

BASIC NEEDS & SUPPORTS



Without adequate access to certain goods and services, it is difficult to live a healthy and productive life.

To ensure basic needs are met, communities must develop and provide safety net services for residents who fall on hard times.

The percent of the community in need and the length of time that support is needed are both strong measures of community health.

Basic Needs and Supports Subcommittee

Jeff Sargent, Chair	North Central Community Action Program
Paul Dobbratz, Chair	Liberty Mutual, retired
Pam Anderson	U.S. Bank
Jane Graham-Jennings	The Women's Community
Shirley Hubert	Catholic Charities
Jane Huebsch	Marathon County Social Services
JoAnn Janikowski	United Way of Marathon County
MaiGer Moua	United Way of Marathon County
Betty Noel	Community Development Authority
Tom Rau	The Neighbors' Place
Greg Seubert	Wausau Metro Ride
Jacob & Melinda Tripp	The Salvation Army
Ed Wilson	The Salvation Army
Kelly Zagrzebski	Wisconsin Public Service Corporation
Amy Forst, Aging Committee	Forest Park Village
Bradley Jourdan, Aging Committee	Ministry Health, DTC
Collen Motley, Aging Committee	Faith in Action—Marathon County
Erin Wells, Aging Committee	Aging and Disability Resource Center

Keep in mind....

Only when people's basic needs are met are they able to contribute to society. A secure home and stable environment leads to improved health, education, and child development outcomes.

Section Summary

Success and Progress

- Marathon County has successfully increased the coordination and collaboration between basic needs providers. This teamwork has streamlined services, producing greater impact at a smaller cost to the community.
- The growth of the Marathon County Hunger Coalition and the emergence of the Marathon County Housing and Homelessness Coalition have led to creative new programs that are generating greater impact on these complex issues.
- Overall, the number of residents in Marathon County with unmet basic needs has been reduced.

Calls to Action

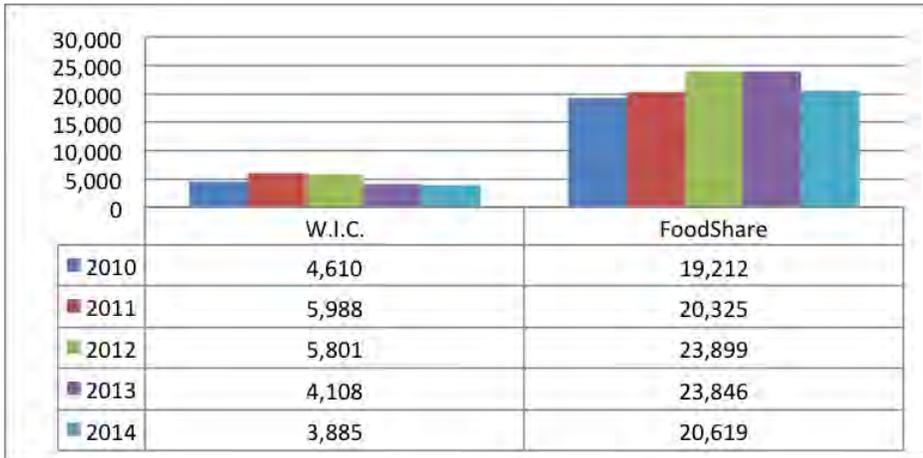
- Marathon County is decreasing public transportation services at a time when the demand for such services is increasing. We must address the growing need for new and innovative transportation options that connect people where they live and work.
- As part of the great start initiative, Marathon County must prioritize its commitment to meeting the basic needs of children as success in this area affects childhood development in so many positive ways.
- As the population ages and Marathon County sees a great concentration of residents over the age of 65, we need to research and support the changing basic needs of the aging as they impact housing, healthcare, and quality of life.

