



COVID-19 Recovery: Village Guidelines & Goals

David W Belanger, President

Andrew R Kurtz, Administrator

Adapted from the River Falls, WI "Crushing Covid-19 Plan"

Updated May 27, 2020

I. Summary

The Village of Marathon City will follow guidance and direction from the State of Wisconsin and public health officials throughout its response and recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic. The “COVID-19 Recovery: Village Guidelines & Goals” is intended to provide an overview of the actions and future direction of the Village related to recovery. During the COVID-19 emergency, the Village has remained focused on five core functions:

- Ensuring organizational resilience
- Delivery of quality public safety services
- Maintaining infrastructure and providing safe utilities
- Minimizing interruptions of public services (i.e. Elections, Utility Billing, Permits, Licensing, etc.)
- Connection the community to resources

The services provided to the community, through staff efforts and allocation of resources will be guided by these principles:

- Maintain flexibility in the face of change and uncertainty
- Capitalize on opportunities for improvement
- Remove barriers
- Apply lessons learned in response
- Align, collaborate and innovate with partners

While the duration of the COVID-19 related response and recovery operations is currently unknown, Village staff will remain focused on the core functions and principles outlines above to adapt to changing circumstances.

II. Introduction

The National Response Framework, part of the National Strategy for Homeland Security, operates on the premise that large-scale emergencies and response programs are federally supported, state manage and locally executed. That sate manages emergency responses through regulatory mandates, emergency orders, legislative activities and advisory services. State efforts and programs are often administered through the counties, including in the case of COVID-19, with the county public health official. The Village of Marathon City does not maintain its own public health official but has appointed the Marathon County Health Department to serve in that capacity.

Village Officials work together to maintain the peace, safety, welfare and health of both residents and visitors. When administering, managing and delivering programs to serve the needs of the community, the Village takes the lead.

This plan does not supersede statewide plans, regulations, policies or statutes. However, it was developed to serve the best interests of the Village of Marathon City and its residents. Consideration is given to regional factors versus statewide blanket criteria.

III. Background

The Village of Marathon City initiated preparedness and response efforts related to COVID-19 on March 10, 2020. A public health emergency was declared for the State of Wisconsin on March 12, 2020 and a local emergency was declared on March 17, 2020 by the Village President and was affirmed by Village Board of Trustees at a Special Meeting held March 17, 2020. The Wisconsin Safer at Home order was put into effect by Governor Tony Evers on March 25, 2020 and extended on April 24 through May 26, 2020. The Safer at Home order was invalidated by the Wisconsin State Supreme Court on May 13, 2020.

The Village of Marathon City is empowered to order, by ordinance or resolution, whatever is necessary and expedient for health, safety, protection and welfare of persons and property within the Village during the emergency¹. These orders can be issued directly by the Village President or the Emergency Management Director via proclamation when it is not feasible for the entire governing body to meet². Such orders cannot conflict with state or county authority. To date, such orders by the Village have authorized the following:

- Closing of Village building and facilities to regular public access
- Closing park facilities and sports complexes
- Suspending in-person Board of Trustee and Commission meetings
- Implementation of virtual meeting technology to facilitate public meetings of the Board to Trustees and Utility Commission
- Suspending utility disconnects and late fees

In addition to these orders, the Village of Marathon City swiftly implemented social distancing plans with Village buildings and authorized the Administrator to implement an alternative work scheduling strategy for Village staff. Municipal operations were curtailed to ensure compliance with the “safer at home” order. Village efforts focused on the five core functional areas:

- Ensuring organizational resilience
- Delivery of quality public safety services
- Maintaining infrastructure and providing safe utilities
- Minimizing interruptions of public services (i.e. Elections, Utility Billing, Permits, Licensing, etc.)
- Connection the community to resources

¹ Wis. Stats. §323.14 (4)(a)

² Wis. Stats. §323.14 (4)(b)

IV. Regulatory Framework

On April 20, 2020, Governor Tony Evers released his Badger Bounce Back Plan, outlining the steps and measures necessary to reopen Wisconsin. While the Badger Bounce Back Plan was overturned on May 13, 2020 by the State Supreme Court, the Village intends to incorporate elements of the phased approach and a best-practice model with regard to local facilities and public spaces. The Village will utilize best practice models from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)³ and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)⁴ into the Village's systematically phased approach to recovery.

