse and mental health conditions.
Environmental Health	Residents are exposed to dangerous environmental toxins via homes, water, and air.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Our infrastructure does not serve Wisconsin residents enough.</b>
Transportation	Transportation is too expensive, failing or unavailable.
Housing	The housing market does not serve all of the population enough.
Broadband	Access to high-speed internet is limited in some areas.
<b>Environment &amp; Stewardship</b>	
<b>Environment &amp; Stewardship</b>	<b>Our environment needs protective management balanced with economic productivity.</b>
Natural Resource Economies	Communities primarily supported with natural resource economies need to protect resources while providing for sustainable livelihoods.
Poor Water Quality	Water quality is poor and causing various health, environmental and economic problems.
Land Stewardship	Private forested lands lack management and farm land requires conservation practices.
<b>Social Infrastructure &amp; Systems</b>	
<b>Social Infrastructure &amp; Systems</b>	<b>Our current social systems are not equitable to all residents, which can disadvantage individuals' and groups' abilities to lead full, productive lives.</b>
Life Skills	Residents that have not had full access to education need the skills and content that help them navigate through social systems.
Violence and Aggression	Violence and the threat of violence sometimes causes and sometimes stems from distress in communities; this distress has or can become intergenerational and/or historical trauma.
Limited Capacity of Organizations	Organizations that provide public services lack the resources needed to provide adequate and equitable services to communities.
Ways to Interact, Cope, Adapt	People must individually navigate, interact with, cope with, and/or adapt to inequitable or otherwise difficult social systems and situations, and many require support in doing so.
Social Cohesion	Misperceptions and misunderstandings between groups can hinder efforts to collectively solve shared problems.

# 2017 – 2020

Health Priorities

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2017-2020



marathon county

[www.marathoncountyhealthpriorities.org](http://www.marathoncountyhealthpriorities.org)

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## OVERVIEW

The 2017-2020 Marathon County Community Health Improvement Plan target population is residents of Marathon County and will guide the work of the Marathon County Health Department, Healthy Marathon County, healthcare organizations, local coalitions, and community organizations. The Marathon County Board of Health and members of the Healthy Marathon County Board of Directors reviewed indicators from the 2015-2017 Marathon County LIFE Report to identify the community health priorities.

The 2017-2020 CHIP was designed to establish common goals for each identified health priority to guide mutually reinforcing activities, utilize best practice strategies, ensure continuous communication, and establish shared measurements with evaluation components.

The Marathon County 2017-2020 CHIP is designed to ensure all residents can understand the importance of addressing the identified community health priorities.

The Action Plan contains goals, objectives, and activities that are tailored specifically to residents of Marathon County, while remaining aligned with the Wisconsin State health improvement plan.

The Marathon County Board of Health and Healthy Marathon County Board of Directors served as the catalyst for establishing the 2017-2020 Marathon County community health priorities. Marathon County Health Department staff served as the planning and facilitation team for the community health improvement planning process.

Since 1993, Wisconsin State Statutes have required communities throughout Wisconsin to develop and implement local health plans to address health conditions affecting their residents. The goal is to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to identify community health priorities and development an implementation plan that aligns with the National Public Health Accreditation standards.

# 2017-2020 Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan Process Timeline



## PHASE 1 JAN-OCT 2015

### Community Health Assessment 2015-2017 Marathon County LIFE Report

Economic Environment, Education, Basic Needs & Support, Health & Wellness, Community Safety, and Environment & Energy subcommittees reviewed data to establish 62 indicators.

Health & Wellness Committee reviewed Healthy People 2020, 2020 Healthiest Wisconsin Goals, and County Health Rankings indicators to establish measures on which to focus.

#### LIFE Subcommittees

- ✓ Identified Progress/Successes
- ✓ Identified Calls-to-Action
- ✓ Consisted of multi-sector individuals



## PHASE 3 JUNE-OCT 2016

### Development of Action Plans

Work groups were formed to develop an action plan to address each of the community health priorities. These work groups were comprised of diverse community partners and content experts for each health priority.

The plan will contain:

- ✓ Long-term and short-term goals
- ✓ Shared measurements
- ✓ Evidence-based improvement strategies
- ✓ Lead and support organizations

Implement



Evaluate

Reassess

## PHASE 2 FEB-MAY 2016



### Identify Community Health Priorities

In consideration of the data from the 2015-2017 LIFE Report and selection criteria developed by the Marathon County Health Department, the Board of Health and representatives from the Healthy Marathon County selected community health priorities through a four-month long facilitated process by Amanda Ostrowski, Public Health Educator.

## PHASE 4 JAN-DEC 2017-2020



### Implement Strategies & Evaluate Efforts

Strategies identified in the 2017-2020 action plans will be carried out through the leadership and backbone support of the Marathon County Healthy Department with support from Healthy Marathon County and community partners. The 2017-2019 LIFE Report is a mid-course review to determine progress in meeting community health priorities.

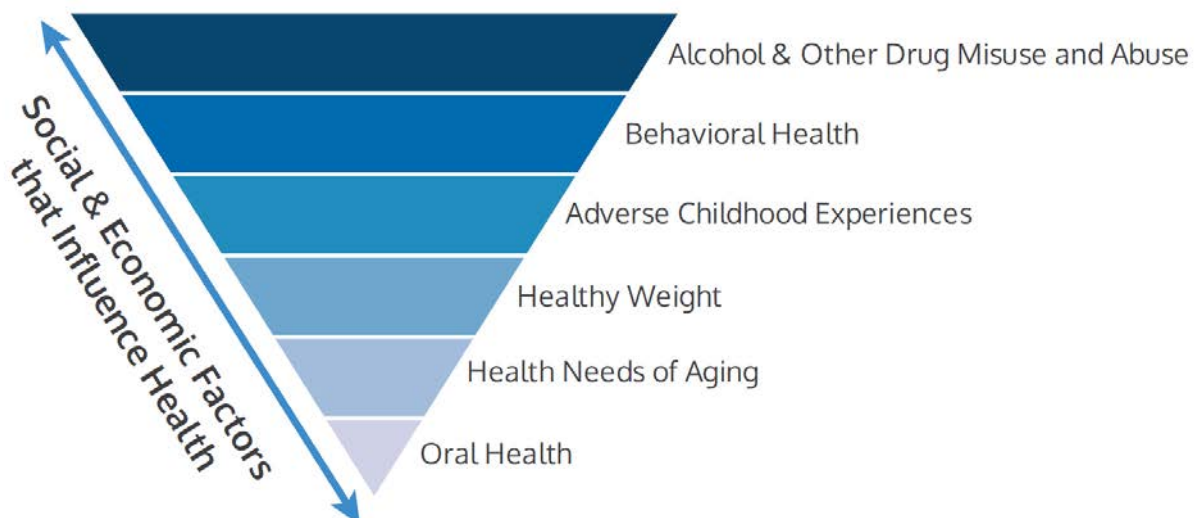
## IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES

In May 2016, the Board of Health and Healthy Marathon County representatives adopted six community health priorities. The six health priorities were ranked using a tiered-approach with priorities ranked by importance from highest to lowest. This tiered-approach demonstrates a need to focus on the top three priorities of Alcohol & Other Drug Misuse and Abuse, Behavioral Health, and Adverse Childhood Experiences, which are not only causing the greatest burden on our community, but also have most community resources with potential for solutions.

The priorities of Healthy Weight, Health Needs of Aging, and Oral Health are still of community importance, but currently lack sufficient community resources and collaboration for long-term, sustainable change.

An important aspect of this tiered-approach is the recognition that social & economic factors influence the entire spectrum of the community health priorities. Social and economic factors are defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age." This includes the broader forces that shape the health of our communities including "economics, social policies, and politics" and factors such as employment, community safety, income, educational attainment, family and social support, as well as racism and other forms of discrimination. Also included is the concept of "health equity", defined as "fairness in the distribution of power and resources and the freedom to achieve healthy outcomes between groups of differing levels of social disadvantage."