Opportunities for Action

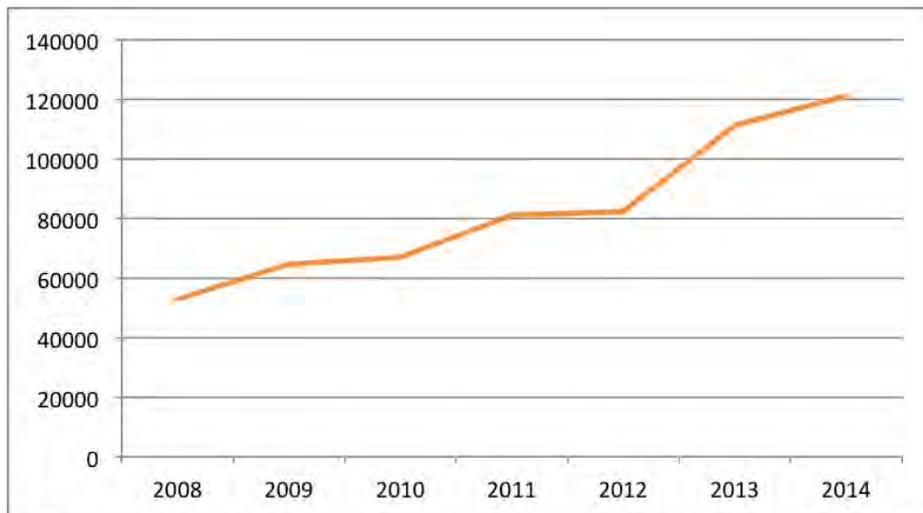
For Individuals	Learn more about the needs of all community members and challenge traditional thinking around why these needs exist. Volunteer for a community organization.
For Organizations	Explore new partnerships that create innovative programs and services. Be receptive to new business models that address challenging issues such as transportation barriers to employment and income obtainment or housing.
For the Community	Become informed about basic needs in the community and advocate for resources to address those needs.



Key Measure: Individuals Served Through Food Assistance in Marathon County, 2010—2014



Key Measure: Met Requests for Food Assistance in Marathon County, 2008—2014



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

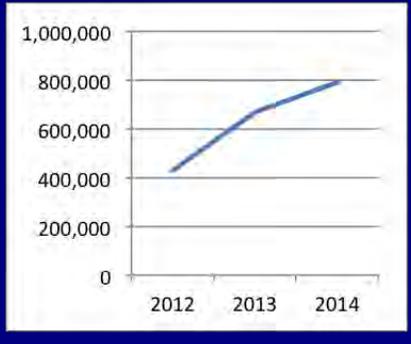
When it comes to addressing hunger, it is important to connect people who need assistance to resources. In spite of what appears to be an improving economic environment, we still have people who have needs when it comes to addressing hunger. While the number of individuals requesting food assistance has started to decrease, we are still seeing an increase in the number of requests for support and the pounds of food distributed.

Partner pantries have distributed a significant amount of food and other supporting resources. Based on this recent data, the need remains high for food, which confirms the ongoing need for support services to address food issues in Marathon County.

By working together and cooperating with numerous organizations in Marathon County, we can make a positive impact on addressing hunger. Bringing pantries, backpack programs, and other local food programs together creates a “collective impact” that achieves a greater good.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Pounds of Food Moved Through The Neighbors’ Place to Partner Pantries



8 Partner Pantries: AIDS Resource Center, Covenant Community Presbyterian Church, Community Center of Hope, First Presbyterian Church, The Neighbors’ Place, The Salvation Army, Wesley United Methodist Church, and The Women’s Community.

- An average of \$1,638,104 in Food Share benefits were issued each month in Marathon County during 2014.
- The Marathon County Hunger Coalition has increased “healthy food choices” to partner food pantries from 136,000 lbs. in 2013 to 270,900 lbs. in 2014.
- 27.1% of LIFE Survey respondents indicated that it was “Very Difficult” or “Somewhat Difficult” to cover their food expenses in a typical month.

SOURCES

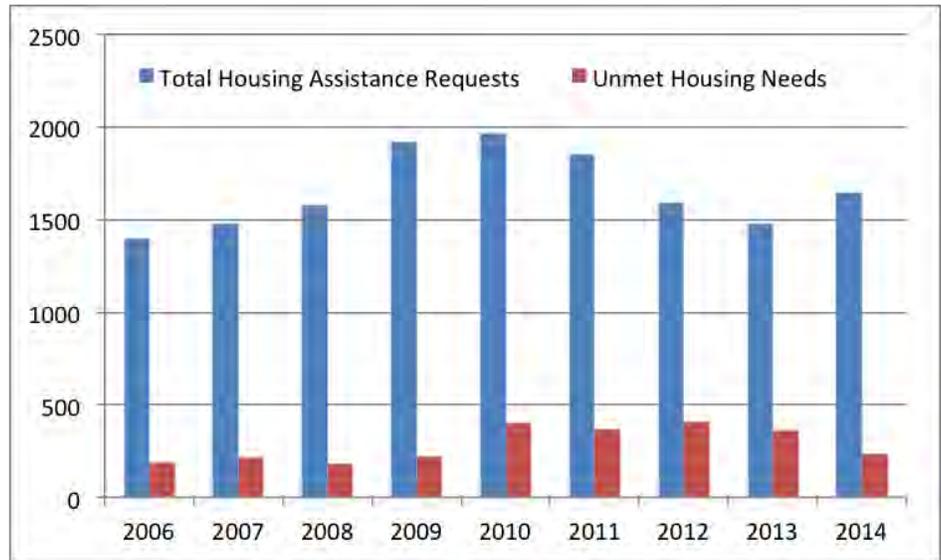
- **State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services**
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/em/rsdata
- **2010 US Census**
www.2010.census.gov
- **United Way of Marathon County Hunger Coalition**
www.unitedwaymc.org/hungercoalition.htm



