



MARATHON COUNTY EXTENSION, EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA

Date & Time of Meeting: **Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 3:00pm**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room, Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI 54403**

Committee Members: Stacey Morache, Chair; Randy Fifrick, Vice-Chair; Wayne Hagen, Ann Lemmer, Tom Rosenberg, Rick Seefeldt, Kim Ungerer

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.

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: 146 235 4571

When you enter the telephone conference, **PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!**

The meeting will also be broadcasted on Public Access or at <https://tinyurl.com/MarathonCountyBoard>

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Comment (15 Minutes)** (Any person who wishes to address the committee during the "Public Comment" portion of the meetings, must provide his or her name, address, and the topic he or she wishes to present to the Marathon County Clerk, or chair of the committee, no later than five minutes before the start of the meeting. All comments must be germane to a topic within the jurisdiction of the committee.)
4. **Approval of the March 3, 2026, Extension, Education and Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes**
5. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, Resolution, or Policy**
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by EEED
 1. 2026 Wausau Older Adults Housing Study Presentation
 - B. Discussion and Possible Action by EEED to Forward to County Board for Consideration
6. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**
 - A. Update on UWSP RFP
 - B. Update on River Drive and Thomas Street RFP's
 - C. MCDEVCO's Monthly Report
 - D. UW- Extension Monthly Report
 - E. UWSP – Wausau Report
7. **Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements and Future Agenda Items**
 - A. Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion.
 - B. Next meeting: Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 3:00pm
8. **Adjournment**

*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 261.1500 or email countyclerk@marathoncounty.gov one business day before the meeting.

SIGNED _____ s/s Stacey Morache
Presiding Officer or Designee

EMAILED TO: Wausau Daily Herald, City Pages, and other Media Groups
EMAILED BY: _____
DATE & TIME: _____

NOTICE POSTED AT THE COURTHOUSE
BY: _____
DATE & TIME: _____



MARATHON COUNTY EXTENSION, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA WITH MINUTES

Date & Time of Meeting: **Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 3:00pm**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room, Courthouse, 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI 54403**

Stacey Morache	Present
Randy Fifrick	Present
Wayne Hagen	Present
Ann Lemmer	Present
Tom Rosenberg	Present
Rick Seefeldt	Present
Kim Ungerer	Excused

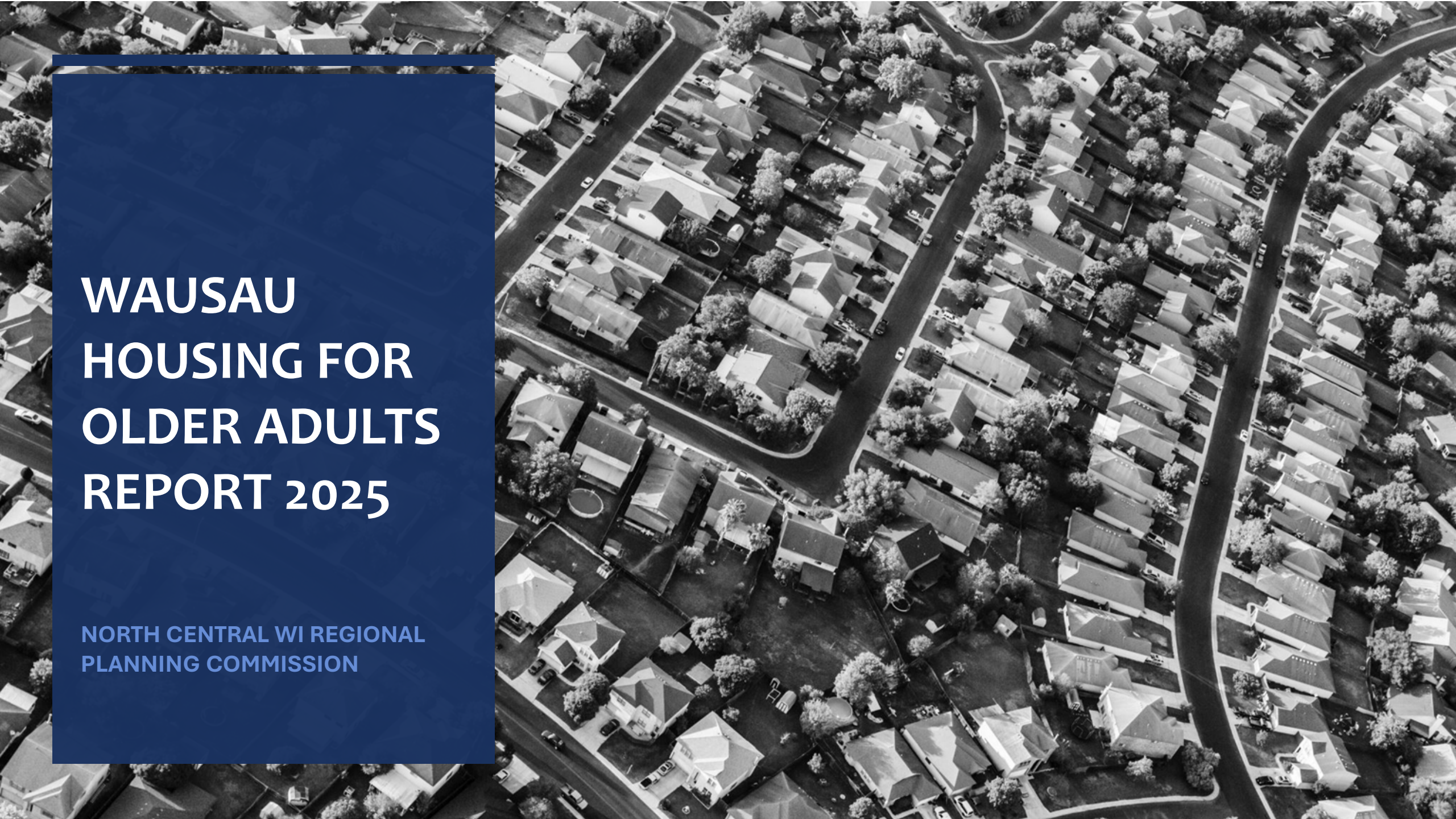
Staff Present: Administrator Leonhard, Brian Desmond, Sam Fenske, Mallory McGivern, Jen McNelly
Others Present:

[Meeting Recording](#)

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – Chair Stacey Morache called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Comment** – (0:00.31) Peter Weinchenk TID
4. **Approval of the February 5, 2026, Extension, Education & Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes** - Motion by Seefeldt, Second by Rosenberg to approve the minutes. Motion carried on voice vote, unanimously.
5. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, Resolution, or Policy**
 - A. Discussion and Possible Action by EEED - None
 - B. Discussion and Possible Action by EEED to Forward to County Board for Consideration - None
6. **Educational Presentations and Committee Discussion**
 - A. Finance Director update on TID meetings (0:03)
 - B. MCDEVCO's Monthly Report
 - C. Library Report
 - D. UW – Extension Monthly Report
 1. Introduction of New Extension Director (0:11.35)
 - E. UWSP – Wausau Report
 - F. Update on WCA Conference presentations and materials related to economic development - what do we see on the horizon for the upcoming board term? (0:14.26)
7. **Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements and Future Agenda Items**
 - A. Committee members are asked to bring ideas for future discussion.
 - B. Next meeting: Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 3:00pm
8. **Adjournment**

Motion by Rosenberg, Second by Hagen to adjourn. Motion Carried on voice vote, unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Minutes Prepared by Kelley Blume



WAUSAU HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS REPORT 2025

NORTH CENTRAL WI REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

BACKGROUND

-
- 2022 Wausau Metropolitan Housing Assessment
 - Region: 4,531 new units by 2040
 - Wausau: 898 by 2040
 - City helps meet regional demand
 - Strong interest in learning more about housing needs as population ages
 - Little data/info available
 - Affordability and staffing biggest concerns

APPROACH

- Focus on age groups- needs differ by age:
 - 55-64
 - 65-74
 - 75+
- Projections do not add to 2022 study
 - Estimated housing occupied by older adults
 - 2024 DOA estimates are lower than those used in 2022 study
 - No new DOA Household (HH) projections yet

DEMOGRAPHICS (MARATHON COUNTY)

Age	2020	2030	2040	2050	Net Change 2020- 2030	Net Change 2030- 2040	Net Change 2040- 2050	Total Change 2020- 2050	% Change 2020- 2050
55-59	10,162	7,800	8,325	8,285	-2,362	525	-40	-1,877	-18.5%
60-64	9,810	8,425	7,360	7,845	-1,385	-1,065	485	-1,965	-20.0%
65-69	8,265	8,860	6,945	7,435	595	-1,915	490	-830	-10.0%
70-74	6,450	8,400	7,395	6,475	1,950	-1,005	-920	25	0.4%
75-79	4,540	6,660	7,335	5,760	2,120	675	-1,575	1,220	26.9%
80-84	3,032	4,515	6,090	5,380	1,483	1,575	-710	2,348	77.4%
85+	3,251	3,655	5,135	6,450	404	1,480	1,315	3,199	98.4%
Total	45,510	48,315	48,585	47,630	2,805	270	-955	2,120	4.7%

CONTINUUM OF OLDER ADULT HOUSING



Long-Term Care (LTC)

Residential Care Apartment Complex (RCAC)

Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF)

Adult Family Home (AFH)

Nursing Homes

RESEARCH/INTERVIEWS

70% of County/ 75% of City households earn under \$75,000

People are living longer, staying in homes longer

A dramatic shift in housing hasn't occurred yet

Debt for older adults is increasing

Growing gaps between savings, investments, etc.

