

2019- 2023

STRATEGIC PLAN



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▶ A Leap of Faith

The 2019-2023 Marathon County Health Department Strategic Plan has been created to inspire fellow colleagues and stakeholders to take a leap of faith and set in motion the actions we need to take to be relevant in our communities. Like any organization that matures, we had a choice to do more of the same, or to challenge ourselves to remain pertinent to those we serve. As an organization, we chose to challenge ourselves to serve better.

Over the past year, the department has spent time reflecting and planning for our future. As part of the process we looked at our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and the challenges facing us. The Marathon County Health Department Strategic Plan is a leadership tool for the department; realizing that without a deliberate decision making process and having a roadmap for our future, fate would shape our future.

For local health departments, the strategic plan is internally focused. The plan protects the assets we have built while managing our weaknesses, keeping our eye on the opportunities and challenges public health faces. Local health departments have been charged with a new role, being the change leader in their community to address the health conditions impacting our residents. As a change leader, we will need to take calculated risks to carry out the strategic plan, hence the term leap of faith.

The mission of the health department is vast, heavily reliant on partnerships and stakeholders for us to succeed in our mission. Our ability to continue to form and maintain meaningful partnerships is a key element in this plan.

I invite anyone reading this to join me in taking a leap of faith so we can serve better. Together we will achieve our vision, “To be the healthiest and safest county in which to live, learn, work, and play”.

In good health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Theurer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joan Theurer, Health Officer

▶ MISSION

To advance a healthy Marathon County community by preventing disease, promoting health, and protecting the public from environmental hazards.

▶ VISION

To be the healthiest and safest county in which to live, learn, work, and play.

▶ CORE VALUES

Core Values are principles for which we stand and provide us direction on how people are to conduct themselves as representatives of Marathon County.

- ▶ **SERVICE** is responsively delivering on our commitments to all of our internal and external customers
- ▶ **INTEGRITY** is honesty, openness, and demonstrating mutual respect and trust in others
- ▶ **QUALITY** is providing public services that are reflective of “best practices” in the field
- ▶ **DIVERSITY** is actively welcoming and valuing people with different perspectives and experiences
- ▶ **SHARED PURPOSE** is functioning as a team to attain organizational goals and working collaboratively with our policy makers, departments, employees and customers
- ▶ **STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES** is conserving the human, natural, cultural, and financial resources for current and future generations

ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH

1. Monitor health status to identify community health problems
2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community
3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues
4. Mobilize, promote and facilitate community partnerships to identify and solve health problems
5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety
7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise available
8. Assure a competent public health and personal healthcare workforce
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems

THE DIFFERENCE THE MARATHON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MAKES...

Prevent infectious disease threats to the public by,

- ▶ Protecting the public from the spread of disease
- ▶ Keeping the public informed of threats and what they can do

Prevent unsafe food and water by,

- ▶ Working with businesses to sell food that does not make people sick
- ▶ Testing water from private and public drinking wells so people do not get sick

Promote strong healthy families during the early years by,

- ▶ Helping families to have babies born healthy
- ▶ Teaching people how to be good parents
- ▶ Helping families connect to community resources
- ▶ Preventing childhood trauma and injuries

Create places where it is easy to support healthy lifestyles by,

- ▶ Choosing to use alcohol and other drugs safely
- ▶ Breathing smoke-free air
- ▶ Being active
- ▶ Getting healthy, affordable food
- ▶ Making good mental health as important as good physical health

Protect against health hazards by,

- ▶ Keeping the public informed of hazards and what they can do
- ▶ Protecting the public from hazards
- ▶ Making sure children are not exposed to lead

Monitor and address community health priorities by,

- ▶ Identifying major causes of disease, injury and premature death
- ▶ Facilitate community partnerships to address issues impacting our communities

GOAL 1

Citizen
Perspective

Integrate concepts of health equity into programs and initiatives that address the population health needs in Marathon County.

OUTCOME MEASURES

1.A

By December 31, 2020 and annually thereafter, 100% of employees will participate in a shared learning experience to further their understanding and ability to apply the concepts of health equity in their day-to-day work.