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 359 households received Emergency Housing Assistance Funds (EHAF) in 2014.
- In 2014 there were 1,646 requests for housing assistance. 14 percent of these went unmet (234 out of the 1646).
- The City of Wausau provides public housing through Riverview Terrace, Riverview Towers, Scattered Site Public Housing and Section 8 Rental Assistance.
- The Community Development Authority opened its Section 8 Program Waiting List in the fall of 2014 and again in the spring of 2015 for the first time since 2010. 300 names were added to the waiting list in August 2015.
- Marathon County has 435 vouchers allocated but because of an increase in the amount needed per voucher they only have funds to issue 250 vouchers.
- In 2013, 43.7% of LIFE Community Survey respondents stated that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing.
- In 2015, 44.7% of LIFE Community Survey respondents stated that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Key Measure: Total and Unmet Housing Assistance Requests from United Way's 2-1-1, 2006—2012



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Housing assistance is needed for community members whose income and earnings make housing unaffordable. Federal recommendations suggest that no more than 30 percent of a person's or family's income should be spent on housing if housing is considered affordable. It is this ratio that determines a living wage within a community.

There are resources available to assist with housing costs but the needs outweigh available resources. While the demand for assistance is starting to decrease, we are still failing to meet the need that does exist. As such, in Marathon County we continue to see unmet needs in the area of housing.

SOURCES

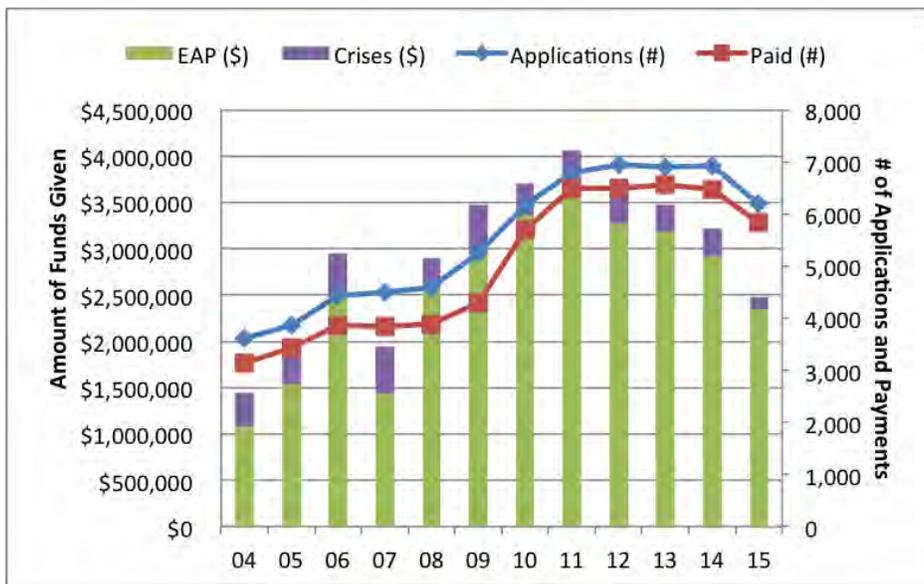
- **United Way of Marathon County**
United Way's 2-1-1 2011 & 2012 Caller Unmet Needs Snapshot
www.unitedwaymc.org/211.htm
- **US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD
- **City of Wausau**
Community Development Authority
www.ci.wausau.wi.us/



Unfortunately, there are people in Marathon County who spend between 50-75 percent of their monthly income on housing. Again, the 2015 LIFE Community Survey saw almost half of respondents indicating housing expenses that exceed this recommended threshold.