75+ most likely to need apartments, long-term care

People who retire in a destination (Northwoods, sunbelt) often return to Wausau later in life



RESEARCH/INTERVIEWS

Challenges:

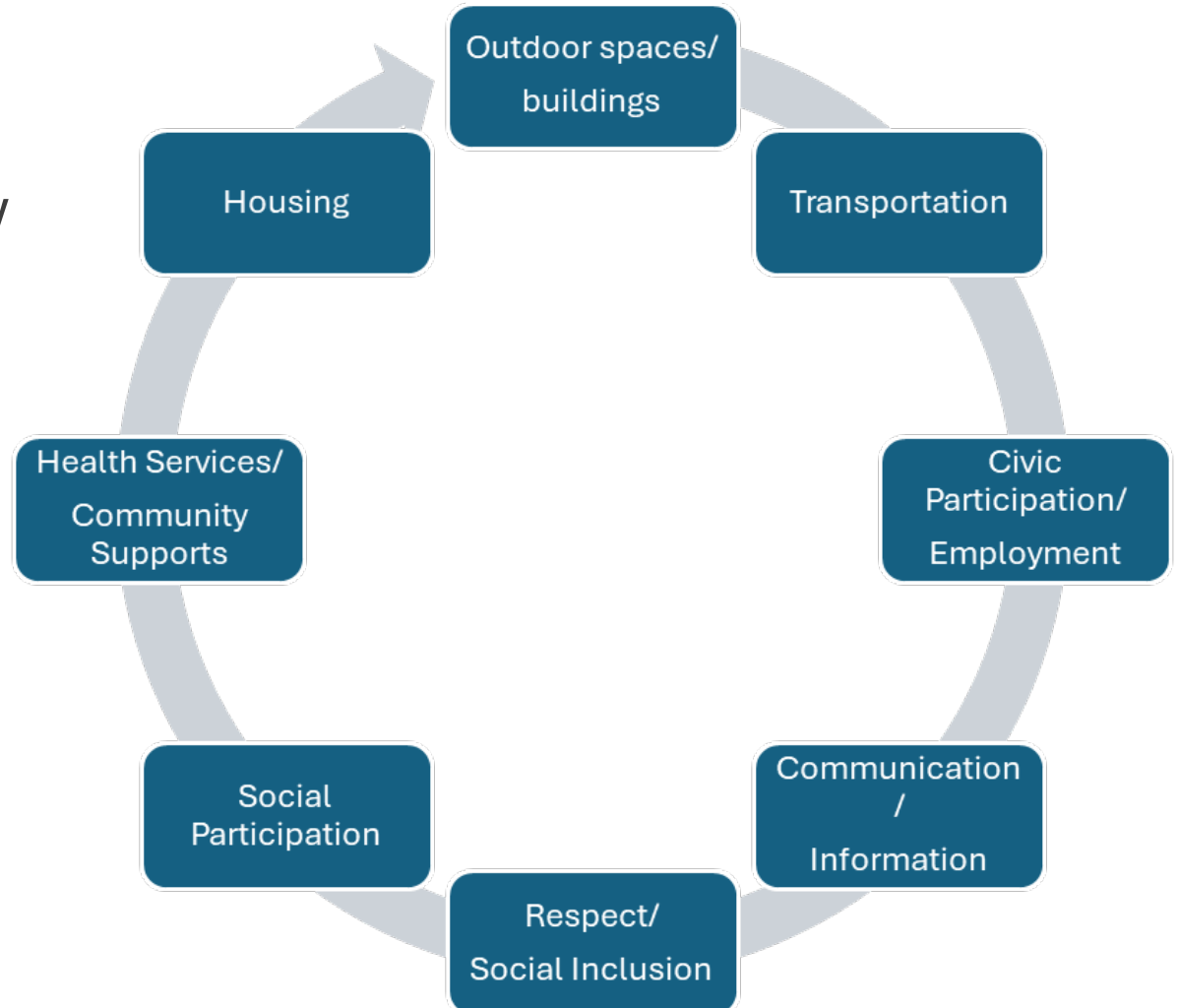
- Affordability and staffing are biggest concerns
- Commercial areas (Rib Mtn, Weston) not connected by transit)
- New housing is expensive to construct
- Some earn too much for public assistance but not enough afford necessities
- Demand for older adult housing/services will rapidly increase, then rapidly decrease
- Condos no longer feasible
- Surrounding rural areas may increase demand in Wausau
- Dual cost burden (house and LTC at same time)

Opportunities:

- The Landing (YMCA) is recognized nationally
- Healthcare systems, walking trails, parks, pickle ball, etc.
- Emerging trends in older adult housing
- Wausau has bigger-city amenities, small city livability
- Wausau is more affordable than other places
- Mix of urban, suburban, and rural lifestyles in Marathon Co.
- Existing transit options, walkability, etc.
- Aging-in-place, technology, multigenerational housing/programs

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

- **Wausau:** AARP Age-Friendly Community since 2018
 - **Score 62/100 based on 8 Domains of livability (see graphic)**
 - Rec's: Bike/ped infrastructure, intergenerational activities
- Age-friendly D.C.
- Los Angeles Aging-Friendly Action Plan



LIVASU, SHEBOYGAN COUNTY, WI

LIVASU, Sheboygan County

- “Dementia Village” based on Dutch communities
- 124 manufactured homes \$95K-\$175K
- Units designed to assist w/ memory care
- Families can live there, landscaping/cameras help
- \$14 million fundraising for Phase 1
- Gym, groceries, spa, restaurant, trails, golf carts