## 2017-2020 COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES



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<b>Health Priority</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Alcohol &amp; Other Drug Misuse and Abuse</b>	Creating a culture in communities where alcohol is used responsibly and other drugs (tobacco, prescription, and illicit) are not misused.
<b>Behavioral Health</b>	Promoting well-being by preventing or intervening in mental illness such as depression or anxiety, along with preventing or intervening in substance abuse or other addiction.
<b>Adverse Childhood Experiences</b>	Preventing or reducing the impact of potentially traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and well-being. Their experiences range from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to parental divorce or the incarceration of a parent or guardian.
<b>Healthy Weight</b>	A weight that lowers your risk for health problems. Achievement or maintenance of a health weight includes healthy food choices and physical activity.
<b>Health Needs of Aging</b>	Developing and maintaining optimal mental, social, and physical well-being and function in older adulthood. Includes addressing basic needs, optimizing health and well-being, promoting social/civic engagement, and supporting independence.
<b>Oral Health</b>	Promoting healthy teeth and the entire mouth, such as gums, chewing muscles, palate, tongue, with the goal of being free of tooth decay, gum disease, oral cancer and free of chronic oral pain.

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# Phase 2: Identify Community Health Priorities

## Decision Makers



Board of Health members  
Healthy Marathon County representatives

**FEBRUARY**  
Board of Health Meeting

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0  
1  
6

### CHIP Process Overview

Members were asked to review 2015-2017 LIFE report indicators, the Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, and community health priority selection criteria. Members submitted their initial top 11 community health priorities prior to the March meeting.

#### Meeting Materials

- ✓ CHIP Timeline
- ✓ Community Health Priority Criteria
- ✓ 2015-2017 LIFE Report Indicators

**MARCH**  
Board of Health Meeting

### Initial Selection of Priorities

A facilitated process allowed members to share their top 11 community health priorities, followed by a discussion to review, rank, and prioritize on the top community health priorities.

#### Results:

- + Oral Health
- + Behavioral Health
- + Alcohol and Other Drugs Misuse & Abuse
- + Health Needs of Aging
- + Adverse Childhood Experiences
- + Social & Economic Factors that Influence Health
- + Healthy Weight

**APRIL**  
Board of Health Meeting

### Exploring Action

The group reviewed the definitions for each of the selected health priorities and using the Implementation Plan Action Matrix, determined what type of action can be taken within the next four years.

#### Meeting Materials

- ✓ Implementation Plan Action Matrix

**MAY**  
Board of Health Meeting

### Final Priority Selection

The group reviewed a comparison of health priorities with area hospitals, the State of Wisconsin, and the Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, as well as examined a relationship map that identified connections between all of the top community health priorities for Marathon County. Following discussion, the group finalized the selection of the community health priorities.

#### Meeting Materials

- ✓ Implementation Plan Action Matrix
- ✓ Community Health Priority Relationship Map
- ✓ CHIP Comparison Matrix



## **DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLANS**

Work groups were formed to develop an action plan to address each of community health priorities. These workgroups were comprised on diverse community partners and content experts for each health priority.

Organizations and individuals involved in the work groups for each community health priority were as follows:

### **Facilitator for each work group session:**

Amanda Ostrowski, Marathon County Health Department

### **Alcohol & Other Drug Misuse and Abuse**

- Laura Scudiere, North Central Health Care
- Lee Shipway, Peaceful Solutions Counseling
- Deb Piskoty, Peaceful Solutions Counseling
- Melissa Dotter, Marathon County Alcohol & Other Drug Partnership
- Tracy Peterson, Compass Counseling
- Jackie Newell, Compass Counseling
- Lance Leonhard, Marathon County Administration
- Amanda Gallagher, United Way of Marathon County
- Sara Guild, Wausau Chamber of Commerce
- Corina Norrbom, M.D., Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service
- Judy Burrows, Marathon County Health Department
- Aaron Ruff, Marathon County Health Department

**Transcriber:** Sam Pinzl, Marathon County Health Department

### **Behavioral Health**

- Tracy Peterson, Compass Counseling
- Corina Norrbom, M.D., Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service
- Sandy Bump, Marshfield Clinic
- Lauri Doepke, Ministry Health Care
- Julie Jensen, Marathon County Department of Social Services
- Brooke Davis, DC Everest Junior High School
- Josh Wright, Weston Elementary School
- Trina Kaiser, Marathon County Special Education
- Kristin Jacobson, Marathon County Special Education
- Brian Stezenski-Williams, Boys & Girls Club of the Wausau Area
- Brad Johnson, Rothschild Police Department
- Lee Shipway, Peaceful Solutions Counseling
- Janelle Hintz, North Central Health Care
- Cathy Howe Thwaites, Marathon County Child Development Agency, Inc. Head Start
- Anthony Reince, Wausau Police Department
- Jennifer Smith, Bridge Community Health Clinic

- Dave Eckmann, Wausau Area Chamber of Commerce
- Deb Traeder, North Central Health Care
- Lance Leonhard, Marathon County Administration
- Judy Burrows, Marathon County Health Department
- Joan Theurer, Marathon County Health Department

**Transcriber:** Aaron Ruff, Marathon County Health Department

### Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Dr. Lori Shepherd M.D., Marshfield Clinic
- Vicki Tylka, Marathon County Department of Social Services
- Sarah Nilles, Wausau School District
- Angela Diener, Boys & Girls Club of the Wausau Area
- Beth Goetsch, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northcentral Wisconsin
- Bill Milhausen, Marathon County Sheriff's Office
- Tracy Peterson, Compass Counseling
- Jolene Nowak, Peaceful Solutions Counseling
- Michelle Gleason, North Central Health Care
- Cathy Howe, Marathon County Child Development Agency, Inc.
- Melissa Foster, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
- Nathan Cihlar, Wausau Police Department
- Mary Olson, Childcaring, Inc.
- MaiGer Moua, United Way of Marathon County
- Antonina Olszewski, Ministry – St. Clare's Hospital
- Mary Jo Lechner, DC Everest School District
- Tara Draeger, Aspirus Wausau Hospital
- Dr. Carolyn Nash M.D., Marshfield Clinic
- Corina Norrbom, Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service
- Joan Theurer, Marathon County Health Department
- Aaron Ruff, Marathon County Health Department

**Transcriber:** Destinee Coenen, Marathon County Health Department

### Healthy Weight

- Jessica Scharfenberg, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Cynthia Olson, Domtar Paper Company, LLC
- Judy Burrows, Marathon County Health Department
- Michelle Clark, Woodson YMCA
- Jessica Mowrer, Woodson YMCA
- Melissa Hoffman, Woodson YMCA
- Susan Coleman, Marshfield Clinic
- Jennifer Smith, Bridge Community Health Clinic
- Brad Sippel, North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- Sue Gantner, Community Member

**Transcriber:** Aaron Ruff, Marathon County Health Department

### Health Needs of Aging

- Brad Jourdan, Diagnostic & Treatment Center
- Jennifer Cummings, Aging & Disability Resource Center of Central Wisconsin
- Peggy Kurth, Aging & Disability Resource Center of Central Wisconsin
- Margie Hackbarth, Aspirus Wausau Hospital
- Cheryl Steen, Aspirus Wausau Hospital
- Christ Frost, Faith in Action
- Curtis Bartel, Wausau Area Mobile Meals
- Amy Forst, Homme Homes – Forest Park Village
- Jean Burgener – Connections Place
- Nancy Fisker, American Red Cross
- Lori Knauf, Ministry – St. Clare’s Hospital
- Janet Lattyak, Lattyak Elder Law, LLC
- Tony Omernik, United Way of Marathon County
- Pam Frary, Eastside Parishes
- Patrick Bradley, myFamilyCFO, Inc.
- Leslie Ross, Community Care Connections of Wisconsin
- Barbara Longsdorf, Retired psychologist
- Polly Day, Retired nurse
- Karen Katz, EO Johnson Business Technologies
- Joan Theurer, Marathon County Health Department

**Transcriber:** Ashley Deering, Marathon County Health Department

### Oral Health

- Georgia Fisher, Bridge Community Health Clinic
- Janice Field, Family Health Center of Marshfield
- Jeff Lindell, Wausau School District
- Julie Fox, Fox Dentistry
- Tara Draeger, Aspirus Wausau Hospital
- Ken Heffron, Marshfield Clinic
- Amit Acharya, Marshfield Clinic
- Brenda Diamond, Ministry – St. Clare’s Hospital
- Anita Bublik-Anderson, Aspirus Wausau Hospital
- Christy Keele, Guardian Ad Litem
- Joan Theurer, Marathon County Health Department