1.B

By December 31, 2020 and annually thereafter, 90% of Board of Health members will participate in a shared learning experience to further their understanding and ability to apply concepts of health equity when making policy decisions.

1.C

By December 31, 2021 and annually thereafter, 80% of Healthy Marathon County alliance members will participate in a shared learning experience to further their understanding on health equity.

1.D

By December 31, 2021 and annually thereafter, 100% of new employees will complete a training on health equity within one year of employment.

1.E

By December 31, 2021 and annually thereafter, the Health Department will have revised and/or adopted four new practices to further alignment of programs, services and community initiatives to include concepts of health equity.

STRATEGY AND RATIONALE

1.1

Build locally and contribute statewide to a learning community of health equity

Marathon County Health Department will look to and build upon what other leading health departments and the State of Wisconsin are doing to incorporate the concepts of health equity into their programs, services, and community initiatives. The department will promote a learning community within Marathon County by creating a common definition of health equity, providing examples of what health equity looks like for program areas, and framing health equity from the worldviews of market and social justice.

1.2

Further knowledge and skill around health equity among employees, Board of Health, and community partners

Marathon County Health Department will develop educational resources for employees, Board of Health members and community partners to further their awareness, knowledge, and skill in regards to health equity. This will enhance their ability to incorporate concepts of health equity when assessing, implementing, and evaluating program services and community initiatives. Individual, team, cross-team, and department-wide learning strategies will be used to promote health equity integration across all program services and community initiatives.

1.3

Make the case for investing in health equity

Marathon County Health Department will use a prevention framework to increase residents understanding as to the benefits of reducing or eliminating disparities in health. The department will utilize data and stories to demonstrate the case for investing in health equity.

1.4

Modify services and practices for health equity

Marathon County Health Department will assess and align program services and initiatives from a health equity lens whereby the department's products meet the expectations of customers. Examples of products include: accessible content on websites, service hours, and written materials in Hmong and Spanish.

GOAL 2

Employee Learning and Growth

Foster an organizational culture that supports innovation and excellence.

OUTCOME MEASURES

2.A

By December 31, 2019 and annually thereafter, a quality improvement project will be completed in each of the six major program areas of: communicable disease, community health improvement plans and processes, chronic disease prevention, environmental health and safety, family health, and human health hazards.

2.B

By December 31, 2020 and annually thereafter, benchmarks of success will be established for all Priority Based Budgeting programs with an investment of \$25,000 or more.

2.C

By December 31, 2020 and annually thereafter, all new employees will attend the State of Wisconsin Division of Public Health's public health orientation or in-house Public Health 101 training within one year of employment.

2.D

By December 31, 2021 and annually thereafter, 80% of employees will incorporate one new practice into their work as a result of attending a training and/or conference.

STRATEGY AND RATIONALE

2.1

Create professional growth expectations and promote professional development opportunities

Marathon County Health Department will set standards for professional development. Managers and direct reports share the responsibility for creating a professional development plan. Employees will be encouraged to seize professional development and leadership opportunities through training, conferences, and professional organizations. Managers will be knowledgeable of direct reports' strengths, interests, and skills. Learning among colleagues will be promoted within the department and county.

2.2

Further the application of professional development learning opportunities across the department

Marathon County Health Department will create additional opportunities for applying what was learned from trainings and conferences within teams and the department.

2.3

Embrace intentional innovation by creating conditions for employees to think, plan, reflect and evaluate

Marathon County Health Department will further its current learning organizational culture by having employees take time to think, plan, reflect, and evaluate program services and initiatives to assure they meet the needs of our residents. The department will have work spaces to support varying work styles and creativity. The department will promote a work environment where taking calculated risks and failing forward provides learning opportunities and is valued. All employees will have a basic understanding of how the Denison Organization Culture Model informs the department to achieve organizational excellence.

2.4

Foster a culture of quality improvement that maximizes the use of technology

Marathon County Health Department will further expectations of quality improvement by helping all employees see how quality improvement activities can be integrated into their day-to-day work. Employees will understand how quality improvement aligns with public health accreditation and supports our ability to achieve established program benchmarks of success.

