

# Chapter Five

## Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include things such as electrical service, natural gas, telephone, cable and internet. Community facilities include local government buildings, libraries, educational facilities, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police, fire protection, and emergency medical services. Utilities and community facilities play an important role in the economy and livability of a community.

### Previous Plans and Studies

#### Marathon County All Hazards Mitigation Plan

This document examines general conditions, including an inventory of utilities, community facilities and emergency services throughout the County. Risk assessment is at the heart of the All-Hazards Mitigation program. In order to mitigate the risks, it is necessary to assess their relative importance. The report reviews a series of weather disasters; how they have affected the county in the past and how future instances are likely to affect the County and how local government should respond to such occurrences. The report concludes with suggested mitigation measures that might be taken by local governments to reduce the risk from identified hazards. Counties and incorporated municipalities are required to adopt such plans with updates every five years.

### Utilities

#### Water and Sewer

The Village of Marathon City operates water and sewer utilities as business enterprises, separate from other tax supported functions of the Village government. User fees for the services provided by these utilities pay for the operation, maintenance, repair and capital improvements of the utilities. The water and sewer utilities are governed by the Marathon City Utility Commission, consisting of the village president and four other commissioners who are appointed by the village board.

The source of the Village's water is three wells on the north side of the Rib River. Raw water from these wells is pumped to the Village's water treatment plant at Third and Hemlock Streets. Certain mineral elements are filtered out and the water is treated for biological contaminants. The treated water is then pumped up the hill to the water tower and reservoir. A network of water mains distributes the treated water to Village residents and businesses. The water utility sells about 50 million gallons of water per year to more than 600 customers.

Wastewater from these customers is transported through a network of sewer mains and lift stations to the Village's wastewater treatment plant at North and Chestnut streets. The plant is a conventional activated sludge treatment facility with biological phosphorus removal, chemical polishing and ultraviolet disinfection. Sludge is treated with anaerobic digestion and stored in a tank for seasonal land application. Treated water is released to the Rib River with an average daily flow of just under 250,000 gallons.

## **Solid Waste and Recycling**

The Village of Marathon City contracts with a private company for waste management. Municipal, commercial and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. User fees collected at the landfill defray the cost of landfill operations.

The Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department is in charge of waste management for non-hazardous solid waste. Marathon County Solid Waste Management consists of the 575-acre landfill, recycling programs, composting, and waste-to-energy. The Department operates a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility where residents can drop off hazardous waste free of charge.

Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor on a bi-weekly basis.

## **Stormwater Management**

Surface water management (also referred to as "storm water management") is one of the key components in efforts to improve water quality. It primarily involves controlling the volume, quality, and storage of runoff. Marathon County is especially concerned about non-point sources of pollution, including failing septic systems, urban runoff, and issues often identified with rural areas such as soil erosion, animal waste and pesticides. Non-point pollution is best addressed at the watershed level.

# **Energy and Telecommunications**

## **Electric and Natural Gas**

Natural gas and electric service in the Village of Marathon City is provided by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). WPS is based in Green Bay, WI and operates four power plants (Weston 1, 2, 3, and 4) located in the Villages of Kronenwetter and Rothschild. These plants provide up to 896 megawatts of coal-fired capacity. Weston 4, which began operating in 2008, uses clean coal technology, and is one of the cleanest power plants of its kind in the County.

## **Solar Energy Potential**

The Village of Marathon City recognizes the potential impacts to our community of large-scale Solar Energy projects (100 MW or greater). Since the landscape of the Village and surrounding area offers prime conditions for solar energy development, the Village recognizes the need to encourage the siting of potential solar projects to specific areas that best fit the needs and desires of both the citizens and the agricultural community while minimizing negative impacts on existing land use trends and public interests.

## Wind Energy Potential

The Village of Marathon City recognizes that there are potential impacts to our community stemming from large-scale wind energy projects. Although wind energy can be a very cost-effective source of electricity, wind energy developments do pose potential issues for the Village, mainly regarding visibility, noise, negative impacts on property values, and harmful impacts on wildlife.