LIVASU, SHEBOYGAN COUNTY, WI



PROJECTED HOUSING DEMAND

- **Countywide totals for Marathon County** (City age projections not available)
- Based on “status quo” using current trends for households 55-64, 65-74, & 75+
- Each projection increased by 20% to reflect outside demand
- Categories:
 - Owner/Renter Occupied Housing (current occupancy rates, HH size, and income distribution)
 - Independent Living (1.5% of those aged 65-74, 13% of those aged 75+)
 - Long-term care (based on current beds to population over 55 ratio)

OWNER AND RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSING

Purchase Price	Change in Demand		
	2020-2030	2030-2040	2040-2050
<\$25K	24	-5	-20
\$25K - \$79K	89	-18	-73
\$80K-\$99K	99	-20	-82
\$100K - \$149K	88	-17	-72
\$150K - \$199K	143	-28	-118
\$200K - \$299K	82	-16	-68
\$300K - \$399K	68	-13	-56
\$400K +	42	-8	-35
Total	636	-126	-523

Monthly Rent	Change in Demand		
	2020-2030	2030-2040	2040-2050
< \$250	13	2	-8
\$250 - \$599	50	7	-28
\$600 - \$899	55	7	-31
\$900 - \$1,249	49	7	-28
\$1,250 - \$1,499	80	11	-45
\$1,500 - \$2,499	46	6	-26
\$2,500 - \$3,499	38	5	-21
\$3,500 and over	23	3	-13
Total	354	48	-200

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Monthly Rent (30% of Income)	Monthly Rent (65% of Income)	Change in Demand		
		2020-2030	2030-2040	2040-2050
< \$250	< \$540	16	13	-4
\$250 - \$599	\$540 - \$1,299	60	48	-14
\$600 - \$899	\$1,300 - \$1,949	67	53	-16
\$900 - \$1,249	\$1,950 - \$2,699	60	47	-14
\$1,250 - \$1,499	\$2,700 - \$3,249	97	77	-23
\$1,500 - \$2,499	\$3,250 - \$5,399	55	44	-13
\$2,500 - \$3,499	\$5,400 - \$7,549	46	37	-11
\$3,500 and over	\$7,550 and over	28	23	-7
Total		430	341	-102

LONG-TERM CARE

LTC Facility	2020 Capacity	2020 Per Capita 65+	2030	2040	2050
AFH	168	0.007	43	5	-9
CBRF	688	0.027	177	22	-38
Nursing Homes	697	0.027	179	22	-38
RCAC	337	0.013	86	11	-18
Total	1,890	0.074	485	60	-104

SUMMARY OF DEMAND

- 636 single-family, owner-occupied homes by 2030.
- 402 renter-occupied housing units by 2040.
- 771 independent living housing units (predominately renter-occupied) by 2040.
- 545 beds by 2040 for assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing.

REVIEW: 2022 RECOMMENDATIONS

Highest Priority

- Amend zoning ordinances that enable a greater variety of housing units and prices.
- Amend subdivision ordinances to allow for smaller lot sizes.
- Reach out to developers, agencies, and nonprofits to increase housing supply.
- Educating the community about the housing market.
- Updating municipal planning documents.

Second Priority

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF).
- Bonds, cash incentives, and/or other financial products.
- Land banks, land trusts, housing trust funds, rent-to-own programs, and other local strategies.
- Financial program administration.

Ongoing: monitor emerging state/federal/local programs and partnerships

NEW RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recruit developers who specialize in housing for older adults, especially continuum of care. Enable flexibility as demand shifts.
2. Work with healthcare systems, health organizations, schools, and workforce training/upskilling programs to address housing, care, and staffing needs.
3. Develop transit, parks, outdoor facilities/amenities, and other public facilities.
4. Support the maintenance, rehabilitation, and upgrading of existing housing stock through City services along with aging-in-place and telehealth capabilities.
5. Identify and repurpose vacant sites and structures.

QUESTIONS?

Contact:

Sam Wessel, AICP

NCWRPC

715-849-5510 ext. 303

swessel@ncwrpc.org

MCDEVCO, Inc. – March 2026 Report

GAP & Micro FINANCING

MCDEVCO continues to work with businesses throughout Marathon County to provide GAP and Micro Financing.

POWTS REVOLVING LOAN FUND

MCDEVCO continues to process and assist with failing septic system replacements for our community.

ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

2026 Programs and Educational Updates:

- **February 10 and February 17, 2026:** Public Speaking
- **April 7 & 14, 2026:** Social Media Marketing
- **May 5 & 12, 2026:** Sales and Use Tax
- ***More programs and offerings are being scheduled for Summer and Fall 2026!***

2025 Programs and Educational Updates:

- **January 28, 2025:** Public Speaking 101 hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **January 29, 2025:** Q1 Entrepreneur Information Session hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **February 4, 2025:** DC Everest Youth Entrepreneurs Tour of MCDEVCO & EEC hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **April 1 & April 8, 2025:** Social Media Marketing hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **May 13, 2025:** Q2 Entrepreneur Information Session hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **May 13 & May 20, 2025:** Sales & Use Tax Workshop hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **July 22, 2025:** UW Law & Entrepreneurship Clinic hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **August 12, 2025:** Q3 Entrepreneur Information Session hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **October 14, 2025:** Q4 Entrepreneur Information Session hosted by MCDEVCO.
- **October 17, 2025:** Women's Entrepreneurship & Leadership Summit
- **November 13, 2025:** Wausau West Entrepreneurs Field Trip to the Incubator.
- **FALL 2025:** GEARS Certificate of Entrepreneurial Excellence hosted by MCDEVCO.