GOALS

Operations

Advance strategic collaborative partnerships at the local, regional and state level to fulfill the department's mission.

OUTCOME MEASURES

3.A

By December 31, 2019 and annually thereafter, 85% of community partners will identify they trust in the Health Department's ability to be collaborative partners as exemplified by follow-through on commitments and shared decision making.

3.B

By December 31, 2020 and annually thereafter, 50% of employees will be a member of a local community group or county-wide initiative that advances one or more program goals.

3.C

By December 31, 2021 and annually thereafter, 35% of employees will serve in a formal leadership role for a local, regional or state collaborative effort (e.g., board, association, committee, coalition, etc.).

3.D

By December 31, 2021 and annually thereafter, the six major Health Department programs will track in-kind resources leveraged to advance the objectives in the 2018-2022 Marathon County Strategic Plan, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, or the Marathon County Community Health Improvement Plan. The six major programs include communicable disease, community health improvement plans and processes, chronic disease prevention, environmental health and safety, family health, and human health hazards.

3.E

By December 31, 2022 and annually thereafter, 45% of employees will have completed a media contact.

STRATEGY AND RATIONALE

3.1

Demonstrate the value of partnerships in furthering the department's mission

Marathon County Health Department will develop a system to measure the contributions of partners in furthering health outcomes in terms of in-kind time, money, and other resources. The department will provide an annual report to be included in the budget process.

3.2

Leverage media partnerships and social media to further program goals

Marathon County Health Department will develop an annual media plan that includes social media to be more proactive in providing educational messages. The department will further relationships with media contacts across all program areas. Additional media training and mentoring will occur to increase the department's bench-strength in using media to further program goals.

3.3

Promote the investment in intentional partnership relationships

Marathon County Health Department will continue to identify, evaluate, and adjust partnership investments in order to be effective in furthering programs', and the county's strategic and comprehensive plan goals. Networking at community meetings, events, and conferences is valuable in building new and maintaining trusting working relationships. Employees will further their skills in developing and maintaining effective partnerships.

3.4

Position the department to be the chief health strategist in the county

Marathon County Health Department will be seen as the Chief Health Strategist in addressing the social determinates of health and collaborating across non-sector partners to advance the community health priorities in Marathon County. As Chief Health Strategist, the department will further its leadership role to bring together community stakeholders, thereby leveraging resources and integrating systems to address health disparities. Further investments in facilitating decision making, along with shaping messages intended for partners, policy makers, and residents will be made.

GOAL 4



Inform and advance public health policy in support of the County’s mission and strategic goals.

OUTCOME MEASURES

- 4.A ▶ By December 31, 2019 and annually thereafter, the Health Department will actively support or advance one statewide public policy initiative.
- 4.B ▶ By December 31, 2020 and annually thereafter, the Board of Health will advance five policies to further public health’s mission.
- 4.C ▶ By December 31, 2020 and annually thereafter, the department will be proactive in publishing three information articles per program areas for residents about public health prevention strategies in the areas of communicable disease, chronic disease prevention, environmental health and safety, family health, and human health hazards.
- 4.D ▶ By December 31, 2021 and annually thereafter, 90% of the employees will be able to state the goals of the six major program areas.

STRATEGY AND RATIONALE

4.1

Responsibly frame messages to encourage desired health outcomes

Marathon County Health Department will further employees skills in shaping stories with data to increase policy makers' and the public's understanding of the impact of public health programs and services. The department's website will be enhanced to improve user friendliness and service products will be developed through the customer's eyes and what they expect.

4.2

Further employees understanding of the department's role in advancing public policy

Marathon County Health Department will develop Public Policy 101 resources and training. Employees who have a role in shaping public policy will further their understanding of the public policy process, and the difference between advocacy and education versus lobbying. Policy opportunities to advance program goals will be identified and monitored to determine which opportunities are advanced to the Board of Health and County Board of Supervisors.

