



Photo by Roger Zimmermann, District 22 Supervisor

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## County Comprehensive & Strategic Plans

Diane Wessel Conservation, Planning & Zoning

**A strategic plan** is a roadmap for **organizational** development. It answers the questions of what our local government does (services), who we do it for (customers), and how we excel at what we do (accomplishments). *The focus of a strategic plan is the entire organization.*

A strategic plan has a short term horizon (3-5 years). The plan includes the organization's mission, vision, values and strategies.

**A strategic plan defines the work of government.**

**A comprehensive plan** is a roadmap for **community** development (transportation, natural resources, agriculture, & economic development). It answers the question of what we want our community to look like in the future. *The focus of a comprehensive plan is the entire geographic area of the community.*

A comprehensive plan has a long term horizon (20-30 years). It includes the community's goals and the objectives and policies to achieve those goals.

**A comprehensive plan guides public policy regarding community development.**

The County's comprehensive plan focuses on regional issues and issues that are under county jurisdiction.

Strategic and comprehensive plans define where we are, where we want to go, and how we will get there. They identify the challenges and opportunities we face now and in the future. Both plans are used to make decisions regarding the allocation of resources (capital and people).

Strategic and comprehensive plans differ in that strategic plans are about the work of the organization, while comprehensive plans are about the development of the community.

Marathon County will update both plans in 2011. Watch for upcoming informational meetings!

## Community Comprehensive Plan Assistance

Diane Wessel, Conservation, Planning and Zoning

Most Marathon County communities' comprehensive plans were developed prior to 2006.

A lot has changed in 5+ years!

To address the changing environment (economical, social, natural, and demographic), many communities are looking to update their comprehensive plans.

Much of the data used in the development of the comprehensive plans has been updated.

Even more important than updating the base information is a review of the goals, objectives, strategies, and actions. These make up your community's vision for the future.

It is important to review the plans and identify progress made towards implementation since the adoption of the plan, what may no longer apply, and what new goals your community may have for the future.

Marathon County CPZ is providing limited assistance to communities in the update of their plans. Standard data collection, maps, and limited consultation will be provided at no charge.

Data available from CPZ:

- Economic
- Housing
- Demographic
- Social
- Transportation
- Land use
- Property assessment
- Employment



## Expansion of Broadband Communications

Dean Forss, Broadband Education Coordinator, UW-Extension

Marathon County is part of an effort to improve online access in our region. Two federal grants are being managed by UW-Extension at the state level; the grants involve five pilot communities.

The intent of the Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI) grant is to improve online access for health care delivery, public safety, K-12 schools, libraries, and post-secondary education.

Economic development is increasingly dependent on an infrastructure that supports high speed internet communication.

Area business and residents could benefit from this increased bandwidth as mid-tier providers will have open access (at fair market value) to the main fiber-optic network and options to implement higher speed services to the end user.

The Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) grant supports education about the opportunities available through the internet for personal and business development. Future plans for education include sessions at branch libraries and locations that serve vulnerable populations.

For more information:  
[www.uwex.edu/broadband](http://www.uwex.edu/broadband)  
or  
Dean Forss: 715-261-1246

## The Real Cost of a Winter Storm

Jim Griesbach, Highway

Can local or state government afford to fight a winter storm? Perhaps a better question is, can they afford not to?



A recent survey done by the American Highway Users Alliance shows that in the state of Wisconsin, a one day shutdown due to snow and ice has a negative \$149 million economic financial impact to our state.

These figures include lost wages, lost retail trade and lost tax revenue. The study also shows the ripple effect from the one day loss doubles the one day impact; making the true impact of a one day storm approximately \$300,000,000 for our state.

So when state or local government needs to make tough decisions on snow and ice budgets, they need not only to look at the amount spent on fighting a snow storm, but what it is costing them **not** to fight our tough Wisconsin winter storms.

## County Forest Land Acquisition

Tom Lovlien—Parks, Recreation, & Forestry

Marathon County residents and visitors value access to public lands for hunting and recreation. These lands also provides an important spark to community and economic development of the region by helping to make Marathon County a great place to live. In fact, during the development of the 2006 – 2020 Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the public identified expansion of the County Forest as

a high priority. To respond to the public desires to access and enjoy public land, Marathon County continues to purchase forest land for multiple uses.

Property that abuts existing County Forest has the highest priority for acquisition to minimize administrative costs and to expand recreational opportunities cost effectively.

The County may only purchase land from cooperative sellers. Prior to the purchase, the County seeks approval from the town where the property is located. Purchases are financed through grants, interest free loans and money set aside specifically for land acquisition.

Questions regarding County policy for forest land acquisition: Contact Tom Lovlien at 715-261-1584

# Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2010–2020

Andy Johnson—Conservation, Planning & Zoning

The Land & Water Resource Management (LWRM) Plan identifies existing natural resource concerns in Marathon County relative to land use conversion of farmland, soil erosion rate trends, groundwater quality and quantity, and nonpoint source water pollution. The plan also outlines the conservation policies, watershed assessments and programs that will be administered by the County to help protect the communities' land and water resources.