On May 14, 2020, Marathon County Health Department issued COVID-19 Order #1⁵ covering municipalities in Marathon County and residents of the county. The order issued the following recommendations:

Individuals and Families:

- Practice Physical Distancing and Protective Measures including the following:
 - Maintaining physical distancing of six (6) feet between people not residing in a single living unit or household;
 - Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer;
 - Covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands)'
 - Regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces;
 - Not shaking hands;
 - Use of a mask or cloth face covering when physical distancing is impractical;
 - Limiting travel to reduce the potential for virus transmission;
 - Following all other public health recommendations issued by the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Marathon County Health Department and the U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Stay home if you are sick and seek appropriate medical care.

³ CDC Guidance for Where You Live, Work, Learn, Pray and Play available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

⁴ WEDC Reopen Guidelines available from: <https://wedc.org/re-open-guidelines/>

⁵ Marathon County Health Department COVID-19 Order #1 available from: <https://www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/HealthDepartment/COVID19.aspx>

Businesses, Non-profits and other Entities:

- Implement the strategies and practices provided in the WEDC Reopening Guidelines, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services.
- Consult with your local Chamber of Commerce and the Marathon County Health Department to gather additional information to safely resume business activities.

Mass Gatherings:

- Individuals avoid situations where you are unable to exercise appropriate physical distancing with non-household members.
- Businesses, Non-profits and other Entities reduce capacity and modify physical spaces to ensure adequate physical distancing for customers and staff.

V. Local Execution

The Badger Bounce Back Plan was a statewide plan that did not take into account the diverse regional impacts of COVID-19. As allowed by law, the Village of Marathon City will consider regional and local conditions when implementing its guidelines. Ultimately the guidelines are intended to minimize risk to health, safety, and welfare of persons and to protect property within the Village during the emergency and recovery phases.

The Village may implement additional measures or restrictions due to local impact(s) as the President deems necessary and with approval of the Village Board of Trustees. It may also help provide definition to some areas left unclear by state orders, lack of state orders or where local enforcement is involved.

In addition to its partnership with Marathon County Health Department, staff has attended regular COVID-19 weekly meetings held by the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and the McDevCo Municipalities Group. These discussions as well as interaction with the community help to advise policy makers when considering policy.

VI. Gating Criteria

Unless directed by the Village President otherwise, the Village will transition from phase to phase in a similar manner to the Badger Bounce Back Plan. That plan utilizes a gating criteria before moving to the next phase. The statewide gating criteria is shown below for illustrative purposes. Local and regional metrics are included and may be amended from time to time.

It is possible that the Village, at the direction of the Village President or designee, may advance through stages, remain at stages or return to previous stages independently of other communities in the region or state. These determinations will be driven by data collected from the Marathon County Health Department, Wisconsin Department of Health Services and CDC.

A. Statewide Criteria

Indicator	Metric	Statewide ⁶	Regional ⁷	Date
Symptoms	Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses reported within a 14-day period			6/1/20
Symptoms	Downward trajectory of COVID-like syndromic cases reported within a 14-day period.			6/1/20
Cases	Downward trajectory of positive test as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period.			6/1/20
Hospitals	95% of hospitals affirm that they can treat all patients without crisis standards of care.			6/1/20
Hospitals	95% of all hospitals affirm that they have arranged for testing for all symptomatic staff			6/1/20
Healthcare	Downward trend of COVID-19 cases amount healthcare workers calculated weekly			6/1/20

⁶ DHS Badger Bounce Back Dashboard: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/prepare.htm>

⁷ Marathon County Case Data: <https://www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/HealthDepartment/COVID19.aspx>

B. Local Considerations

Criteria	Status	6/1	6/8	6/15
# of know active resident cases of COVID-19 within Marathon City	●	<10*		
# of new COVID-19 positive results in Marathon County	●	2		
# of Current active cases in Marathon County	●	24		
Adequate PPE for Village Response Staff: GREEN = ≥ 60 days, YELLOW = 30 -59 days, RED = < 30 days	●	●		
COVID-19 testing capability for Marathon City Residents: : GREEN = General Public Testing in Wausau, YELLOW = Doctor Ordered Testing	●	●		

*Due to HIPPA and privacy concerns, Marathon County Health Department Does Not Provide Local Data <10 Cases