Since the landscape of our Village and surrounding area offers prime conditions for wind energy development, the Village should consider adopting an ordinance focused on the regulation of wind turbines that complies with the local government regulatory limitations set by 2009 Wisconsin Act 40 - [ch. PSC 128, Wis. Adm. Code](#) and State Statute [§.66.0401](#). Under current state law, a local ordinance may require a study, money compensation, and annual reports, among other requirements.

## Cable/Internet

Internet service continues to expand as an economic development necessity, and access to internet service is continuing to improve throughout Marathon City and the rest of Marathon County. According to data from the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, there are 713 broadband serviceable locations located within the Village of Marathon City. All 713 of these locations are considered to be served by broadband, meaning that they have access to broadband meeting current standards (100 mbps download & 20 mbps upload speeds). Fiber and cable internet service providers in the area include Spectrum and Frontier. Satellite providers serving the area include Starlink, Bug Tussel Wireless, Country Wireless, US Cellular, T-Mobile, AT&T, AirNet ISP, Hughes Net, and ViaSat.

The **Public Service Commission of Wisconsin** (PSC) maintains maps showing the current provision of broadband and also maintains a broadband almanac which shows data on availability, affordability, and current broadband adoption rates. Maps and the broadband almanac can be accessed at PSC's Wisconsin Broadband Office website: <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/ServiceType/Broadband/BroadbandMaps.aspx>.

## Community Facilities

### Schools

The Village of Marathon City is served by the Marathon School District. The Marathon School District operates a 4K-5 grade elementary school, the Marathon Venture Academy which is a 6-8 grade middle school, and a 9-12 grade high school. St. Mary's School is a 4k-8 grade parochial school located within the Village.

## Post-Secondary Education

- **Northcentral Technical College (NTC)** – located in Wausau, NTC has over 190 program offerings including two-year associates degrees that combine technical skills with general education. NTC also offers one- and two-year technical diplomas concentrated on hands-on learning and short-term certificates to improve job skills. NTC also has a transfer credit program with the UW school system.
- **Mid-State Technical College** – located in Marshfield, is one of 16 regional colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College system, with campuses in Adams, Marshfield, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Rapids. They offer associate degrees, technical diplomas, and certificates in a wide variety of high demand fields.
- **University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP)** – located in the City of Stevens Point, UWSP was founded in 1894. When combined with its satellite campuses in Wausau and Marshfield, total enrollment is over 8,000. The campus offers 80 baccalaureate degrees, 17 graduate programs, and 90 minors, and is known for its robust fine arts and natural resources programs.
- **University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point at Wausau** – offers courses leading to a baccalaureate degree. They also offer graduate degrees including Master of Business Administration (MBA), Physician Assistant (in partnership with UW Madison), and Master’s Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (in partnership with Northern Vermont University).
- **University of Wisconsin Stevens Point at Marshfield** – located in Marshfield, students can work toward a variety of bachelor’s degree options including business administration, nursing, and social work.

## Libraries

Libraries promote lifelong learning, supporting populations not reached by traditional education including very young children and older adults. Libraries also increase access to computers and technology. The Village of Marathon City is served by the Marathon County Public Library system (MCPL). The system includes the Marathon City Branch Library, located on Third Street in Marathon City, in addition to seven other locations. The Marathon City Branch Library is located in a 3,000 sq. ft. facility built in 2010. The MCPL is a member of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service.

## Cemeteries

There are four known cemeteries located within the Village. St. Mary’s Catholic Cemetery is located at 1042 Wisconsin Hwy 107, while Potters Field Cemetery and St. Matthew’s Lutheran Cemetery are located just to the south of St. Mary’s. Saint Anthony’s Friary Cemetery is located at 300 E 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Public Safety

- **Law Enforcement** – The Village of Marathon City is served by the Marathon City Police Department. In 2026, the department was staffed by a police chief and two full-time officers.
- **Fire and Emergency Response** – The Village of Marathon City is served by the Marathon City Fire Department. This Department also serves outlying areas including: Town of Marathon, Cassel, Rib Falls, Stettin, and Emmet. These outlying areas pay a fee for the services of the Fire Department. Emergency response includes EMS first responders, EMTs, and ambulance service. These services are currently provided by a partnership with the Edgar Fire Department. With continued growth in the Village, there may be the opportunity for housing local ambulance service in the future.
- **E-911 Dispatch Service** – The Marathon County Sheriff's Office Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County.