Key Measure: Wisconsin Energy Association Program Applications and Payments in Marathon County, 2004—2015



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program administered by Energy Services, Inc. on behalf of Marathon County offers two of the major energy assistance programs available to residents with limited income. These include the federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Public Benefits Energy Assistance Program. In combination, these programs help approximately 225,000 Wisconsin households each year. While available resources in the community provide much needed assistance, they often fall short of the growing basic need that exists. In 2014, in Marathon County alone, over 6,460 families received utilities assistance totaling \$3,224,978.

Another source of support includes the State of Wisconsin's Energy Assistance Funds. The number of applicants for Energy Assistance has continued to stay consistent each year and the State Public Benefits Programs helps to augment the uncertainty of declining federal funds.

An additional assistance program, the Keep Wisconsin Warm/Cool Fund, was established to keep the heat and power

on for thousands of families in crisis. Through public, private, and community partnerships, the fund provides preventative services and the financial assistance necessary to alleviate potential life-threatening energy-related emergencies during Wisconsin's harsh winters by closing the growing gap between unmet needs and the resources available.

One side note that could in some cases be related to household utilities is the cost of gasoline. Since 2007 the cost of a gallon of gasoline has gone from \$3.68 a gallon to \$2.42 a gallon. This change has helped free up some funds for families as it relates to their household budgets.

Some residents in Marathon County have weathered the storm of rising household utility costs by making those challenging choices between their basic needs and offsetting costs by participating in assistance programs that are offered in the county. Their participation helps to avert emergencies and to stabilize their long term economic condition.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- United Way's 2-1-1 saw an increase in referrals for utility payment assistance from 1,036 in 2012 to 1,188 in 2014.
- The average water bill for residential customers using 18,750 gallons/quarter was \$86.59, an increase of 25% since 2007.
- Wisconsin's average electric use per household is 723 kwh/month, compared with the national average of 909 kwh/month. The average cost in Wisconsin is \$0.135/kwh; Wisconsin Public Service is \$0.1025/kwh.
- The national average cost of home heating oil is \$2.491/gallon. Wisconsin averages \$2.416- \$3.568/gallon. Marathon County averages \$2.00 - \$1.58/gallon.
- Natural gas costs approximately \$0.60/therm compared with propane and oil which cost approximately \$2.40/therm.
- Marathon County residents that potentially could be disconnected for lack of payment (30 plus days in arrears as of March of each year).
 - * 2009 7,715
 - * 2010 7,953
 - * 2011 7,588
 - * 2012 7,630
 - * 2013 7,550
 - * 2014 7,637
 - * 2015 7,268

SOURCES

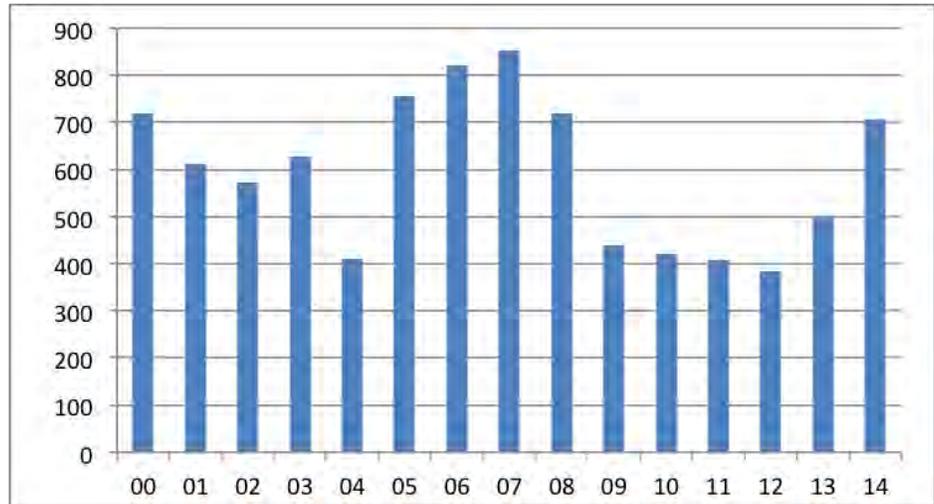
- **Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP)**
www.homeenergyplus.wi.gov/
- **Keep Wisconsin Warm/Cool Fund**
www.keepwisconsinwarm.org
- **Wisconsin Public Service**
www.wisconsinpublicservice.com
- **U.S. Department of Energy**
<http://energy.gov/>