VII. Village of Marathon City Phased Recover Planning

A. Municipal Facilities*

Location	Safer at Home**	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Village Hall	Closed	Open w/ social distancing controls and capacity limits	Open w/ social distancing controls and capacity limits	Open
Veterans Park Bathrooms	Closed	Open, use at own risk; daily cleaning	Open	Open
Veterans Park Ball Diamonds	Use at own risk family unit use only	Open w/ social distancing controls < 15 persons	Open w/ social distancing controls	Open
Park Pavilions	Use at own risk family unit use only < 10 persons	Use at own risk family unit use only < 15 persons	Parties < 50	No Restrictions
Tower Park Playground	Closed	Use at own risk family unit use only < 10 persons	Use at own risk family unit use only < 10 persons	No Restrictions
Lions River Park	Open w/ social distancing controls	Open w/ social distancing controls	Open w/ social distancing controls	No Restrictions
Village Hall Community Room	Closed	Closed	Open w/ social distancing controls and capacity limits	Open

*For the latest status of municipal facilities visit www.marathoncity.org/coivd-19-recovery

** Safer at Home order was overturned on May 13, 2020.

B. Municipal Operations*

Practice	Safer at Home**	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Social Distancing	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Respiratory Etiquette	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stay home when sick	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal travel work restrictions	Potentially, dependent on location and details	Potentially, dependent on location and details	Potentially, dependent on location and details	No Restrictions Likely
Work-related travel restrictions	City Limits or utility service territory	Wausau MSA	Statewide	No Restrictions
Meetings	None in person	<10; virtual encouraged	< 50; virtual encouraged	No Restrictions
Village Board / Commissions	As scheduled; virtual only	As scheduled; virtual only	As scheduled; social distancing virtual encouraged	No Restrictions
Training / Events	Virtual	Virtual or static participation with < 10 and social distancing	Virtual or static participation with < 50 and social distancing	No Restrictions
Group Sports/ Leagues/ fields	Suspended	<10 and social distancing	With capacity limits, social distancing, and participant modifications	No Restrictions
Village Dump	Open, social distancing	Open, social distancing	Open, social distancing	No Restrictions
Non-emergency meter swaps	Suspended	With approval	With approval	No Restrictions

*For the latest status of municipal facilities visit www.marathoncity.org/covid-19-recovery

** Safer at Home order was overturned on May 13, 2020.

In addition, and unless otherwise indicated, the following should be noted regarding events in public spaces with the Village.

Events	Safer at Home	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Festivals / Parades	Will not be authorized	Will not be authorized	Will not be authorized	With capacity limits and modifications
Sports events (i.e. Youth summer league)	Will not be authorized	Will not be authorized	With capacity limits and modifications	TBD
Spectator Activities (i.e. Fireworks)	Will not be authorized	Will not be authorized	TBD	No Restrictions

C. Communications

The will provide COVID-19 related official information and resources. This will be accomplished via the Village’s website and Facebook pages. Other communications may include, but are not limited to:

- Updates from the Village President
- Monthly Administrator’s report to the Village Board
- Formal resolutions passed by the Village Board

Official information sources cited will include Marathon County Health Department, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Marathon County Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Other sources may be utilized with the approval of the Village Administrator or designee.

D. Enforcement Policy

Community or staff concerns about compliance with COVID-19 related emergency orders would rarely, if ever, be of an emergent nature. These non-emergency type questions, concerns or complaints should be directed to Marathon County Health Department (715-261-1900) or the Village of Marathon City Police Department non-emergency number (715-443-2470).

The Police Department is committed to working in partnership with the community to find solutions to community problems through their proactive outreach, community education, and neighborhood advocacy efforts. The preferred response to COVID-19 issues is to gain voluntary compliance through collaboration and education prior to citation based enforcement.

Violations of emergency orders that are either too egregious or unable to be resolved via voluntary compliance may result in enforcement actions. The Police Department has discretionary authority under the leadership of the Chief of Police to pursue formal enforcement through the County District Attorney's office. Public Health Officials also have enforcement authority granted them.

E. Business Community Considerations

The Village of Marathon City has a diverse business community and the impacts of COVID-19 orders have had varying levels of impacts on businesses within the Village. The Village has implemented efforts to support local businesses:

- Established a webpage providing resources for small business⁸
- Contacted WEDC to expand small business grant programs.
- Approved proration of Class B liquor licenses for 2020-2021 terms.
- Collaboration with McDevCo and Municipalities group regarding resources and implementation.