4.3

Increase employees' skills to serve as the department's ambassador for programs

Marathon County Health Department will develop key talking points for major programs to be utilized by employees when talking with partners, community members, and policy makers. Employees will be able to speak about each teams' program services impacts.

4.4

Influence public policy through education

Marathon County Health Department will maintain and enhance its connection to state public health associations in order to influence public policy by seizing the opportunity to serve on boards, committees, and workgroups of the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards and the Wisconsin Public Health Association. The Board of Health and employees will maintain and further working relationships with policy makers.

▶ A Roadmap for Synergy

The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan creates a roadmap for the future of the Marathon County Health Department, affirming our mission and vision. The plan is intended to be internally focused; identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges in carrying out the department's mission. In order to achieve the department's vision, that is, "to be the healthiest and safest county in which to live, learn, work, and play", the plan lays out goals, objectives, and strategies that build on our current assets.

The health department, like many local health departments in Wisconsin and across the United States, is in the process of being "public health accreditation ready". Developing a strategic plan every five years is an effective performance management tool; one of three requisite planning documents for local health departments seeking national accreditation. Refer to Diagram 1.

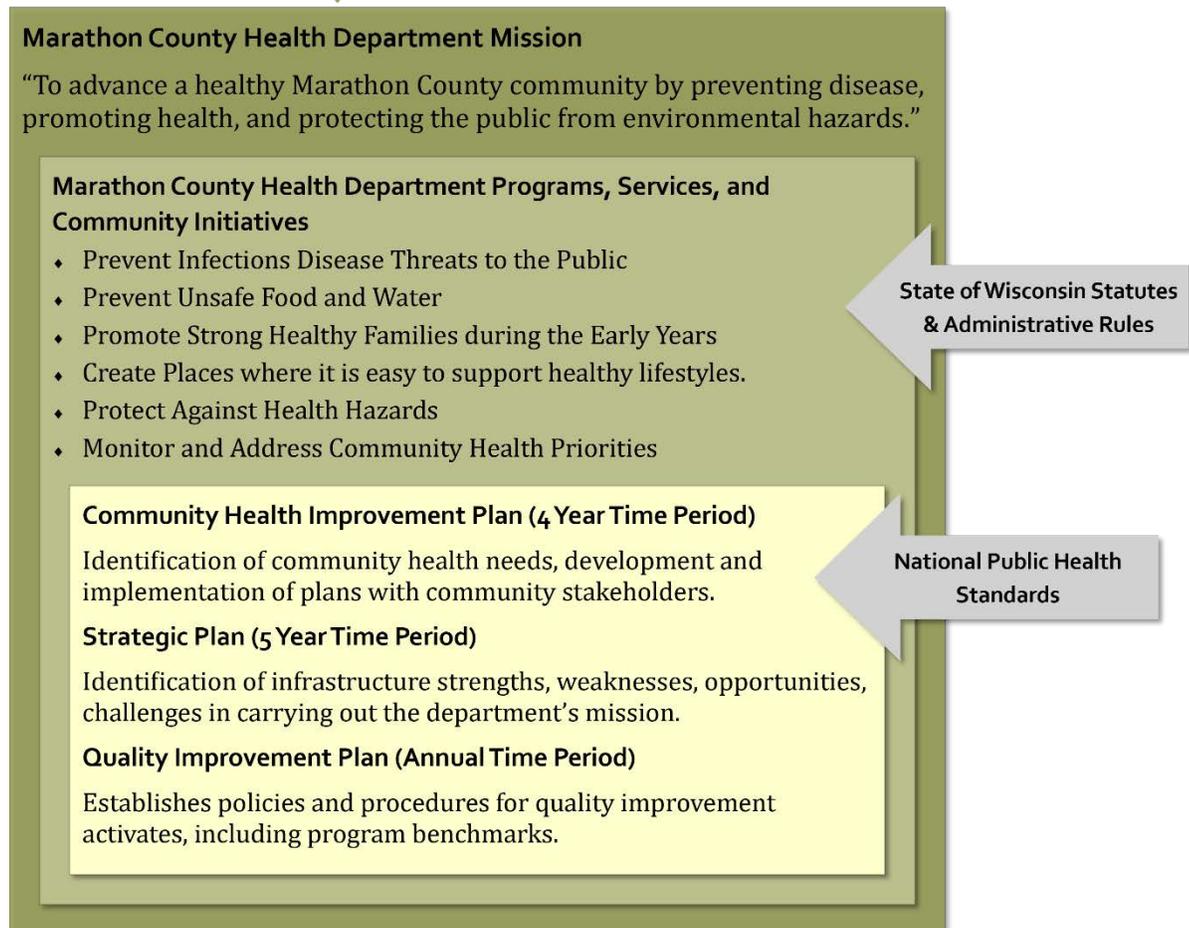
The health department's strategic plan is not a plan developed or carried out in isolation. A tool known as a balanced scorecard framework was used in developing the plan to ensure that as a department we continue to focus on citizen's perspectives, employee learning and growth, operations, and financial health. The plan reinforces the department's commitment to be performance oriented, ensuring that program services and initiatives are relevant and county resources are invested wisely.