Municipalities

MCDEVCO hosts quarterly municipality meetings.

Wausau Business Incubator (WBI) Management

March YTD Occupancy: 88.49%

WBI and MCDEVCO consultation with UW-Platteville regarding recommendations to get their incubator kitchen back up and running.

Respectfully submitted for:

Kim Weber, Executive Director – MCDEVCO

YQ

PUBLIC SPEAKING 101

Perfect your business pitch in this two-day workshop with MCDEVCO! Get hands on practice and learn tips and tricks on how to become a better public speaker using acting techniques.

DATE
TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 10 & 17, 2026

TIME
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

REGISTER NOW

www.mcdevco.org
715.298.0084



INSTRUCTOR
MELANIE XIONG



SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

Not getting the results you want on social media? Look no further! Find out exactly what works right now on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and how you can use them to drive tangible leads.

DATE
TUESDAYS, APRIL 7 & 14, 2026

TIME
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

REGISTER NOW

www.mcdevco.org
715.298.0084



INSTRUCTOR
BRYSON BERNARDE



SALES & USE TAX WORKSHOP

Sales tax is complex and can be costly... tackle the basics with a former auditor! Learn more about WI Sales & Use Tax, such as when to register, what is taxable, exemptions, and audit tips.

DATE
TUESDAYS, MAY 5 & 12, 2026

TIME
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

REGISTER NOW

www.mcdevco.org
715.298.0084



INSTRUCTOR
HOLLY HOFFMAN





*We teach, learn, lead, and serve,
connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with
them in transforming lives and communities.*

4-H – Positive Youth Development

Holly Luerssen, 4-H Program Educator

- A pen pal project for youth in grades 5K - 2 where young people practice reading and writing skills in order to create and build new relationships across 8 counties in central Wisconsin.
 - Pen pal projects have a long history of building relationships between people from areas different from their own. A few counties initiated this effort during COVID in 2020 and felt like it would be a beneficial project to expand. This eight county pen pal project is based on the Flat Stanley Project, an international literacy and communications pen pal activity based on the book Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown. We introduced youth to the story during a story read-a-long via Zoom. All participants receive a journal and a Flat Stanley/Stella template to complete. We then had a 2nd zoom to continue reading the story and checking in with families that they received their packets. After they complete a few pages in the journal and color their Flat Stanley/Stella, they then mail the journal and character through USPS to another participant. The recipient will share adventures with Flat Stanley/Stella and journal about their adventures. At the end, each journal and Flat Stanley/Stella are returned to their creators. The project will end with a wrap up zoom where more of the Flat Stanley story is read and participants share some of the adventures they went on with Stanley or Stella. Over 60 young people registered for the pen pal project. There was great excitement on the opening zooms to get started. Through this effort, youth build communication, planning, and record keeping skills, along with engaging with others and learning about a new place.
- A virtual meeting where families learned about 4-H summer camp and the changes for this summer's program so that families are well-informed as they make decisions for their children in grades 3-7.
- An orientation for youth in grades 9-12, attending the Ignite by 4-H conference and Citizen Washington Focus, where participants learned more about the experience they will be attending in March. Through this program, youth and parents were able to ask questions, familiarize themselves with the details of the trip, and begin forming relationships with other youth and adults attending the conference.
 - Many youth across the state have not attended a national 4-H experience before and this can cause a lot of anxiety for both participants and parents. There are many details that go into these educational experiences and an orientation over Zoom is a great way to address that need. Educators leading this



experience created a presentation to deliver crucial details to participants and families, allowing them to become more comfortable with the travel that will be occurring. Through direct delivery of content and asking youth to interact with one another through breakout rooms, participants are able to start to build relationships with fellow travelers and adults. Youth were able to interact, ask questions, and gain knowledge of the upcoming trip. This creates an opportunity to ease any nervousness about travel and let youth know what to expect.