As recovery efforts begin, businesses, non-profits and faith-based communities should prepare to implement new business practices, social distancing measures in consultation with public health officials. WEDC has created a toolkit⁹ covering multiple industry segments and can be access via the Village's Covid-19 Business Resource page.

F. Fiscal Strategy During Pandemic Response

Future financial stability continues to be a primary focus of the Village administration. Pursuit of strategic initiatives has not changed as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Village Board has focused on financial stability and the Village is financially prepared for contingencies by:

- Ensuring adequate unassigned general fund reserves
- Maintaining an excellent credit rating
- Minimizing dependence on state aids

This has allowed the Village the ability to adjust as local and statewide economic impacts continue to unfold. The goal is not only weather the current economic storm, but to position the Village for future long-term sustainable growth once the recovery accelerates. This will be accomplished by short-term cash management, rebalancing of 2020 budget and ongoing analysis of all funds.

The Village will continue to make investments that support continued development of industrial growth, residential expansion, infrastructure updates and those that best position Marathon City for recovery as the pandemic impacts recede.

⁸ <https://www.marathoncity.org/covid-19-information-page/covid-19-business-assistance-resources/>

⁹ WEDC guidelines available at: <https://wedc.org/reopen-guidelines/>

G. Modified Strategic Initiatives

The magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic and the level of disruption cause by the response will require modifications to planned strategic initiatives and related work plans. The revised strategic initiatives and supporting goals are outlined below. These items are subject to change as conditions warrant or as opportunities present themselves.

- Deliver Quality Public Safety Services
 - Develop continuity of operational plans and personal protective equipment plans for long-term sustained COVID-19 responses.
- Support the Local Business Community and Economy
 - Monitor economic health of the community
 - Participate and assist in coordinating with County and State on regional recovery planning
 - Maintain rapid response approach to economic development opportunities
 - Complete and submit EDA application for north business park expansion
- Connect the Community
 - Develop and maintain a centralized source for COVID-19 resources and public information resources
 - Continue essential municipal services in a safe and efficient manner that incorporates any social distancing measures
- Maintain infrastructure and Provide Safe Utilities
 - Continue facility planning activities for wastewater plant
 - Continue water system infrastructure maintenance and inspection projects
- Ensure Organizational Resilience
 - Rebalance 2020 budget
 - Develop 2021 budget
 - Revisit Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2021
 - Develop 2022-2027 CIP
 - Provide flexibility and support for employees addressing COVID-19 impacts

VIII. Principles and Approaches to Recovery

As the Village being the process of reopening, it will be important to approach recovery in a systematic way that aligns with strategic initiatives. Staff has developed in initial series of principles to guide our recovery.

- Adaptability in the face of change and uncertainty: As an organization, we will react and adapt current services to meet the needs of the community amid rapid change and uncertainty.
- Capitalize on opportunities for improvement: Use COVID-19 response as a way to improve processes that can apply beyond the recovery phase and become permanent changes to the way we do business.
- Remove barriers: Address regulatory or process barriers to allow the community to recover more quickly.
- Apply lessons learned in response: Craft frameworks that allow Marathon City to better manage future crises and community disruptions.
- Align, collaborate and innovate with partners: Maintain inter-governmental and inter-organizational relationships to foster increased local and regional partnerships improving response, resource access and recovery.

IX. Conclusion

The Village of Marathon City is committed to supporting the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. This document outlines the guidelines and principles employed by the Village as recovery starts. The Village is moving from Safer at Home to Phase 1. We pledge to work diligently to find solutions that move us incrementally forward while operating within the recommended guidelines. As guidelines change, we will evaluate and adapt using the criteria contained here, as modified from time-to-time by the President and Board.

As we look toward the next 12 months and beyond, Village staff will continue to focus on its core functions, guided by principles that include flexibility, adaptability, innovation and collaboration. At the same time, we continue to focus on attaining our strategic goals. This will ensure that, when this pandemic recedes, we have made the progress necessary to keep our Village not only functioning but growing.

This plan cannot be accomplished without the support of our community. We recognize the hardships and disruption borne by residents and businesses during this pandemic. We continue to work to provide vital services and greatly appreciate the patience, flexibility and desire for the best possible outcome demonstrated by our community. We are a strong community with a bright future and we will move forward with focus.