## Hospitals and Medical Services

There are three main hospitals in proximity to the Village of Marathon City. Aspirus Wausau Hospital located at 425 Pine Ridge Boulevard in Wausau, serves as the major hospital in Marathon County, and is a multi-specialty regional health center. Marshfield Clinic Hospital in Weston is a regional hospital with a wide range of advanced care services. Marshfield Medical Center is located at 611 Saint Joseph Avenue in Marshfield and offers a full array of services, specialty services and a complete rehabilitation unit. Residents also report visiting the Aspirus Stevens Point Hospital located in Stevens Point.

The Aspirus Marathon Clinic is located in the Village and provides primary care services. Astia Health, a mobile and tele-medicine provider, also has a clinic within the Village.

## Mental Health and Assisted Living

In addition to the hospitals and clinics described above, Marathon County is served by NCHC, a public agency that also serves Langlade and Lincoln counties. NCHC operates campuses in Wausau, in Antigo, Merrill, and Tomahawk. NCHC offers outpatient, day hospital, community support and inpatient services for mental/emotional problems; vocational, life skill training, early intervention, housing and care management services for the developmentally disabled; and assessment, individual and outpatient group counseling, intensive programming, day hospital, referral for residential and inpatient treatment, and education for alcohol and other drug problems. Services for detoxification and for persons suffering from problems with gambling addiction are also offered.

NCHC operates a nursing home, Mount View Care Center, that offers skilled nursing services at the main campus in Wausau. This facility has a licensed capacity of 320 and serves persons requiring either short term or long term skilled nursing care because of complex physical needs, psychiatric and neurological diseases, dementia or behavior problems.

Copperleaf Assisted Living, located within the Village, provides individualized personal care, support services, and leisure activities for older individuals who cannot live alone but do not require nursing home care. This facility also offers dementia care, hospice, and rehabilitation services.

## **Childcare**

The Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network is a membership organization made up of community-based CCR&R agencies serving the State of Wisconsin. Marathon County is within Region 6, which is served by Childcaring, Inc., located in Wisconsin Rapids.

CCR&R agencies assist parents in selecting quality childcare, help to increase the supply of childcare in areas that may be lacking sufficient care, offer information and technical support to potential childcare providers, and give technical assistance and support to existing childcare programs. Each agency manages a database of existing childcare providers and programs, collects data about childcare rates, provider and teacher salaries, the number of parents and children using their services, the type of care requested and the children's ages. There are two licensed childcare facilities located within the Village – Little Lions Childcare located at 300 County Road NN and Tina's Daycare located at 1002 Walnut Street.

## **Recreation**

### **Local Parks**

The Village of Marathon City operates several outdoor recreational areas and has a local parks plan. The four Village parks are Veterans Park, Water Tower Park, County Materials Sports Complex, and Lions Park. Local parks, especially Veterans Park, are often used for local events such as Marathon Fun Days and local sports leagues. County Materials Sports Complex is a new community park within the Village and held its grand opening in May of 2026. The Sports Complex features three high school softball and youth baseball fields, a new concession stand, two outdoor basketball courts, two pickleball courts, and a modern all-ages playground.

In addition to the Village operated parks, a few other recreational facilities are located in Marathon City. The Marathon Area Swim Association operates an indoor swim center and Marathon High School has a fully equipped Wellness Center which is open to the public.

## County or State Parks

The Marathon County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry department operates several parks in close proximity to Marathon City. These parks are listed below, as well as the only nearby state park, Rib Mountain State Park.

Rib Falls Park is 315 acres with park facilities including an open shelter, toilet, well, and children's play equipment. The majority of the park is currently undeveloped and is the temporary site of a County gravel pit and asphalt plant. The park's main feature is the Big Rib River, which flows through the park and over a dam and rapids, with an impoundment that allows for swimming. The gravel pit is currently being developed as an artificial lake for recreational use.