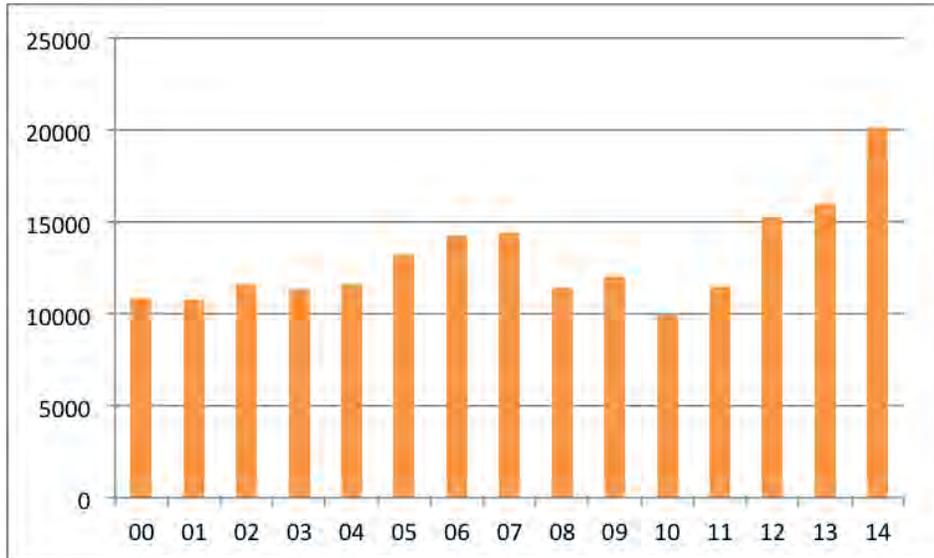
DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- The Wausau Community Warming Center at Catholic Charities provided 1740 nights to 96 unduplicated people in 2013. In 2014 they provided 2661 nights to 145 unduplicated people.
- The Women’s Community saw their number of shelter nights increase from 6,048 in 2013 to 8,606 in 2014.
- The Salvation Army saw their number of shelter nights increase from 8213 in 2013 to 8897 in 2014.
- The Point In-Time Homeless Street Counts conducted on the last Wednesday in January and July saw an increase from 13 in 2013 to 23 in 2014.

Key Measure: Total Number of Individuals Sheltered in Marathon County, 2000—2014



Key Measure: Total Number of Lodging Nights in Marathon County, 2000—2014



SOURCES

- Wisconsin Department of Commerce
<http://commerce.wi.gov/>
- The Salvation Army
<http://www.salvationarmy.org>
- The Women’s Community, Inc.
www.womenscommunity.org
- Catholic Charities
www.cclse.org/wausau/php
- Wisconsin Community Action Program Association (WISCAP)
<http://www.wiscap.org>

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

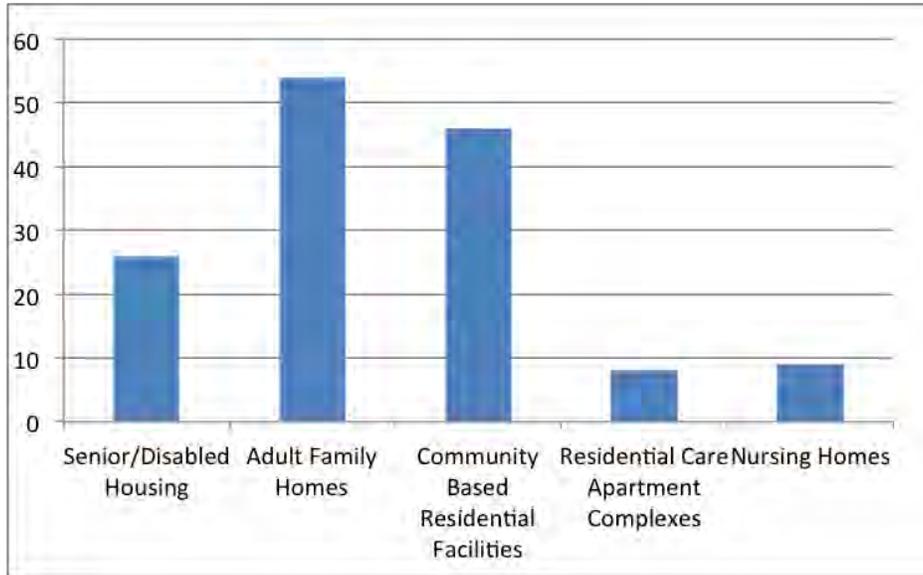
Homelessness can be the beginning of a lifetime of negative consequences that impact individuals, families and communities. Marathon County is currently experiencing the trend of a growing homeless population, evident in the increase in night stays at local homeless shelters. These community members have limited housing options available to them and lack the financial resources to pay for housing.

