



WISLINE SERIES
Current Issues Affecting
Local Government Officials
2006-2007

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The Many Roads to County Strategic Planning

Tuesday, December 12, 2006
10:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.

Guest Speakers

Keith Langenhahn, Marathon County Board Chair
Brad Karger, Marathon County Deputy Administrator

Clifford Main, Burnett County Board Chair
Candace Fitzgerald, Burnett County Administrator

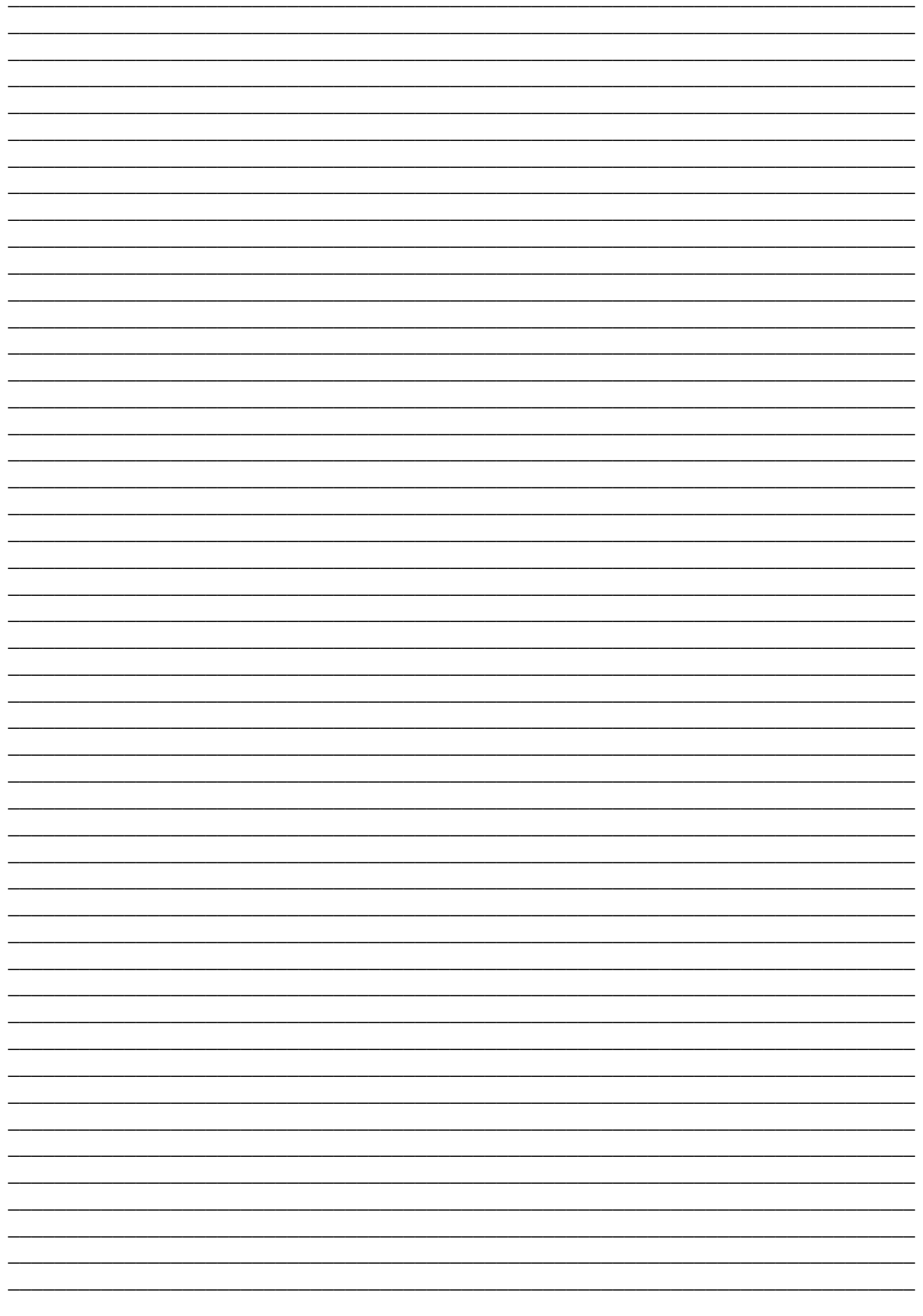
Steve Doyle, LaCrosse County Board Chair
Steve O'Malley, LaCrosse County Administrator

AGENDA

1. Marathon County Strategic Plan and Process
2. Burnett County Strategic Plan and Process
3. LaCrosse County Strategic Thinking and Process
4. Further Questions and Discussion

Enclosures: (1) Notes pages, (2) Marathon County Webpage, (3) "Marathon County Board of Supervisors: Core Values," (4) "The County Board: Providing Leadership through Strategic Planning," by Kenneth Day and Brad Karger, article in February 2006 Wisconsin Counties Association magazine, (5) "2006 Burnett County Strategic Plan," pages 2 – 23, (6) "LaCrosse County High Performance Government," powerpoint by Steve O'Malley, and (7) an evaluation form.