**Transcriber:** Aaron Ruff, Marathon County Health Department

# Phase 3: Development of Action Plans

## Planning Groups



Community Partners  
Content experts for each health priority

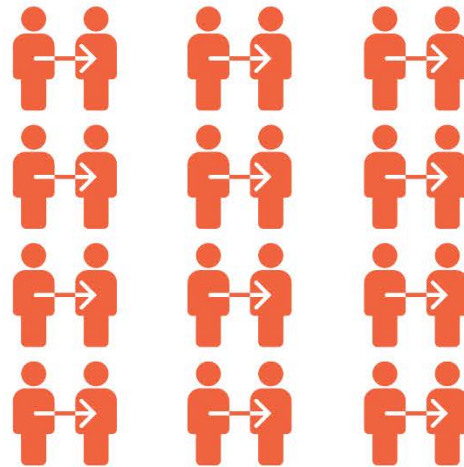
2016

- JULY 11 Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse & Abuse
- JULY 14 Adverse Childhood Experiences
- AUGUST 4 Healthy Weight
- AUGUST 11 Health Needs of Aging
- AUGUST 23 Oral Health
- AUGUST 30 Behavioral Health

## Group Process

### Mad Tea Party

Planning group members were invited to finish a set of open ended sentences that relating to each health priority, creating a bigger, richer, and clearer context for shaping the Community Health Improvement Implementation Plan.



### Safari Game Plan

The Safari Game Plan allowed planning group members to answer a series of five questions in order to create a common understanding and context for each health priority in Marathon County. The final question led to the creation of a draft implementation plan that defined action steps, identified lead organizations, and established a timeline for each community health priority.



## **2017-2020 ACTION PLANS**

### **Alcohol & Other Drug Misuse and Abuse**

The burden of alcohol and other drug abuse continues to have a negative impact on individuals, families, and communities within Marathon County. Marathon County, as well as the rest of Wisconsin, is experiencing a surge in heroin and prescription opiate abuse, which brings with it an array of public health and safety concerns. Increases in drug-related crimes, incarceration, and the number of individuals with addiction are placing tremendous strains on criminal justice, treatment, human services, schools and healthcare systems.

Alcohol continues to be the most commonly abused substance by both youth and adults in Marathon County. Alcohol consumption is socially-accepted and expected activity at most community events, fundraisers, fairs, and festivals. An opportunity in Marathon County is to integrate the safe use of alcohol in our cultural norms.

Marathon County lacks a continuum of integrated care for substance abuse options, including local outpatient and inpatient services, adult residential, and youth treatment programs. Health care systems and service providers desire an enhanced coordination of treatment and care. The opportunity is to create comprehensive treatment options that make sense to those who are using them.

It is difficult for individuals that abuse or misuse alcohol or other drugs to ask for help. Community awareness that addiction is a disease is low. Building a community that is supportive of individuals using alcohol in moderation or in recovery is critical. Efforts to raise awareness of the culture of alcohol, addiction, and recovery have occurred, but more work needs to be done.

Community readiness to address alcohol and other drug misuse and abuse is increasing in Marathon County. There is cross-sector synergy to align and work to solve this problem together. Solving this problem will require innovative approaches through public and private partnerships. No one organization can solve this issue alone.

**[To view the Alcohol & Other Drug Misuse and Abuse Action Plan click here.](#)**

### **Behavioral Health**

Behavioral health is promoting well-being by preventing or intervening in mental illness such as depression, or anxiety, along with preventing or intervening with substance abuse or other addictions. There is a need to increase the public's awareness and understanding how one's behavioral health impacts their overall physical health.

Seeking behavioral health services too often is still viewed as a stigma in families and communities.

In recent years, Marathon County, like communities across the state and nation, are recognizing the benefit of having a continuum of services and treatment options for mental health, alcohol and other substance abuse, and other addictions (gambling, pornography).

There is a realization of the need for collaborative, innovative solutions to explore models of care and service across the continuum of care, settings and lifespan. Schools and mental health providers have begun to work together to look at shared service models, that integrate behavioral health services within schools. This model of care is seen as promising for schools and child care providers, as a strategy to increase access for services.

The current system of care and services is often disjointed at multiple levels. Collaborative efforts are occurring to address access gaps in services and provide a solid foundation to build upon. Benefits could be gained in having the general public know how to access services and utilize community resource guides. In addition, health care providers need a referral system to link patients to community services.

To further efforts, there is a need of a common understanding of what is 'behavioral health' for the general public, community organizations and health care providers. Recognizing 'behavioral health' as a community health priority for the first time in Marathon County is significant to seize opportunities as a community.

[To view the Behavioral Health Action Plan click here.](#)

### **Adverse Childhood Experiences**

Early relationships between a child and their caregiver are critical to create emotional bonds. It is through these early relationships that a child's emotions, trust, and understanding develop to understand themselves and the world around them.

The impact associated between childhood trauma on long-term health and wellbeing was initially studied by Kaiser Permanente from 1995-1997 and is referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences. An Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) is traumatic experience prior to the age of 18.

The 10 ACEs are defined as:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse



- Emotional abuse
- Physical neglect
- Emotional neglect
- Growing up in a household with a family member who is:
  - o Depressed or mentally ill
  - o Addicted to alcohol or other drugs
  - o In prison
- Witnessing a mother being abused
- Separation or divorce of parents

ACEs result in toxic stress that can harm a child’s brain. Positive experiences in childhood often lead to healthy and productive adulthood. ACEs can negatively impact a child’s brain development and physical, mental, and social behaviors increasing risk for poorer mental health, teen pregnancy and juvenile delinquency.

Adults with higher ACEs have poorer health outcomes, such as increased levels of toxic stress, higher risk for alcoholism, illegal drug use, depression, suicide, partner violence, smoking, obesity, and heart disease. ACEs tend to occur in clusters, such that people who experienced at least one ACE are likely to have experienced multiple ACEs in childhood. The impact of ACEs is multigenerational.

Childcare providers, schools, and human service providers have increased awareness and are seeing the complexity of ACEs and the impact on children in Marathon County, but comprehensive community action needs to be furthered to address solutions.

This is a new community health priority for Marathon County. Increasing community awareness on the implications of ACEs and how they can be reduced and prevented throughout the lifespan is vital.

Opportunities exist to expand and coordinate ACE Interface trainings including an understanding of what are best practices around Trauma-Informed Care in various community sectors throughout Marathon County. Building resiliency in parents and children is crucial in reducing the impact of childhood trauma. Resilience is the ability to return to being healthy and hopeful after bad things happen. Research shows that if a safe environment is provided for children and they learn how to be resilient, that helps reduce the effects of ACEs.

Changing our social norm in Marathon County from “What is wrong with you?” to “What has happened to you?” is pivotal.

**[To view the Adverse Childhood Experiences Action Plan click here.](#)**

## Healthy Weight

Healthy weight is defined as a weight that lowers your risk for health problems. Achievement or maintenance of a healthy weight includes healthy food choices and physical activity. Our community environment and norms include several factors that impact a person's ability to incorporate healthy food choices and physical activity into their lifestyle. Factors identified by local leaders include: the increased use of technology, busy schedules, the convenience and availability of fast food, and individuals differing values and interpretations regarding what "healthy food" is. To further the work of this health priority, it is crucial to identify what our residents deem the most valuable in order to achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Healthy weight is a community issue that directly impacts the local economy. Physical activity and recreational opportunities, as well as a local food system are two positive aspects that appeal to millennials, who are needed to fill Marathon County's work force and entrepreneurial needs. An unhealthy weight, and the accompanying health conditions, leads to absenteeism, increased health insurance costs, and decreased productivity. There is benefit in strengthening the involvement of the economic development sector in order to implement strategies that would provide both an economic and health benefit.

Marathon County is fortunate to have several community assets already established. Local food producers are expanding the availability and diversity of food options. Nearly every municipality offers a farmers market, community gardens continue to expand, and several school districts are integrating Farm to School. Increasing the promotion and integration of offerings available, in attempts to expand access and decrease duplication, would be beneficial to our community partners that offer these services and programs. Marathon County is known for an abundance of year-round outdoor recreational opportunities. In addition indoor physical activity sites, like community and school fitness centers in most communities, are present. Shifting resident's cultural norm around physical activity to more fully take advantage of Marathon County's active recreation opportunities is essential.