To ensure the strategic plan is incorporated into the day-to-day workings of the department, an annual plan of work will be developed to map out tasks and timelines to move forward outcome objectives and associated strategies. Outcome objectives will be incorporated into the health department's dashboard, evaluating our progress in meeting said objectives on an annual basis.

The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan will secure the department's future ability and resources to address Marathon County public health needs through our program services. As a result of having a solid internal roadmap for the department, the Marathon County Health Department will be in a position to lead and/or support the implementation of the Marathon County Strategic and Comprehensive Plan objectives. Subsequently, the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

creates synergy beyond the department, enabling the Marathon County Health Department to create significant impacts by leveraging partnerships with county government and community stakeholders to achieve our vision, “to be the healthiest and safest county in which to live, learn, work, and play.”

Diagram 1





SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Why is this important for the future of the Health Department?

- ▶ Demonstrates alignment to Marathon County’s goal of being the healthiest, safest, most prosperous County in the State.
- ▶ Creates a balance between what residents view as important with what is needed to prevent disease and protect the public with resources available.
- ▶ Adheres to carrying out best and evidence-based practices in order to use resources wisely, enhance impacts, and to establish and maintain credibility.
- ▶ Aligns with Marathon County’s and the Health Department’s core values of diversity and service.
- ▶ Ensures programs and initiatives are inclusive and accessible to everyone.
- ▶ Supports the overarching community health priority, “Social and Economic Factors that Influence Health”, a state and national focus.
- ▶ Acknowledges and honors targeted universalism—considers some people need more and some people need fewer services.
- ▶ Displays we are adaptable and responsive to community needs.

Goal 1: Integrate concepts of health equity into programs and initiatives that address the population health needs in Marathon County.

What do we currently have in place that supports us in achieving the identified goals?

- ▶ Social and Economic Factors that Influence Health is a 2017-2020 Marathon County Health Department's Community Health Priority. The health priority was selected by the Board of Health and representatives from Healthy Marathon County.
- ▶ The Health Department has begun to increase employees' awareness of the concepts and research behind health equity since 2017 through team discussion, department training, and statewide conferences.
- ▶ The Health Department has begun efforts to increase an understanding of health equity and awareness of the implications for advancing community health priorities among partners.
- ▶ The Health Department program services are adjusted according to need, and products are developed based on consumers' expectations with the end user in mind.
- ▶ The Health Department employees have an understanding of how poverty, education, language, and mental health impacts housing choices and how we provide services.
- ▶ Grant funds received from the State of Wisconsin for Marathon County Health Department programs have a focus on health equity.
- ▶ The MarathonCountyPulse.org can house data, disaggregate data, and share [equity or inequity] in reports on the website.
- ▶ The Health Department is advancing components of health equity through community initiatives such as RISEUP and collaborations with the Marathon County Conservation, Planning, and Zoning Department on the public transit system.

Goal 1: Integrate concepts of health equity into programs and initiatives that address the population health needs in Marathon County.

Why is this important for the future of the Health Department?