When there is homelessness it can impact children. School attendance is often impacted and school performance can suffer. There is also an increase in

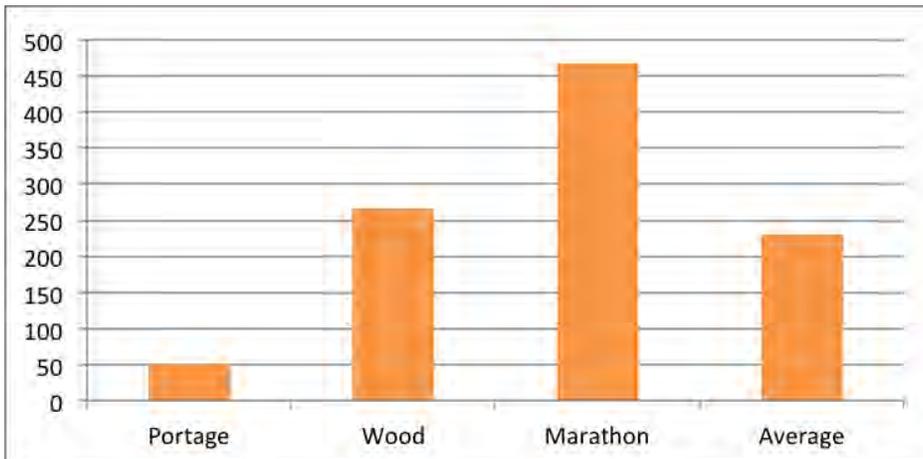
medical illness in children who are homeless. In adults who are homeless, compliance with taking needed medications drops, follow through for chemical dependency treatment is impacted, and job retention rates decline. The higher the rates of homelessness the greater the adverse effects on overall health.



Key Measure: Assisted Living Facilities by Option in Marathon County, 2015



Key Measure: Number of Non-Developmentally Delayed Nursing Home Residents on Medicaid, 2011



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Sustainable, affordable housing options are a necessity for older adults. When considering housing options for seniors, many people think of nursing home care, but Marathon County seniors have many housing options.

As their health dictates, seniors can obtain supportive in-home services to enable them to remain in the home of their choice. Day Services are available to provide relief for caregivers as well as socialization opportunities for the elderly. Subsidized housing is an option for those struggling to maintain, afford, or access housing. Also, assisted living facilities are a flexible option designed to

allow individuals to age in place while remaining connected to their community.

In addition, nursing homes are a critical option for communities committed to serving aging adults. Nursing homes provide long-term care for those that cannot live at home and require continual skilled nursing services. They can also be a supportive place to receive short-term rehabilitative services.

Informed decision making must be a priority. Planning ahead and making informed choices can help to control the costs associated with long-term care and slow or prevent decline.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- 36.2% of LIFE Community survey respondents were either satisfied or strongly satisfied with access to elder care. Only 5.4% were strongly satisfied.
- 57% of LIFE Community survey respondents were either somewhat or very concerned with the affordability of elder care. 26.4% were very concerned.
- There are currently 975 beds available in nursing homes in Marathon County. In 2011, there were 939.
- In Marathon County, people 65+ are predicted to make up more than a quarter of the population by 2035, up from 12–15% in 2010.