Agriculture

Heather Schlessor, Dairy Agent

Matt Lippert, Regional Dairy Educator

Melissa Ohlrich, Regional Crops & Soils Educator

- Planning April 2026 in-person Save a Calf Save A Cow Workshops for dairy and dairy workers (with Spanish interpretation) and beef producers. The goal is to provide information and techniques to boost cattle caretakers' confidence in preparing the cow for calving, obstetric techniques and newborn calf care so that their health and reproductive programs maintain their farm's economic viability.
 - Local area livestock and dairy educators received requests for obstetric trainings. Time and money are heavily invested in the farm's reproductive program with the goal of obtaining a live calf from every breeding. The nutritional and health care of the pregnant animal contributes to her potential for successful gestation and calving, a healthy calf and future rebreeding. Newborn calf care provides the opportunity for calves to reach their full genetic potential as productive individuals for years to come. In-person workshops are planned for April in Medford and Chippewa Falls. Educators Stuttgart, Schlessor and Sterry upgraded their skills for teaching obstetrics and calf care topics by attending the University of Nebraska Beef extension 2025 Calving College Producer Education Series. Schlessor's Extension office purchased a bovine calving model to use in this series. Schlessor and Stuttgart have previously taught obstetrics training for beef and dairy producers. As a bovine veterinarian, Stuttgart has lifelong experience in obstetrics. Lippert will provide instruction in dairy transition cow nutrition. UW Madison OAIC provided Spanish translation of the fliers, the bilingual registration form and will provide interpreters at the workshops. These will be reported from evaluation data after the workshops.
- A series of presentations at educational meetings for northeastern & eastern Wisconsin farmers and crop consultants, where participants learned about nitrogen credits from leguminous cover crops to enhance their understanding of how including legume cover crops can result in the ability for reducing synthetic nitrogen fertilizer rates, thereby reducing negative impacts to farm profitability and environmental degradation.
 - Wisconsin farmers and crop consultants recognize the value of implementing cover crops to reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff, but less information is available that provides insight as to how much nitrogen legume cover crop species can provide to subsequent year corn when planted after a small grain crop. This project team initiated an on-farm research project in collaboration with 5 Wisconsin



farmers in Northeastern / Eastern Wisconsin in 2024-2025. The study allowed for direct determination of optimal corn nitrogen fertilizer application rates when corn followed A) no cover crop or B) a berseem clover (legume) cover crop. Doing so resulted in data that informs the primary "need" of providing farmers with information regarding how much nitrogen legume cover crops can provide to following year corn. In addition to the research, an emphasis on results-outreach was initiated during the winter (2026) meeting season where project results were shared throughout the region. The results of the project suggest that berseem clover cover crops (1 of many legume species available to WI farmers) planted after small grains and ahead of corn (grain) can provide nitrogen credits that range from 0 to 100 pounds of N per acre. In other words, depending on how much cover crop biomass that is accumulated, farmers could reduce their synthetic N fertilizer application rates by 0 to 100 lbs/ac (average of 32 lbs / ac). Sharing these results through outreach efforts provides farmers and crop consultants with the necessary data and information they need to make informed decisions on their farms. The importance of these results, assuming farmers implement similar practices to those studied in this project, is highlighted in each of farm-economics and agronomics in addition to environmental outcomes. Reducing the reliance on synthetic N fertilizer may save farmers money in the short-term while also reducing the amount of N that is susceptible to loss to our ground water resources; benefitting those far beyond the confines of the farm.

- Planning and preparation for a field day focused on the use of Automatic Milking Systems (AMS) for dairy producers and ag professionals where participants will increase their AMS related knowledge through facility tours, educational sessions, and peer-to-peer learning. The goal of this effort is to help farmers make informed, strategic, and economically viable decisions regarding AMS adoption and use.
 - The adoption of automatic milking systems (AMS) has steadily increased since their introduction. Successful AMS adoption and use requires careful planning and management by farmers regarding all aspects of their farming operation and lifestyle. Currently there is a lack of publicly available, non-commercial educational opportunities for farmers and ag professionals to learn about the considerations of AMS adoption and use. To address this current gap, a team of Extension professionals are developing and organizing a field day focused on AMS adoption and use. Participants will learn about AMS adoption and use through facility tours, educational sessions, and peer-to-peer learning. The goal of this effort is to help farmers make informed, strategic, and economically viable decisions regarding AMS adoption and use. An AMS focused field day will be held that includes farm tours, educational sessions, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities.
- Planning for a four-session, 2026 Focus on Forage webinar series for livestock producers, forage growers and agriculture consultants. The goal of the series is to provide timely forage management guidance to improve forage quality and meet farm productivity goals.
 - Dairy and livestock producers require high-quality forages to meet the animal production goals on their farms. Using a quality forage base reduces feed inputs and leads to improved animal health, milk production and growth. There are many opportunities for forage growers to increase forage dry matter production and quality while optimizing input costs, and this series aims to provide research



based solutions to these producers. The Focus on Forage planning team identified topics and speakers that address the key management challenges and opportunities that exist for forage growers. Ongoing planning will result in four scheduled webinars in February 2026 that will each address a specific topic area related to forage production.