- ▶ Attracts and keeps quality employees.
- ▶ Invests in how the work of the Health Department is carried out, that is through people, with 73% of budget allocated to employees and only 5% in operations.
- ▶ Engages employees - happy employees are motivated and focused in carrying out the department's mission.
- ▶ Reinforces the pride Marathon County government takes in being seen as a leader and a learning organization, where it is okay to take calculated risks and fail forward.
- ▶ Commits the Health Department to continuous quality improvement, striving to be innovative in our fields.
- ▶ Aligns with Public Health Accreditation Standard on workforce development.
- ▶ Drives the Health Department to pay attention to the balance of what employees want and what residents expect. Community needs and work force needs change; therefore, as employees and as an organization, the department needs to be able change and evolve.
- ▶ Requires time and resources when thinking and planning with innovation and excellence in mind; if innovation and quality improvement is not pursued as an organization, the department will not be as effective in meeting residents' needs and expectation.
- ▶ Contributes to the Health Department's credibility within the community, both with residents and other organizations. The department has been given opportunities because it is seen as credible in the community, region, and state.
- ▶ Ensures an organization is able to adapt to meet changing service needs.
- ▶ Acknowledges that as a government entity there are boundaries to the department's ability to pursue innovation compared to the private sector.
- ▶ Supports innovation and quality improvement; technology within the department is about inclusion and not substitution. When adding a new technology, the other options are not taken away. Technology enhances the quality of our work by increasing security, efficiency, and the use of resources, such as time and money.

Goal 2: Foster an organizational culture that supports innovation and excellence.

What do we currently have in place that supports us in achieving the identified goals?

- ▶ The Health Department allocates funds for continuing education in the budget each year that includes subscriptions, registration fees, travel, lodging/meals, professional license/certification fees, professional association fees, and paid time.
- ▶ The Health Department's Quality Improvement Team has been in place since 2013 and meets 3-4 times per year.
- ▶ The Health Department established a Quality Improvement Plan in September of 2012 which outlines expectations for quality improvement in the department.
- ▶ The Health Department presents annual team accomplishments at the January all-staff meeting.
- ▶ The Health Department employees are "rounded" with every six weeks.
- ▶ The Health Department employees created the Innovations group as a means to share new concepts across teams with all who are interested.
- ▶ The Health Department have several staff who serve on local, regional, or statewide boards and committees in leadership roles.
- ▶ The Health Department has begun the task of reviewing job standards to ensure alignment with national Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals.
- ▶ The Health Department's leadership supports staff in participating in non-traditional learning opportunities.
- ▶ The Health Department's leadership supports team retreats that contribute to team building, improving culture, learning, and growth.
- ▶ The Health Department has had 11 graduates from the Marathon County Leadership Development program since 2014 and 9 graduates have served as a mentors.
- ▶ The Health Department and Marathon County Leadership is committed to continuing education, viewing itself as a learning organization. The Health Department creates leadership opportunities for staff through in-house workgroups; and supports leadership opportunities through regional and state workgroups, committees, advisory groups, and boards.
- ▶ The Health Department is a site for student field experience and internships.
- ▶ The Health Department is looked to pilot new IT initiatives and processes within Marathon County Government.
- ▶ The Health Department Administrative Support Team has expanded their technological skills in the areas of Microsoft Office Suite products, and website development and maintenance.

Goal 2: Foster an organizational culture that supports innovation and excellence.

Why is this important for the future of the Health Department?

- ▶ Enables the Health Department to leverage resources, to increase our reach, and to provide services more effectively and efficiently.
- ▶ Aligns strategies across organizations to achieve similar outcomes.
- ▶ Shares responsibility across many sectors for solving public health related issues and associated “wicked” problems which are not ours to solve alone. Creates synergy to cultivate the conditions of Collective Impact, which results in a community working together to minimize negative impacts of the issue; provides an opportunity for us to learn from others’ successes and failures; and enhances the ability to be innovative.
- ▶ Requires us to be mindful in what partnerships we want to engage in so we don’t extend beyond capacity.
- ▶ Creates opportunities for the social justice and market justice worldviews to intertwine.
- ▶ Aligns with Marathon County’s and the Health Department’s core values of shared purpose, stewardship of resources, and quality.
- ▶ Leverages resources to do the work that the Health Department wouldn’t be able to do alone by; maintaining or increasing funding, garnering support from policymakers, increasing the department’s credibility, and establishing sustainability of what has already been built by the department.