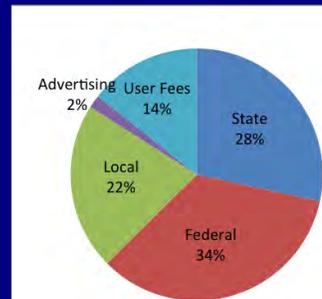
SOURCES

- **Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services**
Wisconsin Assisted Living Facilities <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bqaconsumer/AssistedLiving/AsLivindex.htm>
- Wisconsin Nursing Homes <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bqaconsumer/NursingHomes/NHindex.htm>
- State of Assisted Living <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bqaconsumer/assistedliving/altrends12.pdf>
- Connections to Community Living <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/ccl/reports-pubs/index.htm>



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Metro Ride Funding Sources, 2014

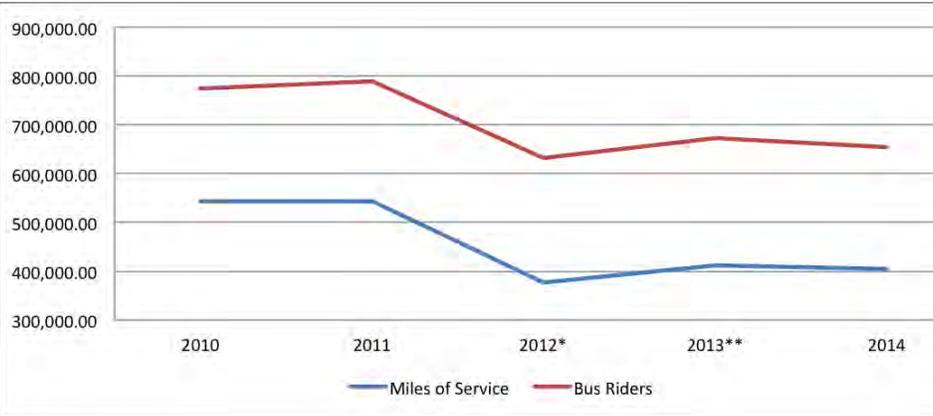


- 60% of surveyed Wisconsin college students said they would be at least "somewhat more likely" to stay in Wisconsin after graduation if they could live in a place where they could get around without driving (WISPIRG Foundation survey).
- The largest group of Metro Ride passengers (at 45%) are students; the second largest (30%) are seniors and the disabled.
- 27% of Metro Ride passengers use the service to get to school. 26% use the service to get to work. 18% use it for shopping, 8% use it for medical purposes, and 7% use it for social connections.
- Metro Ride's Paratransit service saw a 61.3% decrease in rides from 8,697 to 3,370 in 2012 when the service was discontinued to Schofield, Rothschild, and Weston.

SOURCES

- **American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)**
Public Policy Institute
www.aarp.org/research/ppi/
- **Urban Land Institute**
www.uli.org/
- **Wisconsin Department of Health Services**
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/
- **Wisconsin Department of Transportation**
www.dot.state.wi.us

Key Measure: Metro Ride Service Levels and Ridership, 2010—2014



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

A community's ability to provide transportation alternatives is increasingly becoming a strong measure of its competitiveness in the modern economy. In 2010, the number of car-driven miles decreased for the first time since the invention of the automobile, and those numbers have continued to decline with each year since.

Many Millennials are choosing not to obtain a driver's license. As such, communities that are multi-modal are seeing the strongest rates of attraction and retention among young professionals. Wisconsin college students have indicated a much greater likelihood of staying in Wisconsin if its communities provided better transportation alternatives.

the fastest growing areas of need for United Way's 2-1-1 callers. Simultaneously, decisions to eliminate or limit certain types or regions of Metro Ride service have limited transportation access to residents in Marathon County. Without proper planning and investment, these challenges will only get worse for the county.