Horticulture

Janell Wehr, Horticulture Educator

Gaonou Thao, Hmong Farmer Outreach Specialist

- Planning for a bilingual agricultural conference for Hmong farmers in collaboration with local agencies and educators. The goal is to provide education on sustainable farming, business development, and pest management, so that participants can improve farm profitability, adopt resilient practices, and strengthen community connections.
 - Hmong farmers in Wisconsin face significant barriers to accessing agricultural education and resources due to language differences, cultural considerations, and limited outreach. These challenges restrict opportunities for adopting sustainable practices, improving farm business management, and connecting with technical assistance programs. To address barriers faced by Hmong farmers in accessing agricultural education, a bilingual agricultural conference is being developed. The event will feature concurrent tracks on farm business management and production practices, including sessions on sustainable farming, integrated pest management, and financial planning. Each session will incorporate interpretation services, printed materials in Hmong and English, and interactive activities to ensure accessibility and engagement. The conference will also include resource tables and roundtable discussions to connect participants with grants, technical assistance, and financial tools. This initiative is expected to result in increased access to culturally relevant agricultural education for Hmong farmers through a bilingual conference format. Anticipated short-term outcomes include improved knowledge of sustainable farming practices, integrated pest management, and farm business strategies, as well as greater awareness of available grants and technical assistance. Medium-term impacts are expected to include adoption of improved agricultural practices, stronger engagement with Extension and partner agencies, and enhanced farm profitability. Long-term outcomes aim to strengthen economic resilience among Hmong farmers, build community networks, and increase representation in regional agricultural initiatives. These outcomes address broader societal issues of equity in education and resource access, contributing to sustainable local food systems and economic stability.
 - While this event was cancelled due to inclement weather, it is in the process of being rescheduled.
- A presentation for Garden Dreams participants, where participants learned how to apply integrated pest management principles to early spring landscape activities. The goal of this effort is to reduce pesticide and fertilizer misuse in consumer landscapes.
 - Reach: 52



Natural Resources

Kris Tiles, NRI Program Manager

Anna James, Regional Natural Resources Educator

Jen McNelly, Regional Natural Resources Groundwater Educator

- A monthly email newsletter for woodland owners and stewards in Wisconsin. The newsletter features phenology tidbits, educational content, practical tips, and actionable resources for all aspects of woodland stewardship, along with listings of upcoming Extension Forestry events. Through this effort, we empower readers to connect more deeply with their land and make informed decisions to steward their woods in an environmentally and economically sustainable way.
- Social media (Facebook and Instagram) outreach for Wisconsin woodland owners and stewards, where we share educational tidbits about forestry-related topics and information about upcoming forestry-related events so that woodland owners learn more about their woodlands and engage with our programming and resources. By engaging with our social media content, woodland owners build their sense of connection to their land and make informed decisions to steward their woods in an environmentally and economically sustainable way.
 - In the modern information ecosystem, social media platforms are an important way to reach geographically dispersed audiences. 70% of U.S. adults use Facebook, including 74% of rural residents, 70% of those ages 50-64, and 59% of those ages 65+. Facebook is also home to various "groups" for Wisconsin maple syrup producers and other woodland stewards. Therefore, Facebook is a promising venue to reach Wisconsin woodland owners. At the same time, woodland owners are an aging demographic, and the future of Wisconsin's privately owned forests depends on getting younger generations to become more engaged in woodland stewardship and ownership. 50% of U.S. adults use Instagram, including 76% of those ages 18-29 and 66% of those ages 30-49. Therefore, Instagram is a promising venue to reach potential future Wisconsin woodland owners. Additionally, social media provides a way for landowners who have attended our events to stay engaged with our resources on woodland stewardship throughout the year. UW-Madison Extension Forestry maintains active accounts on Facebook and Instagram. We typically post at least twice per week on both platforms and are working to grow our audience in the long term. We use both organic (unpaid) posts and paid advertisements to reach Wisconsin woodland owners. Our social media efforts contribute to our broader mission of getting Wisconsin woodland owners involved in sustainable management of their woodlands by exposing them to forestry topics when they otherwise might not be thinking about their woods (scrolling through social media) and increasing attendance at our events. Post-event surveys indicate that many people who attend our events learn about them through social media.



Additional Extension Outreach Programming Occurring in Marathon County

- A workshop for farm managers, where we taught nutrient application and conservation practices to reduce nutrient and soil losses to surface and ground water. Through this program farmers used this information to make a nutrient management plan to apply nutrients according to crop needs and implement practices that reduce soil and nutrient losses.
 - This effort is in collaboration with Marathon County Conservation, Planning, and Zoning and Clark County Land Conservation Departments to host workshops to allow farmers to write a nutrient management plan without the use of a computer. Nutrient management plans are written using the SnapPlus computer software. However, due to Clark and Marathon Counties have a large population of Amish and Mennonite farmers that are not able to use a computer, this workshop is made available to enable this population of farmers to write and implement nutrient management plans to comply with local county ordinances. These workshops are open to all farmers that are interested in developing a nutrient management plan without the use of a computer. We worked closely with the conservation staff in Clark and Marathon Counties to host two workshops in Clark County in late February. In these workshops, farmers learn soil fertility fundamentals of soil testing, pH, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium management. We also discuss methods of testing manure for nutrients and manure application methods to reduce runoff. Additionally, we discuss soil conservation techniques that reduce soil erosion and nutrient runoff and leaching. At the end of the session we teach farmers how to determine how many nutrients a crop needs and how to calculate the amount of fertilizer and/or manure that needs to be applied to meet those needs.
- A one-day workshop for drainage tile contractors, farmers, and agency staff where participants learned the latest research from UW Madison/University of Minnesota on the impacts of farm practices on drainage water quality, conservation drainage to improve decision - making around installation of ag drainage systems
 - An increasing number of cropland acres in Wisconsin are being impacted by the first-time installation or the enhancement of existing ag drainage systems. These systems have the potential to negatively impact surface water quality. Understanding the basics of conservation drainage, how farming practices impact drainage water quality, and the regulations impacting drainage installation will allow farmers to achieve the production benefits of ag drainage while moving towards reducing its negative impacts. The Conservation Professional Training Program (NRI) and the Ag Water Program (AW) joined with the UW-Madison CALS Dept of Plant and Ecosystem Sciences and CALS Dept of Biosystems Engineering to host a one-day workshop focused on 1. Delivering research based information on conservation drainage, the impacts of agriculture on drainage water quality and how to locate old tile systems 2. Understanding the laws and regulations that impact ag drainage 3. A basic understanding of lift station technology (conventional and solar powered) and where it fits into farming systems.