[To view the Healthy Weight Action Plan click here.](#)

## Health Needs of Aging

Healthy aging includes developing and maintaining optimal mental, social, and physical well-being and function in older adulthood. This includes addressing basic needs, optimizing health and well-being, promoting social/civic engagement, and supporting independence. In Marathon County, there is recognition of the impact the aging population will have on our communities: workforce shortages; generations that



are currently functioning well and enjoying a high quality of life may transition into a lesser quality as they age; the burden of high economic costs related to health care for chronic conditions, as well as nursing home or long-term care; and the loss of community assets—adults that were once able to volunteer, engage civically, and positively contribute to their communities.

As a community, we must strive to assist the aging population in maintaining a high quality of life and independences. In order to achieve this, there is the need for infrastructure to allow aging-related service providers to work together collaboratively, changing policies and organizational systems in order to enhance program and service delivery for the aging population.

Marathon County is rich in resources for our aging population. There is benefit in exploring methods to enhance Marathon County's aging-related information system, to achieve a more comprehensive, centralized system to access information regarding available services and program, including their eligibility requirements and enrollment processes.

It is crucial to recognize the necessity of planning as you age, not only financially, but also socially, spiritually, mentally, and physically. Mindful consideration of these aging aspects may decrease the need for the aging population, their families, and service providers to operate in a "crisis-mode", as so many do currently. Increasing the awareness and knowledge of the aging population and their families about the importance of planning across the aging spectrum is critical.

[To view the Health Needs of Aging Action Plan click here.](#)

## Oral Health

There is a need to further the integration of oral health into primary health care, as oral health impacts overall health of an individual. Health care providers' practice in promoting good oral health varies, due in part to the lack of knowledge and understanding on how to interface and refer to oral health providers. Patients are not routinely linked to oral health providers, whether it is for an oral health emergency room or preventive visit. The burden is left on the patient to seek good oral health care. Oral health and health care providers agree this is a community issue however there is a lack of common agenda across sectors as to what can be done.

The payment system for oral health care needs to be unified and keeping with health care reimbursement. There is significant difference in dental insurance coverage plans in comparison to health insurance. Reimbursement under Medicaid is low, having limited benefits under Medicare. Disparities in dental care coverage continue to

exist in minority and low income populations due to lack of adequate insurance or dentists that accept Medicaid. Marathon County is fortunate to be served by Bridge Community Health Clinic and Marshfield Clinic's Family Health Center, both of which offer access to dental care to underserved populations. There is benefit in strengthening working relationship between federally qualified dental health clinics and dental providers.

Consumers could benefit in increasing their understanding of the importance of good oral health, oral health's contribution to chronic disease, and prevention measures individuals can take. The aesthetic impact of tooth decay and tooth loss will continue to impact the employability of a segment of the population.

[To view the Oral Health Action Plan click here.](#)

## **IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES & EVALUATE EFFORTS**

Strategies identified in the 2017-2020 Action Plans will be carried out through leadership and backbone support from the Marathon County Health Department with support from Healthy Marathon County and community partners. The 2017-2019 LIFE Report is a mid-course review to determine progress in meeting community health priority goals.



# LIFE

## *Snapshot of Life in* MARATHON COUNTY

*12th Edition | 2019-2021*

# Snapshot of LIFE in Marathon County

The LIFE in Marathon County Report has been published every two years since 1997, making the 2019-2021 Report the 12th edition. This data driven report depicts the quality of life in Marathon County. The Calls to Action are used to inform the work of community organizations, many of which use the data to complete grant applications. The full LIFE Report now can be found online, offering an opportunity to dig deeper into the data. Access to population-level data is crucial to empower local leaders and community organizations to create results-based strategies that are data-driven. The LIFE Report project is guided by the LIFE Steering Committee and made possible by generous community funders. The Executive Committee and Steering Committee hope you find it a valuable resource as we work together to make Marathon County the healthiest, safest, most prosperous and connected community!

## THE PURPOSE OF THE LIFE REPORT IS TO:

- Acknowledge community strengths.
- Identify community challenges.
- Serve as a catalyst for change by advancing community conversations and partnerships.

## CHANGES TO THE 12TH EDITION

The 2019-2021 report continues to encompass four broad sections:

- Prosperous
- Healthy
- Safe
- Connected

**NEW!** The 2019-2021 report is powered by Marathon County Pulse, a public online data platform giving users access to current Marathon County population data. Pulse will give end users the ability to download a PDF version of the full report. Users also will be able to drill down into the data sources.



## Community Assets

Marathon County is rich in resources and activities for residents to enjoy. To set the basis for determining what priorities to call out, the Steering Committee identified community assets available to all residents. These include:

- **COLLABORATION** among Marathon County organizations and agencies.
- **PEOPLE**
- **VIBRANT ARTS COMMUNITY**
- **OUTDOOR RECREATION** with parks and public space for all residents to enjoy.
- **STRONG HEALTH CARE**
- **QUALITY EDUCATION**
- **CENTRALLY LOCATED**
- **LAW ENFORCEMENT** partnerships.





# LIFE Calls to Action

The 2019-2021 LIFE Report establishes seven community Calls to Action. These priorities are based on report data, feedback from the Community Advisory Committee and the LIFE Steering Committee. The purpose of these Calls to Action is to advance community dialogue and stimulate action to improve the community's well-being.

## THE CALLS TO ACTION

- ALCOHOL
- CHILD CARE
- DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING
- DRUG TREATMENT & RECOVERY
- HOUSING
- WATER QUALITY
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



# LIFE Calls to Action



## ALCOHOL

Alcohol continues to be the most frequently consumed substance of use and misuse among teens and adults in Marathon County. There is a need to increase awareness of the impact of alcohol misuse and abuse on children, families and individuals.

## CHILD CARE

Marathon County has experienced a significant decrease in child care programs and their capacity. Our community needs to have accessible, affordable, high-quality child care programs for families to live in Marathon County. We need to explore how our community can support child care.

- Create outside investments to support our early childhood teachers and our children.
- Explore how businesses and school districts can support quality child care for their employees is important.
- Address the cliff of eligibility requirements in public benefits in regard to childcare (and MA, FoodShare, etc.). A benefits cliff is what happens when public benefit programs taper off or phase out quickly when household earnings increase. The abrupt reduction or loss of benefits can be very disruptive for families because even though household earnings increased, they rarely have increased enough for self-sufficiency.

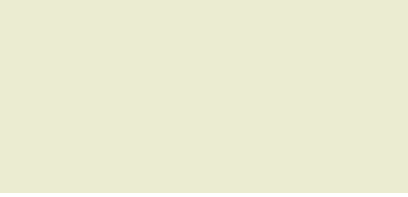
## DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING

Create a community that is diverse, inclusive and everyone has a sense of belonging.

- Combat discrimination (in 2019, more than a third of LIFE Survey respondents reported one or more experiences of discrimination; this is a 7% increase since 2017).
- Ensure a welcoming and inclusive community (LIFE Survey respondents reported a continued decline in satisfaction with how welcoming the community is in 2019. Satisfaction with how welcoming the community is has fallen by more than 20 percentage points since 2013).
- Fewer than half of 2019 LIFE Survey respondents said they were satisfied with the level of tolerance in the community.







## DRUG TREATMENT & RECOVERY

There is no community-wide plan to address the treatment and recovery of substance abuse to ensure continuum of care in recovery.

- Create more options in Transitional Housing units for individuals coming out of substance abuse treatment program.
- Expand Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) outside of correctional settings. The majority of persons impacted by opioid addictions are not in jail, but are being treated at local medical facilities.
- Expand addiction treatment services wherever possible. A 2018 Wisconsin Professional Police Association survey found that 77% of respondents feel law enforcement should treat people addicted to opioids as needing care and treatment, rather than only as criminal offenders.

## HOUSING

There is a need to expand quality, affordable, diverse housing. This includes access to rental housing for all incomes, condos, and housing for mid-life professionals.

## WATER QUALITY

The community needs to engage key stakeholders and decision makers to address the options, costs and opportunities to reduce phosphorous from agricultural runoff to surface waters to acceptable levels.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Marathon County has gained new residents from surrounding rural counties but has lost residents to larger urban areas in the Midwest. There is a need to continue to develop and promote quality, engaging, entertaining places and amenities that attract people and are accessible to all.