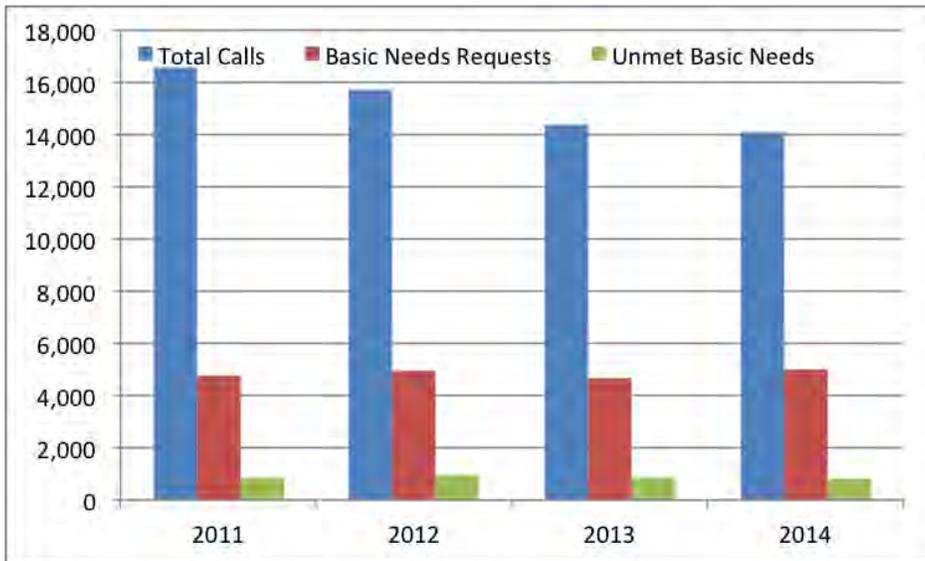


Similarly, public transportation is vital to the elderly, the disabled, and the under- or unemployed who cannot get around otherwise. As the aging population in Marathon County grows, our public transportation infrastructure will determine their abilities to stay in their homes while accessing healthcare, shopping, and social connections.

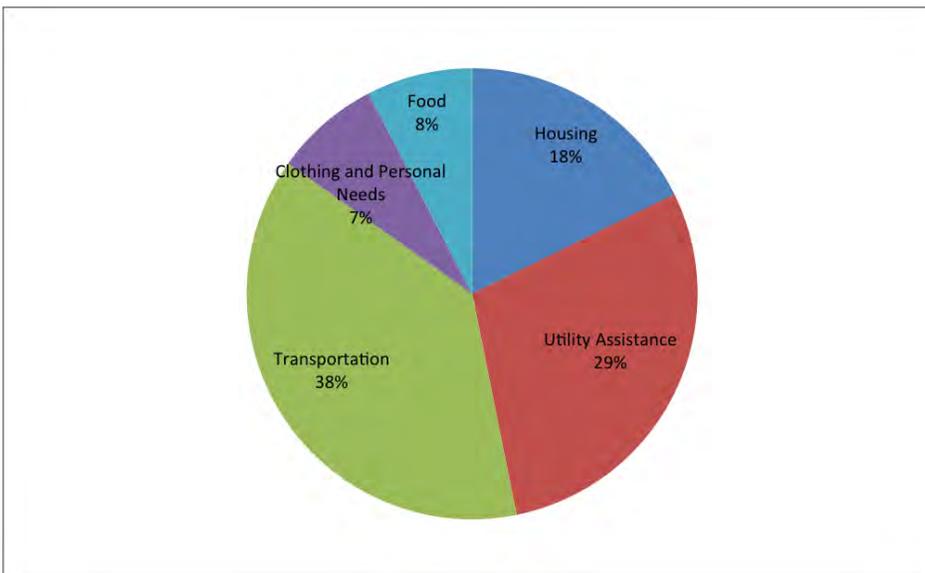
Transportation challenges are among



Key Measure: United Way's 2-1-1 Unmet Basic Needs, 2011—2014



Key Measure: United Way's 2-1-1 Unmet Basic Needs by Category, 2014



DATA HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2014, United Way's 2-1-1 helped 14,085 people with 16,288 needs find help. Of those needs, 1,111 (7%) were not met for reasons related to inadequate community resources and program requirements.
- 31% of requests for services were related to basic needs, which includes housing, utility assistance, food, transportation, clothing and personal needs.
- There has been a gradual increase in requests for basic needs assistance from 27% in 2012 to 31% in 2014, but a decrease in unmet basic needs from 26% in 2012 to 14% in 2014.
- In a typical month, 446 of 995 LIFE survey respondents indicated that it was very or somewhat difficult for them to cover their household expenses and bills.
- 789 of 999 LIFE survey respondents indicated that they were very or somewhat concerned about availability of jobs that pay enough to meet basic household expenses.

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

While there was an increase in requests for basic needs assistance, the number of unmet basic needs requests decreased from 2012 to 2014. Individuals and families who experienced financial hardships were able to access services despite there continuing



to be needs that were not met. United Way's 2-1-1 continues to help connect Marathon County residents who are looking for help to meet basic needs and other community services. Marathon

County continues to be challenged by gaps in services and inadequate community services designed to help residents regain or remain self sufficient.

SOURCES

- **United Way of Marathon County**
United Way's 2-1-1
www.unitedwaymc.org/211.htm
2012 Marathon County Caller
Unmet Needs
www.unitedwaymc.org/PDFs/211/2012MarCoUnmetNeeds.pdf