Goal 3: Advance strategic collaborative partnerships at the local, regional and state level to fulfill the department’s mission.

What do we currently have in place that supports us in achieving the identified goals?

- ▶ The Health Department employees serve on a number of statewide committees and workgroups; and local, regional, or statewide Boards.
- ▶ The Health Department has working relationships with Municipalities, Marathon County Departments, and other Local Health Departments that contribute to shared purpose and health priorities.
- ▶ The Health Department has working relationships with multi-sector public, non-profits, and private sector organizations to advance program service goals.
- ▶ The Health Department leads and/or participates in a number of community initiatives to advance the department's mission.
- ▶ The Health Department has made investments to increase staff skills in basic meeting participation and facilitation, and advanced facilitation of decision making processes to enhance effectiveness of our partnerships.
- ▶ The Health Department has invested in strategic partnerships to leveraged cash and in-kind resources in furthering the department's mission and program goals.

Goal 3: Advance strategic collaborative partnerships at the local, regional and state level to fulfill the department's mission.

Why is this important for the future of the Health Department?

- ▶ Allows policymakers and residents to make an informed choice as to allocation of resources.
- ▶ Contributes to aligning residents and policy makers expectations of what is needed to fund quality governmental public health services.
- ▶ Provides an avenue for other counties and local jurisdictions to adopt similar policy changes and regulations to address public health issues.
- ▶ Impacts shaping people's behavior more than education alone can do.
- ▶ Reduces the need for and level of program services to individuals and families.
- ▶ Supports a core function of public health; identify and educate on the need for public policy, advise on unintended consequences in relation to public policy, and assist organizations to adhere to policies put into place.
- ▶ Leverages resources to do the work that the Health Department wouldn't be able to do alone by; maintaining or increasing funding, garnering support from policymakers, enhancing the department's credibility, and establishing sustainability of what has already been built by the department.
- ▶ Creates avenues for organizations to align their services and identify ways in which they can contribute.
- ▶ Enhances the understanding of the value of prevention and what role the health department plays.
- ▶ Provides an opportunity to address the intersection of individual rights and government intervention for the common good.

Goal 4: Inform of and advance public health policy in support of the County's mission and strategic goals.

What do we currently have in place that supports us in achieving the identified goals?

- ▶ The Marathon County Board of Health understands their role and responsibility to advance public health policy to the County Board of Supervisors and advocate for program services to meet the public health needs in the county.
- ▶ The Health Department and Marathon County Board of Health has existing relationships with local, state, and federally elected officials.
- ▶ The Health Department played a leadership role in developing the 2016 Marathon County Comprehensive Plan and the 2018-2022 Marathon County Strategic Plan, thereby increasing the County Board of Supervisors understanding of the mission of the Health Department and the impacts program services make.
- ▶ The Marathon County Board of Health in 2017 established a Policy Opportunities and Strategies document to guide their work.
- ▶ The Marathon County Board of Health includes a health impact statement for resolutions adopted since 2015.
- ▶ The Health Department began to create an Executive Annual Report in 2014 as a way to share annual accomplishments with the Marathon County Board of Supervisors, partners, and general public.
- ▶ The Health Department utilizes a number of social media networks to communicate and coordinate community initiatives led by the department as well as provide information on program services.
- ▶ The Health Department programs and initiatives are featured in Marathon County Government e-Newsletter. The e-Newsletter is widely distributed among policy makers, other governmental entities, and businesses. A Public Health Educator joined the Editorial Board in the summer of 2018.

Goal 4: Inform of and advance public health policy in support of the County's mission and strategic goals.



To advance a healthy Marathon County community by preventing disease, promoting health, and protecting the public from environmental hazards.