- Promote opportunities for local employers to enhance recruiting and retention strategies.
- Develop, attract and retain the younger, well-educated workers who are critical to a strong Marathon County workforce.
- Our region's economic success requires action to enhance and promote efforts to support diversity and inclusion where culturally diverse communities feel welcome and are provided access to high growth-high wage jobs through development of relevant skills, knowledge and abilities.





# Success | Progress

## SUCCESS & PROGRESS

Part of the process of compiling the 2019-2021 LIFE Report is to reflect on the progress Marathon County has made since the 2017-2019 LIFE Report was published. The Steering Committee, along with the a community Advisory Committee, identified the following advances in Marathon County:

- **Marathon County School-Based Counseling Consortium** offers on-site mental health counseling to every Marathon County public school district.
- To **serve the growing population of seniors and increase social and community connections**, a multimillion-dollar initiative to develop new facilities and programming has been put into place. Those efforts include development of the YMCA's The Landing and extensive renovations at North Central Health Care.
- A **Crisis Assessment Response Team (CART)** was implemented with goals to reduce the numbers of involuntary detentions, provide better access, divert persons to mental health services, and provide immediate crisis response to alleviate demand on the crisis services. Marathon County has experienced significant reduction in emergency detentions for individuals with a mental health crisis with the formation of two CARTs, which pair a law enforcement officer with a crisis professional.
- The Marathon County Board of Supervisors has made it a priority to identify gaps in high speed Internet access and help residents connect to **affordable high speed Internet services**.
- The Marathon County Board of Supervisors has identified the **protection and enhancement of surface water and groundwater quality and quantity as a priority objective** in its 2018-2022 Strategic Plan.
- As a community, Marathon County has responded to **raise awareness and address the opioid (and other drugs) epidemic** with prevention, treatment and enforcement efforts through changes in organizational policies and practices. Grant funding from the Wisconsin Division of Health Services was secured to create a Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) program in the county jail. This program will be the first in the state to offer Suboxone or Vivitrol to our inmate population to assist with opioid addiction issues.
- **Access to higher education in Central WI** is better than ever. Barriers to higher education have been greatly reduced and more young people getting degrees than previous generations. Marathon County residents age 25-44 received Bachelor's degrees at a higher rate than previous generations.
- The Marathon County Hunger Coalition member **pantries collaborated to ensure individuals/families receive the food to keep them healthy and fed**. More requests for food assistance were met by pantries throughout Marathon County. School districts, as well as post-secondary institutions, worked to solve hunger for students within their schools by opening food pantries within the schools.
- The Marathon County Board passed a resolution in 2019 to **recognize June as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) PRIDE month**.
- Overall, **Marathon County school districts meet or exceed WI state educational standards** (Forward Exam, ACT), leading to all school districts in Marathon County exceeding the state average rate for high school graduation

# LIFE Report Highlights

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

One of the main purposes of The LIFE Report is to be a catalyst for change. For each section, the Section Sub-Committees compiled a list of actionable items to engage in, whether on an individual, organizational or community level. Each contribution can advance this work to make Marathon County the healthiest, safest, most prosperous, and connected community possible.

### PROSPEROUS

- For Individuals:**
  - Promote and support childhood literacy.
  - Encourage employers to adopt family-friendly practices.
- For Organizations:**
  - Strive to pay a living wage that allows employees to participate more fully in the local economy.
  - Consider providing on-site childcare.
- For the Community:**
  - Collectively change to realize enhanced childcare services and expand affordable childcare facilities. View childcare providers as critical professionals, not babysitters.

### HEALTHY

- For Individuals:**
  - Keep alcohol out of the hands of youth. Model safe and responsible alcohol use.
  - Educate yourselves on addiction as a chronic disease. Support local recovery efforts.
- For Organizations:**
  - Support community initiatives addressing evidence based approaches for solving the issues of substance abuse, affordable housing and basic needs for all members of the community.
- For the Community:**
  - Come together to plan and assist in implementing strategic actions for solving the community's issues of affordable housing, substance abuse and basic needs.

### SAFE

- For Individuals:**
  - Stop participating in distracted driving, such as texting while operating a motor vehicle. Stay focused and cognizant.
- For Organizations:**
  - Assist individuals leaving incarceration by providing stable housing and employment opportunities that change lifestyles, while recognizing that this is a group that will occasionally fail.
  - Focus on solutions and funding to better serve individuals with mental health needs.
- For the Community:**
  - Commit to being a community where all people can maximize their full potential and feel valued, regardless of background, experience and perspective.

### CONNECTED

- For Individuals:**
  - Seek to visit other communities, reach out to those with backgrounds different from our own, and attend local cultural events.
  - Reach out to neighbors. Consider planning a neighborhood block party or cookout.
- For Organizations:**
  - Continue to innovate and connect with diverse populations. Work with schools, trade organizations and social service providers to better understand ethnic, cultural and generational differences that will help employees connect and succeed.
  - Work closely with the Society for Human Resources Management and wage equity organizations to evaluate and address wage and earnings disparities. As the labor pool shrinks, addressing those disparities will become more important.
- For the Community:**
  - Ensure a diverse and culturally inclusive culture to secure its long-term future. Whether it is attracting millennials, including LGBTQ perspectives or tapping the contributions of minority populations, regional viability requires that everyone is welcomed, engaged and connected in the community.

For the complete list of Opportunities for Action, please see the full report.



The LIFE Report powered by Pulse, sponsored by:

**MARATHON COUNTY PULSE SUSTAINING FUNDERS:**

- Ascension St. Clare’s Hospital
- Aspirus, Inc.
- Bridge Community Health Clinic
- Marathon County Health Department
- Marshfield Clinic Health System

**2019-2021 LIFE REPORT FULL PARTNERS:**

- Ascension St. Clare’s Hospital
- Aspirus, Inc.
- B.A. & Esther Greenheck Foundation
- City of Wausau
- Dudley Foundation
- Greater Wausau Chamber of Commerce
- Judd S. Alexander Foundation
- Marathon County
- United Way of Marathon County

**2019-2021 LIFE REPORT SPONSORS:**

- Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin
- Greenheck Fan Corporation

**2019-2021 LIFE REPORT SUPPORTERS:**

- EO Johnson Business Technologies
- Marshfield Clinic Healthy System
- Wisconsin Public Service Corporation



To see the full 2019-2021 LIFE Report, or to take a deeper look into the data for each section, visit:  
[www.marathoncountypulse.org](http://www.marathoncountypulse.org)



LIFE in Marathon County, c/o United Way  
705 S. 24th Ave., Ste. 400B  
Wausau, WI 54401

715.848.2927 | [unitedwaymc.org](http://unitedwaymc.org)

**SNAPSHOT 2019 – 2021**

Produced in kind by Aspirus Marketing and Graphic Design

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# REGIONAL RECOVERY PLANNING

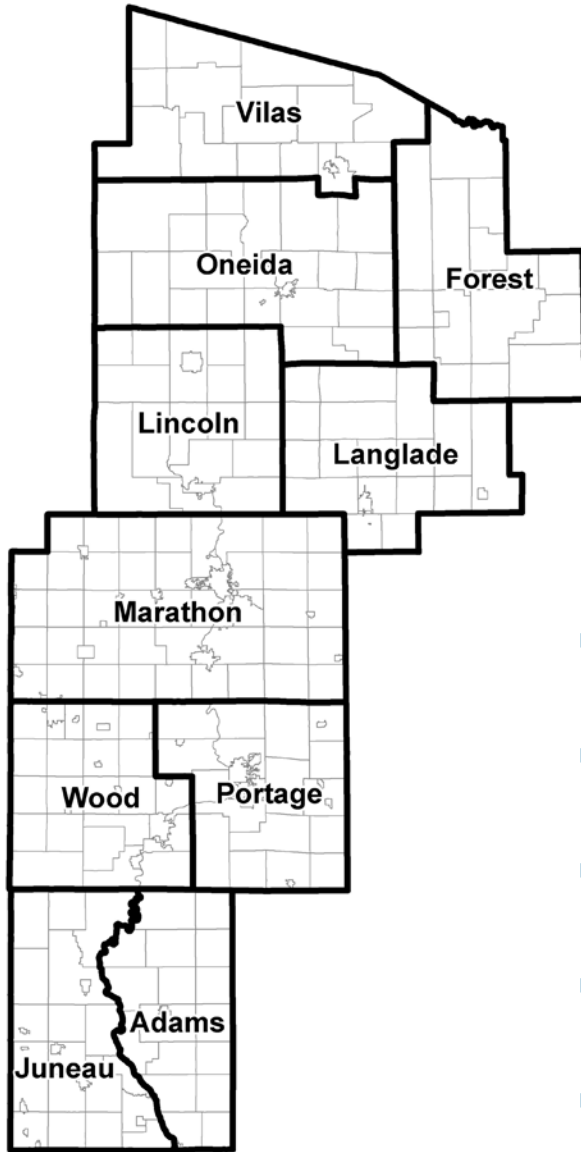
NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