To learn more:

[www.co.marathon.wi.us/](http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/)

or call Andy Johnson: 715-261-6002

The Land Conservation and Zoning Committee has identified resource concerns that will be addressed during the next 10 years:

- Agricultural nonpoint runoff (soil sediment and livestock waste)
- Groundwater quantity and quality
- Land conversion of farmland and woodland
- Forest development & husbandry
- Lake and Big Eau Pleine Reservoir management

Through a combination State, federal and local programs, regulations and monitoring, Marathon County would like to pursue the following outcomes:

- Minimize conflicts between land use activities.
- Maximize infrastructure and community development investments.
- Protect rural character of Marathon County.
- Improve and protect the surface and ground water resources.
- Maintain soil resources through topsoil and organic matter conservation.
- Improve the profitability of agricultural and woodlot producers.

## Used Oil Filters and Oil Absorbents Ban

Meleesa Johnson, Solid Waste

In an effort to divert recyclable materials from landfills and to encourage oil conservation, used oil filters and oil absorbents are banned from landfill or incineration disposal. The disposal ban is in effect beginning January 1, 2011 and applies to individuals, farmers, businesses, commercial or industrial facilities and other organizations.

The oil filter disposal ban includes filters from: Cars, trucks, vans, buses, SUVs, tractors, forklifts, off-road equipment, snowmobiles, ATVs/UTVs and others.

The oil absorbent disposal ban includes clay-type (kitty litter), synthetic, rags, paper toweling, wipes, oil-dry cloths, pillow/pads/socks, sand, sawdust, paper or other materials used as an absorbent.

The law exempts up to one gallon of used oil absorbent from a "non-routine" spill (ex: car leaking oil in garage and it is cleaned up with a paper towel).

For more information:

<http://dailyreporter.com/files/2010/12/wa1503.pdf>

Solid Waste and Recycling Information:  
877-270-3989

## September 2010 Flooding

Diane Wessel, Conservation, Planning & Zoning

Public assistance and hazard mitigation grants were available following the September floods. Communities meeting the following requirements were eligible:

- Current Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Participate in the National Floodplain Insurance Program
- Declared a disaster area
- \$1,000 or more in damages to public property.

**Public assistance** funds cover up to 87.5% of eligible costs for repair and cleanup of public infrastructure (roads, culverts, etc). Damages to public infrastructure from the September floods in Marathon County totaled over \$800,000. Several communities applied for reimbursement.

Draft 2011 Hazard Mitigation Plan:

[www.co.marathon.wi.us/infosubtop.asp?dep=29&tid=54](http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/infosubtop.asp?dep=29&tid=54)

**Hazard mitigation** funds also cover up to 87.5% of eligible projects and were available for communities to reduce the risk to public safety or damage to property from future hazards. Examples include the acquisition and demolition of damaged structures in the floodplain, purchase of emergency radios, and establishment of safety shelters.

# Community Connections

Marathon County CPZ  
210 River Drive  
Wausau, WI 54403-5449

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## A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER BY THE MARATHON COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENTS

Conservation, Planning & Zoning: 261-6040  
Health: 261-1900  
Highway: 261-1800  
Parks, Recreation & Forestry: 261-1550  
Solid Waste: 446-3339  
UW-Extension: 261-1230

The Marathon County Environmental Resources Committee provides guidance on policies and strategies that balance, protect and enhance environmental and community resources through cooperation with all levels of government.

We're on the Web!  
[www.co.marathon.wi.us](http://www.co.marathon.wi.us)

### 5th Medicine Drop Box Location Now Open

The Kronenwetter Police Department hosts a drop off for old and unwanted medications. It is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is located in the lobby of the Kronenwetter Municipal Center. Other drop-box locations include Everest-Metro, Wausau, Rothschild, and Colby-Abbotsford police departments. For more information: 877-270-3989.

## A Family Centered Resource for Special Needs Families in Marathon County: Shared Blessings, Inc. Coming Summer 2011 *Jenn Goldbach*

Learning that your child has special medical needs or a disability can be a traumatic experience. Parents often find their greatest support in other parents who are in a similar situation.

Our community provides families resources on how to find help and resources to care for their child, but does not have a resource specifically focused on the emotional support, insight and understanding of families of special needs children. Shared Blessings, Inc. has been created to meet this need. The location will be at 5120 Stettin Drive in Wausau, complete with community room and parents' lounge.

The 'Build From the Heart Project', sponsored by River Valley Bank, Noah's Never Ending Rainbow and WAOW Newsline 9, is organizing the building of The Teeters family home, which includes this new community resource. Construction will be completed in Spring 2011.

Shared Blessings, Inc. is a grassroots parent network and community room organized and directed by Annie Teeters, a mom of two special needs children and Jenn Golbach, a family friend that has shared the Teeters' journey. Support through education, social, and play opportunities are essential in helping to empower parents to face the challenge of helping their children grow within their school and community.

The catalysts for creating Shared Blessings, Inc. are the shared feelings of social isolation and need for support by those that have "been there"; sharing the ups and downs of the journey, the milestones, and the simple joys.

To learn more about the Build from the Heart project, the Teeters family and the community room visit:

WAOW Special Report  
[www.waow.com/Global/category.asp?C=178695](http://www.waow.com/Global/category.asp?C=178695)

Build from the Heart Home Page at River Valley Bank  
[www.rivervalleybank.com/index.cfm?pid=51&id=84&pageTitle=Community](http://www.rivervalleybank.com/index.cfm?pid=51&id=84&pageTitle=Community)

Or call 715-355-9491