- Continued planning efforts for the Central Wisconsin Housing Summit, a regional convening designed to bring together developers, municipal leaders, and housing practitioners. The event will highlight best practices, resources, and collaborative strategies to advance local housing solutions that address workforce needs and support long-term community vitality. This event is designed to elevate the builder and developer perspective and address real challenges in today's housing landscape. The goal is to accelerate cross-sector collaboration that leads to more housing development in Central Wisconsin.
 - Affordable housing in rural regions is significantly less and often hard to generate. Working with Extension colleagues across the state on an Innovation Grant to target different regional areas in Wisconsin that face this housing crisis was a must. As part of a collaborative effort to engage community leaders and residents from several counties in the central Wisconsin region, the planning and facilitation of a regional rural housing summit is in the early stages of development. This series of regional workshops is intended to build local capacity, facilitate regional partnerships, and strengthen local connections to state and federal agencies. Presenters will review data, strategies and case studies that provide a road map for rural communities to increase housing availability and access. Modeled on the EDA University Center's successful regional economic summit program, each event will include formal presentations, panel discussions, networking opportunities, and resource takeaways. Planned outcomes: Upon completion, there will be updated housing and resource data, stronger connections between regional partners and state agencies, increased rural access to state and federal dollars to support housing access, affordability, and availability, an increase in the number of affordable, accessible housing units in rural areas, and greater cooperation across counties and within regions as they pursue innovative housing solutions. At the end of the funding period, we will measure success in terms of the number of communities that have received education, the extent to which their capacity to address housing has grown, and the degree to which each is actively pursuing housing solutions. Success will be measured by the impacts outlined above. Since housing is a cross-institutional challenge, we expect to involve Extension colleagues from all institutes to participate in these workshops. We will share progress in a series of Lunch-n-Learn webinars, at All Colleague meetings, and in Area meetings as opportunities arise.

Upcoming Programs

- **4-H Programming** – Information at <https://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/4h/>
- **Horticultural Programs** – Information at <https://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/horticulture/programs/>
- **Agricultural Programs** – Information at <https://marathon.extension.wisc.edu/agriculture/>
- **Central Wisconsin Housing Summit** – Learn more and register:
<https://www.simplertix.com/e/2026-central-wisconsin-housing-summit-tickets-240877>
 - Wednesday, April 15, 8:00 – 4:00, Dreyfus University Center



Wausau UW-Stevens Point

Report to the Extension, Education, and Economic Development Committee March, 2026

1. **Fall 2026 Recruitment:** Fall 2026 recruitment is well underway. Applications and admissions are up from last year. Financial Aid offers have gone out to incoming students and we still have scholarships available.
2. **Admitted Student Day:** This was a great event despite the weather! Admitted students got to take care of a range of their next steps, including registering for orientation and advising, getting their account activated, taking their ID photo, and taking the UW Math placement test. They got to connect with current students and take a tour of the spaces they will frequent at NTC as our classes move there in the fall.
3. **Other events for prospective students:**
 - a. **Weekly visits:** We offer an admissions presentation Thursdays afternoons at 2:00 pm. Register at <https://apply.uwsp.edu/portal/all-visits-wausau>
4. **Continuing Education:** UWSP's Continuing Education department has a wide range of offerings on all three UWSP campuses.
 - a. The Central Wisconsin Musicians next concert will be on May 7th, at 7:00 pm in the Veniga Theater.
 - b. The Central Wisconsin Voices Spring concert will be May 16th at 3:00 pm in the Veniga Theater.
 - c. You can see all CE offerings on their website:
<https://www3.uwsp.edu/conted/Pages/Professional-Development.aspx>
5. **Degree Programs Offered** – Below is a list of the degree programs we currently offer on the Wausau campus.
 - a. Associate Degrees
Associate of Arts and Sciences Degree
Human Services
Leadership and Project Mgt
Pre-Engineering
 - b. Bachelors programs
B.S. in Business Administration
B.S. in Nursing (full degree and completion options available)

B.S. in Organizational Leadership
B.S. in Multidisciplinary Studies
B.S. in Multidisciplinary Studies—Technology Management Emphasis
Engineering (UW-Platteville Partnership)

c. Master's Degrees

Masters of Business Administration in Applied Leadership and Decision-Making
Physician Assistant Program (UW-Madison Partnership)

Submitted by Miranda Gentry-Siegel, Wausau Campus Executive