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# NCWRPC OVERVIEW

- 
- Created in 1973 under Wisconsin Statute 66.0309 as a voluntary association of governments. One of nine RPCs statewide.
  - Provide both regional and local assistance in the areas of:
    - Economic Development and grant writing
    - Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
    - Intergovernmental Coordination
    - Land Use & Community Planning
    - Transportation



- 10 Counties
- 196 Towns
- 22 Cities
- 41 Villages
- 4 Tribal Nations

# NCWRPC REGION

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# MARATHON COUNTY

**135,811**

Population (2020)

Population grew by 495 over the last 5 years and is projected to grow by 711 over the next 5 years.

**77,915**

Total Regional Employment

Jobs grew by 1,210 over the last 5 years and are projected to grow by 2,180 over the next 5 years.

**\$62.6K**

Median Household Income (2019)

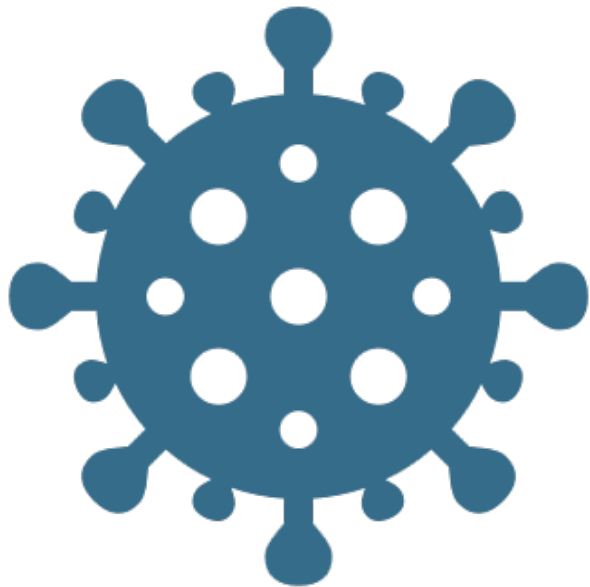
Median household income is \$886 above the state median household income of \$61.7K.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

- Designated EDD for 10 county region by US Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration in 1980
- Prepare Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, every 5 years
- Prepare numerous county and local economic development plans
- Prepare grant applications for region through EDA programs
- To date, brought over \$25 million EDA grant dollars to the region



# BACKGROUND

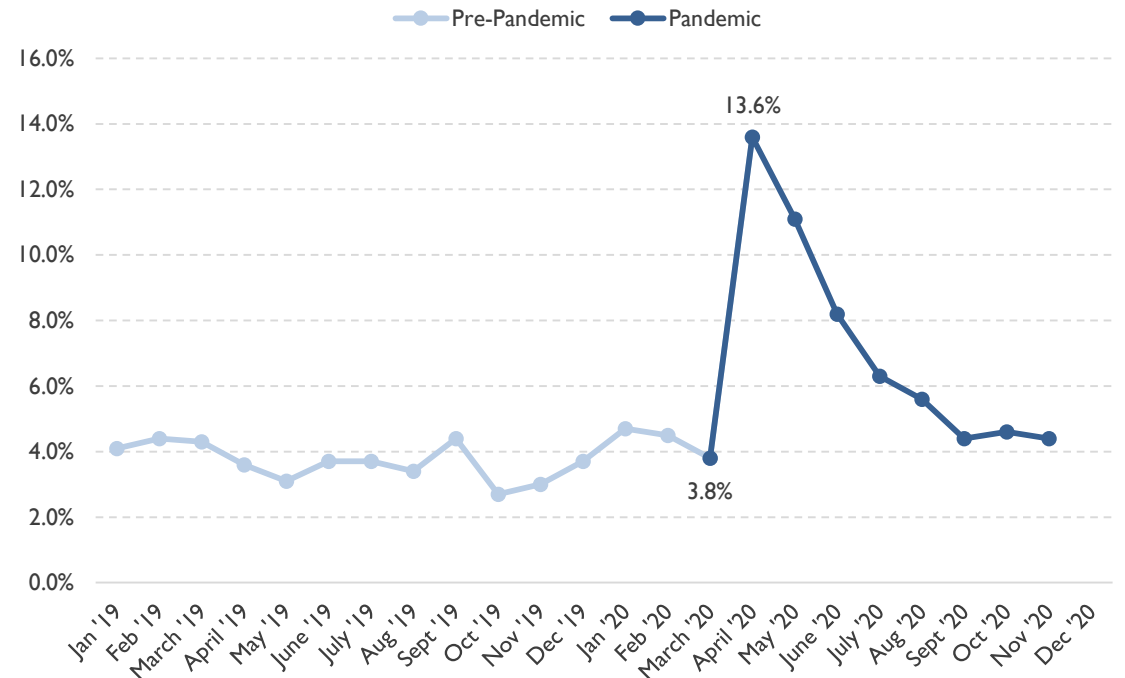


- February 5, 2020 first Wisconsin COVID-19 case
- March 12, 2020 Governor Evers declared a public health emergency in Wisconsin
- March 25, 2020 Governor Evers bans all nonessential travel and business in the State of Wisconsin
- March 27, 2020 the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Trump
- March 27, 2020 Governor Evers bans all evictions and foreclosures for 60 days
- August 1, 2020 Governor Evers institutes a state mask mandate

# COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Largest global economic shock since the Great Depression.
- The COVID-19 pandemic forced many businesses to temporarily close, leading to a drastic loss of jobs and a subsequent rapid increase in unemployment.
- Many businesses required funding such as grants and loans to remain afloat after losing revenue.
- Service, Hospitality, Restaurant, and Small Business Retail industries were hit particularly hard.
- Employment within the Region **decreased by over 27,000 jobs** between March and April, a decrease of 12.7%.
- The Regional unemployment rate experienced a dramatic rise to 13.6%, an **increase of 258%**, between March and April.

Regional Monthly Unemployment Rate, 2019-2020



# THE CARES ACT:



- Provides the U.S. Economic Development Administration with \$1.5 billion for Economic Disaster Assistance Programs to help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19
- In 2020, the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission was awarded a CARES grant from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) to help with the economic recovery of the region as a result of the coronavirus.
- The scope of work supports activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic, and to respond to economic injury as a result of the coronavirus.

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# SCOPE OF WORK

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- **Regional Recovery Plan**

Economic recovery plan with strategies to help rebuild a resilient and sustainable region

- **Update of CEDS (to include recovery and resiliency)**

Prepare recovery and resiliency sections for the CEDS

- **Regional Health Pandemic and Future Response Document**

Assess various county response efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic and create recommendations to better address future pandemics and health related disruptions

- **Business and Industrial Park Inventory**

Prepare a land use update and regional absorption space study to identify future needs

- **Technical Assistance and Planning Support**

# REGIONAL RECOVERY PLAN

- This plan will include a task force that includes Planning Commissioners, economic development professionals, university partners, and others
- The group will meet at least three times throughout the 2021 calendar year to identify issues and opportunities that arose as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, primarily in the areas of:
  - Jobs and the Economy
  - Housing and Transportation
  - Childcare
  - Broadband
- The group will then create a document that contains an economic recovery plan, including both short-term and long-term strategies, for the region with the goals of building a resilient and sustainable region.



# CEDS UPDATE



- Prepare a recovery and a resiliency section for the CEDS update.
- Align the CEDS with the economic recovery and resiliency sections.
- Identify locally generated recovery, economic development and resiliency projects.