Sunny Vale Park is located on a narrow strip of the Town of Stettin and the City of Wausau south of STH 29 at 72nd Avenue. Also known as "Manmade" Park, Sunny Vale is a popular 299-acre park with facilities for swimming in Manmade Lake, picnicking, fishing, and model airplane flying. Sunny Vale Softball Complex is a 71-acre facility managed by the Wausau Area Softball Association through a contract with Marathon County. The complex has six lighted softball diamonds, each with a dugout, bleachers, and scoreboards.

Bluegill Bay Park is a 68-acre County park located on the west shore of Lake Wausau between Cloverland Lane and Parrot Lane. The park provides access to Lake Wausau at its boat landing with piers and a boat trailer parking lot, and is subject to overcrowding at times. The park's picnic area has 20 tables, 4 grills, 3 shelters, flush toilets and 104 parking spaces. A fishing area, including a handicapped pier is also available. Forty-eight acres of the park are undeveloped, and the County's tree nursery is also in the park.

Nine Mile Forest Unit is found in the southeast corner of the Town of Marathon. Nine Mile Forest Unit is known as a recreation area with many miles of hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country ski trails. Skiing is promoted with a ski chalet and over 25 kilometers of one-way loops. The forest is open to hunting and snowmobiling. Nine Mile has 4,755 acres of mixed uplands, marshes, and water impoundments.

Big Eau Pleine Park is located in the Town of Green Valley. It is a 1,450-acre County park located on a peninsula surrounded by the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. The park has an extensive trail system and two active recreation areas. Big Eau Pleine facilities include campgrounds, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, shelters, boat launches, swimming beaches, and play equipment.

Rib Mountain State Park is the closest state park to the Village. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The park surrounds the mountain and contains picnicking amenities, hiking trails, and reservable facilities that include a scenic amphitheater, indoor gathering space, and picnic shelters. The top of the park offers spectacular views of the Wausau area and Wisconsin River. Granite Peak Ski Area is on the north face of the mountain and offers downhill skiing and snowboarding.

## Utilities and Community Facilities Issues

- **Trail System** – There are currently no recreational trail links between local parks. Developing a bicycle/pedestrian trail would allow easy access to all local parks.
- **New Recreation Facilities** – There is a desire for more recreational sports fields in the Village. This could be a potential new use to existing brownfield lands north of the River. [new Sports Complex addresses this issue]
- **Expansion of Utilities** – The Village has sufficient water and sewer capacity for existing and anticipated development. However, as the Village expands outside current borders, there may be a need for an additional elevated water storage tank to serve development along STH 29. Extension of water and sewer to newly annexed areas will be a necessity.
- **Solar Energy Farms** – There are concerns about harmful impacts of commercial solar development on prime farmland and the agricultural landscape.
- **Wind Energy** – There are concerns about harmful impacts such as noise, health, aesthetics, negative, loss of productive farmland, and negative impacts on property values associated with wind energy developments.

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# Goals, Objectives & Policies

**Utilities and Community Facilities Goal:** *The Village of Marathon City provides adequate utility infrastructure and community facilities to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.*

1. Maintain provision of services at a high level.
  - a. Perform annual budget evaluations on public service funding.
  - b. Continue to find methods of cost-sharing, such as equipment sharing, with surrounding communities to increase the efficiency by which services are provided.
  - c. Maintain high quality sewer and water services within the Village.
  - d. Periodically check water quality monitoring wells and develop a plan that identifies actions if contamination is discovered.
  - e. Ensure adequate fire and emergency service provision throughout the Village.
  - f. Maintain clear and open communication with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department.
  - g. Continue to work with telecommunications service providers to upgrade and expand access to high-speed data and communications services.
  
2. Plan utility and service extensions for future development.
  - a. Determine the most suitable locations for future development and analyze extension capabilities.
  - b. Explore developing an official map to site locations for infrastructure additions.
  - c. Continue to use the Capital Improvements Plan to establish goals, identify specific improvements, and attain funding.
  - d. Explore adopting policies that transfer user fees to the development of new projects.
  
3. Support and maintain existing community facilities.
  - a. Maintain the Village Hall as a seat of local government and a community meeting hall.
  - b. Ensure the local park system is well maintained and meets the recreation needs of residents.
  - c. Support the Marathon County park system.
  - d. Explore development of a linear trail system to link existing parks and local community attractions.
  - e. Develop a walking path through the Business and Industrial Park.