# REGIONAL HEALTH PANDEMIC ASSESSMENT AND FUTURE RESPONSE



- The task force includes health officers from each of our ten counties, two tribal entities, health emergency response professionals, aging and disability experts and transportation professionals.
- This group will meet virtually three times throughout 2021 to identify issues and opportunities with public health responses throughout the region.
- The goal will be to prepare a document that analyzes county and tribal response to the COVID-19 pandemic including:
  - Analyze what worked well in terms of planning guidance, data collection, data dissemination, and staffing,
  - Identify what did not work well and where additional support was needed to maintain best practices, and to
  - Create recommendations to better deal with future pandemic and health related disruptions.

# BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PARK STUDY

As part of this inventory, absorption and needs study, the NCWRPC will

- Conduct a regional land use update and specifically examine existing business and industrial space within the region.
- Prepare a regional absorption space study for the region to identify future needs.



# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, PLANNING SUPPORT & OTHER EFFORTS

1

Provide general technical assistance and capacity building for member organizations, local businesses and other local stakeholders impacted by coronavirus including grant application preparation.

2

Help to identify economic development grant eligible projects with state and federal resources for locally impacted communities to ensure that these entities take full advantage of funding opportunities.

3

Assist in local, state and federally led coronavirus recovery planning efforts among the most impacted communities.

## GRANT APPLICATIONS:

- Antigo: Saratoga Industrial Park Roadway Expansion (FY 2020 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Funding)
- Marathon City: Marathon City North Business Park Expansion (CARES Act application)
- Wisconsin Rapids: City of Wisconsin Rapids Recovery and Redevelopment Effort (CARES Act application)
- Wausau: Wausau Recovery and Resiliency Project (CARES Act application)
- CREATE Portage County: CREATE Your Community (SPRINT Challenge application)
- City of Elroy (in progress)
- Mole Lake (provided assistance)
- McMillan Memorial Library (provided assistance)

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## RECOVERY COORDINATORS



## **Contract for Services with the Marathon County Historical Society**

### **2020 Final Report**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Marathon County Historical Society closed its doors to the general public on March 17, 2020. In the months that followed, it became clear that all of our scheduled programs, events and lectures would have to be cancelled for the remainder of the year. However, that did not stop the staff from discovering new ways to continue our mission and fulfill our Contract for Services with the County. By mid-summer, plans were in place to partner with the Marathon County Public Library to create a new virtual program series. History Chats is our new weekly series held on Thursdays at 12:30 pm. This series includes short 20 minute lectures that allows visitors to interact with the presenters by asking questions or leaving comments. History Speaks "On The Air" is a monthly, hour long lecture typically held on Saturday afternoon and includes a variety of topics from speakers both inside and outside of our organization. All of these lectures and programs are streamed live, then made available on Facebook and YouTube for visitors to view at their convenience.

Our 2020 Contract for Services was revised and signed on June 30, 2020. The revisions, due to the uncertain times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, reduced the number of programs, lectures and events we were required to provide in 2020 to three programs or lectures within Marathon County and outside of the greater Wausau metropolitan area, and five programs, lectures or events within the greater Wausau Metropolitan area. The attached report shows the programs, events and lectures we held in 2020 including date, title of program, location and number of attendees.

In addition to the programs, events and lectures, our 2020 Contract for Services included continuing to add Marathon County records to our online searchable database and offer these records free to the public through our Website. In 2020, we added 42,789 Marathon County records from the 1900 US Census, 72,747 Marathon County records from the 1940 US Census, several finding aids and improved navigation. We also continued to pursue options for digitizing original Marathon County records and have been working with the Marathon County Veterans Services office on digitizing and indexing their records. At the end of 2020, we had over 400 of these records digitized and indexed.

We greatly appreciate the opportunities given to our organization through this contract and will continue to work hard to provide these unique and valuable services to the people of Marathon County.

Respectfully Submitted.

Mary Forer, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Mary Forer'.





## Marathon County Historical Society Events, Lectures and Programs

1/1/2020 to 12/31/2020

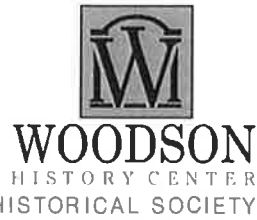
Event			Live Attendees	Total Views	Minutes Viewed
1/24/2020 Vintage Board Game Night - Wausau, WI		Wausau, WI	24		
2/13/2020 Annual Valentine Tea - Wausau, WI		Wausau, WI	79		
2/15/2020 Mother & Child Tea - Wausau, WI		Wausau, WI	40		
2/23/2020 D C Everest History Day Reception - Wausau, WI		Wausau, WI	26		
2/28/2020 Vintage Board Game Night - Wausau, WI		Wausau, WI	7		
Count	5	Total:	176		
<b>History Speaks</b>					
2/1/2020 History Speaks: Looking Through the Past: at the Window Makers of Marathon County - Wausau, WI		Wausau, WI	76		
2/22/2020 History Speaks: American Indians in the Civil War. - Wausau, WI		Wausau, WI	158		
9/10/2020 History Chats: Early Wausau Schools - Gary Gisselman - Virtual		Virtual	17	101	836
9/17/2020 History Chats: Rural Schools - Gary Gisselman - Virtual		Virtual	14	62	520
9/19/2020 History Speaks on the Air: Will the Women Vote? - Ben Clark - Virtual		Virtual	13	65	947
9/24/2020 History Chats: Church Schools - Gary Gisselman - Virtual		Virtual	12	55	459
10/1/2020 History Chats: 20th Century Schools - Gary Gisselman - Virtual		Virtual	9	67	348
10/8/2020 History Chats: County Normal & UW Extension - Gary Gisselman - Virtual		Virtual	8	33	196
10/15/2020 History Chats: Vocational, Business & Tech Schools - Gary Gisselman - Virtual		Virtual	6	32	243
10/17/2020 History Speaks on the Air: Lincoln-Douglas Debates - Brett Barker - Virtual		Virtual	26	86	1360
10/22/2020 History Chats: Ticket Hospitals - Virtual		Virtual	13	47	319
10/29/2020 History Chats: 20th Century Hospitals - Virtual		Virtual	10	38	426
10/31/2020 History Speaks on the Air: At Rest-Death & Mourning Customs - Virtual		Virtual	29	151	1819



## Marathon County Historical Society Events, Lectures and Programs

1/1/2020 to 12/31/2020

		Live Attendees	Total Views	Minutes Viewed		
11/5/2020	History Chats: County medical facilities - Virtual	Virtual	22	135	814	
11/12/2020	History Chats: Father Daniels - Virtual	Virtual	15	70	661	
11/12/2020	History Chats: George Cook - Virtual	Virtual	9	94	526	
12/3/2020	History Chats: The Honorable Louis Marchetti - Virtual	Virtual	16	98	662	
12/5/2020	History Speaks on the Air: Evergleaming: Aluminum Christmas Trees - Virtual	Virtual	17	347	1475	
12/10/2020	History Chats: Councilwoman Helen Ohm - Virtual	Virtual	13	78	438	
12/17/2020	History Chats: Ollie Bache-Wiig - Virtual	Virtual	20	92	520	
12/24/2020	History Chats: Santa Visits Marathon County			122		
	Count	21	Total:	503	1,773	12,569
<b>Program</b>						
1/12/2020	BYOB - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	6			
1/13/2020	Marathon Assisted Living - Presentation/Lecture - Gdansk, Poland - Rick Lohr - Marathon, WI	Marathon, WI	7			
1/14/2020	Forest Park Assisted Living - Presentation/Lecture - Gdansk, Poland - Rick Lohr - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	22			
1/15/2020	Applegate Terrace Assisted Living - Presentation/Lecture - Gdansk, Poland - Rick Lohr - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	11			
1/16/2020	Renaissance Assisted Living - Presentation/Lecture - Gdansk, Poland - Rick Lohr - Weston, WI	Weston, WI	16			
1/16/2020	Remember When Writers - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	7			
1/21/2020	Primrose Assisted Living - Presentation/Lecture - Gdansk, Poland - Rick Lohr - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	12			
1/23/2020	Mountain View Assisted Living - Presentation/Lecture - Gdansk, Poland - Rick Lohr - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	9			
1/30/2020	Civil War Book Club - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	17			
2/3/2020	Catholic Women - Churches - Gary G - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	40			
2/12/2020	BYOB - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	5			
2/13/2020	I Remember When Club - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	7			



## Marathon County Historical Society Events, Lectures and Programs

1/1/2020 to 12/31/2020

			Live Attendees	Total Views	Minutes Viewed
2/16/2020	Biogrpahy and Memoir - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	8		
2/17/2020	Golden Kiwanis - History of Window Making - Ben - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	40		
2/20/2020	Mount Calvary Women - Slide Show/Power Point - History of Churches - Rothschild, WI	Rothschild, WI	20		
2/27/2020	Copperleaf Assisted Living - Traveling Trunk - Toys and Games - Anna - Marathon, WI	Marathon, WI	25		
2/27/2020	Civil War Book Club. - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	19		
3/2/2020	VFW - Slide Show/Power Point - History of NW Neighborhood - Gary G - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	18		
3/4/2020	Copperleaf Assisted Living - Slide Show/Power Point - Women of Wausau - Marathon, WI	Marathon, WI	15		
3/11/2020	BYOB - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	4		
10/5/2020	Noon Optimists - Presentation/Lecture - Park History - Ben - Wausau, WI	Wausau, WI	40		
	Count	21			
		Total:	348		
		<b>Report Total:</b>	<b>1,027</b>	<b>1,773</b>	<b>12,569</b>



# Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
MARATHON COUNTY

## February 2021 Educator Update

*(for work completed in January of 2021)*

### **FoodWise Education - Tammy Hansen, Gaonou Thao, Melissa Yates**

- Tammy revised the new 2021 schedule for the virtual “Healthy Eating” series that will be held monthly. These nutrition/food demonstration lessons will resume in February with the topic of “Soup-er Bowl Worthy Meals.” These lessons will be open to residents from Marathon, Lincoln and Langlade Counties.
- Gaonou and Tammy began conducting a twice weekly virtual Hmong StrongBodies series on January 4th. StrongBodies is a ten-week strength training program developed by Tufts University.
- Gaonou and Tammy met with Portage/Wood Counties FoodWise staff to plan a joint monthly nutrition/ food demo series with Hmong Head Start parents/preschoolers to start in February.
- Tammy met with Julie Bollman, Out-of-School Learning Coordinator for the Wausau School District, in regards to offering a virtual “Fun with Food” nutrition series for the students participating in afterschool programming as well as offering family nutrition education at virtual Family Nights for Title 1 schools. We are currently planning a five-week virtual nutrition/food demo series beginning on April 15th for the students from Lincoln, Riverview, Franklin and G.D. Jones Elementary Schools. Additionally, we will be conducting a single-session lesson for families participating in a Lincoln Elementary Family Night on March 23rd.
- Tammy participated in the first meeting of the full Marathon County Hunger Coalition since March 2020. She will be partnering with a United Way intern on a special project to develop healthy recipes that will be used as a basis for the coalition’s monthly bulk food purchase. Participating pantries will then distribute food bags to patrons that include all the ingredients to prepare the accompanying recipe.
- Tammy continues to work on the statewide Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) review team looking at the issue of food security and FoodWise work with food pantries and also works with a second PSE team looking at FoodWise work with Farmers’ Markets.

### **4-H Youth Development - Kaitlyn Bernarde**

- OUT ON MATERNITY LEAVE (Estimated return Mid February)

### **Agriculture Education - Heather Schlessner**

- Finalized edits to Journal of Extension Article this past month, and am waiting for the new submission website to upload final manuscript.
- We offered the third Heart of the Farm Coffee chat program on January 11<sup>th</sup>.
- The Dairy Team continues to offer weekly zoom programs every Tuesday.
- The Farm Management team is also offering weekly Farm Management program on Friday’s.
- I completed assessing the Emergency management Animal Handling online training documents for ADA accessibility. The online platform will be ready for testing at the end of the month.

- I have taken on co-chair responsibilities for the Midwest Manure Summit, due to the current chair leaving Extension. The Midwest Manure Summit is scheduled for February 24<sup>th</sup> via zoom. More information about the conference can be found at: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/midwestmanure/>
- I have been working on several articles on farm succession regarding the distribution of assets.
- I have also been asked to provide educational materials for the Farm and Industry Short course on the financial model and record keeping. On Feb 17<sup>th</sup> I will be giving a one hour lecture to the students enrolled in the course.

## Community Development Education - Melinda Osterberg

- **Broadband Task Force.** Continued to support the Marathon County Broadband Task Force's work. Attended the January 11th Task Force meeting, conducted research on Starlink, and contacted area Internet Service Providers for input on a broadband survey.
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day In Service.** Was a member of the MLK Jr. Day In Service planning team. Assisted in event organization and provided technical support during the event. Jason Hausler and I co-facilitated a session on how to advance lessons learned throughout the day.
- **Chinese New Year.** Met with representatives from the Wausau School District about providing a learning opportunity for students to learn about the Lunar New Year. Determined to work with G.D. Jones Elementary School on a virtual family night recognizing the holiday on February 11th. District staff indicated this will be the first family night of the 2020-2021 School Year.
- **BHM Courageous Community Conversation.** Partnered with La'Tanya Campbell on a series of Courageous Community Conversations recognizing Black History Month. The conversations will occur Wednesday evenings throughout February, to date 48 individuals have registered for the program. If you are interested in attending, please register at: <https://go.wisc.edu/wjkh29>
- Jason Hausler and I met with Mayor Katie Rosenberg and other City of Wausau officials to discuss UW-Madison Extension housing resources.

## Horticulture Education - Janell Wehr

- **Foundations in Horticulture (FIH)-** I continue to co-facilitate the pilot program, Foundations in Horticulture. FIH is a survey course which introduces the student to the fundamentals of horticulture. FIH will replace Master Gardener training and will be open to all interested individuals, regardless of desire to become a Master Gardener Volunteer. I look forward to bringing this program to Marathon County as an entry point for individuals interested in working in the green industry.
- **Starting Seeds Indoors-** I developed and delivered "Starting Seeds Indoors" for a statewide audience. Participants were introduced to a variety of seed starting mediums and the requirements for germination. When asked, 96% of participants reported as a result of the program, they understood the types of growing media necessary to start seeds. 94% of participants stated because of the program, they understood the requirements for seed germination, and 89% reported high degree of confidence in their ability to start seeds due to their participation in the program.
- **Don't waste your thyme- Composting 101-** I partnered with UWSP Continuing Education for the "Good Ideas!" adult learner's winter conference. In the three-day, web based, interactive class, students learned best practices to effectively manage yard trimmings and kitchen scraps.
- **Planning the Garden-** In this two-part series, participants learned how to choose a good garden site, cultivars best suited for Wisconsin gardens, crop rotation, and making a garden map. Participants reported as a result of the program, 91% were confident in their ability to choose appropriate cultivars, and 92% reported increase in ability to choose an appropriate garden location. 94% reported they would change at least one gardening technique in the coming growing season, and 87% shared an increase in confidence in crop rotation.

- **All dressed up and nowhere to grow: Landscape Design 101-** I will be one of the presenters at the Marathon County Master Gardeners winter symposium, Garden Visions. Garden Visions will be hosted online this year. At this time, there are over 300 participants registered for the program.

### Area Director Update - Jason Hausler

- Providing interim leadership while Kaitlyn Bernarde is on leave, supporting 4-H members and families with programming and volunteer management.
- Co-Chair statewide Fairs Advisory Committee which kicked off in January. Goal is to improve communication between all parties affiliated with Fairs leading to more vibrant community events for the public and our clientele.
- Prepare data for the Priority Based Budgeting process, examining previous entries and realigning with current staffing structures and program delivery.
- Participated in, and led, a session at the MLK Jr. Day On event.
- Assisted staff and county officials with the Broadband Task Force administration while support staff is on leave.

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Como empleador que brinda igualdad de oportunidades en el empleo y acción afirmativa (EEO/AA, por sus siglas en inglés), la University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension, proporciona igualdad de oportunidades en el empleo y en sus programas, incluyendo los requisitos del Título VI, Título IX, y de la ley federal para personas con discapacidades en los Estados Unidos (ADA, por sus siglas en inglés).

Tus Tswv Hauj Lwm Ntawm (EEO/AA), ntawm lub Tsev Kawm Ntawv Qib Siab (University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension) pab rau kev ncaj ncees txog kev hauj lwm thiab kev pab cuam, xws li nyob rau hauv Title VI, Title IX, thiab ntawm tsab cai Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) yuav tsum kom muaj.