Next Program in this Series:
Tuesday, February 13, 2006
The Future of Transportation Funding





Organizational Excellence

- [Mission](#)
- [Vision](#)
- [Core Values](#)
- [Core Strategies](#)
- [Proposed Plan of Activities](#)

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.

Marathon County Vision Statement

Marathon County Government leads by providing high quality infrastructure and integrated services and by developing trusting, collaborative relationships among diverse partners. It is proactive in enhancing health and safety, protecting the environment, and providing cultural, recreational, and economic opportunities which make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business.

Core Values ([details](#))

Service, Integrity, Quality, Diversity, Shared Purpose, Stewardship Of Our Resources.

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Core Strategies

- I. Develop and implement organizational restructuring and processes for continuous improvement that enhance operational efficiency, improve customer service and service effectiveness, as measured by program outcomes, for key customers.
- II. Establish and continually reevaluate service priorities. Proactively align current and future county services and programs with established priorities that anticipate needs, enhance health and safety, protect the environment and offer cultural, recreational, and economic opportunities.
- III. Through leadership, infrastructure and resources, aggressively develop economic opportunities which provide for a strong economic base, equally balanced with protection of the environment and quality of life issues.
- IV. Pursue local, regional, and state collaborative working relationships, public involvement and communication strategies which position Marathon County Government as a recognized leader in coordinating resources for the purpose of meeting community needs in Marathon County and the surrounding area.
- V. Attract, develop, and retain staff capable of the leadership and vision necessary to provide excellent services. Educate and encourage public involvement in County Government, while developing the governance skills of elected officials.

Proposed Plan of Activities

Proposed Marathon County Plan of Activities by Core Strategy

FY 2006-2008

(Identified through the December Board retreat discussion)

(Additional Items Identified by Administration)

Core Strategy #1. *Develop and implement organizational restructuring and processes for continuous improvement that enhances operational efficiency, improves customer service and service effectiveness, as measured by program outcomes for key customers.*

1. Implement a customer satisfaction survey(s) which measures and monitors customer satisfaction with County services.
2. Restructure the County Board organization in order to foster successful accomplishment of the strategic initiatives.
3. Restructure the County operational units to be consistent with fostering effective and efficient services.
4. Establish a specific goal(s) for each department, to include predetermined measurable (expected) outcomes based upon normative data, and monitor outcomes with appropriate regularity.
5. Develop a set of (high level) key reports (a dashboard) germane to measuring the accomplishment of the County's strategic vision and continuously and appropriately monitor the same.

Core Strategy #II. *Establish and continually re-evaluate service priorities. Proactively align current and future County services and programs with established priorities that anticipate needs, enhance health and safety, protect the environment and offer cultural, recreational, and economic opportunities.*

1. Develop and implement a process which uses stakeholder focused criteria to identify the least effective (10% of) programs and services provided by the County, and propose approaches to improve and/or discontinue each.
2. Increase organizational productivity (by 2%) based upon a predetermined criteria e.g., cost per unit of service, FTE, recidivism.
3. Design and implement a public input system which increases community involvement in County Government.
4. Conduct (a minimum of six annually) educational sessions for the Board to develop a better understanding of future challenges and effective governance.
5. Complete a study to determine the most effective means of approaching future criminal justice issues.
6. Conduct NCHCF study to determine the most viable options for the County to move forward with policy decisions related to elderly and individuals with disabilities.

Core Strategy #III. *Through leadership, infrastructure and resources, aggressively develop economic opportunities which provide for a strong economic base, balanced with protection of the environment and quality of life issues.*

1. Through county board reorganization, structure a county board committee(s) with the responsibility for the development and leadership of the county's economic development strategies
2. Complete a futuristic infrastructure needs analysis for Marathon County and the region as a precursor to establishing future economic development initiatives by the County.
3. Participate in and support the regional planning organization(s) implementation of the County's strategic partnership initiatives.
4. Building upon the counties historically strong agriculture economy, foster the development of agriculture initiatives e.g. the Dairyland State Academy and work in partnership with other community organizations to encourage agriculture development.
5. *Research and develop model ordinances and other tools to help communities be successful in implementing the land use element of their respective comprehensive plans.*
6. *Continue to work with our municipalities to assist them in developing policies and practices that are consistent with and support respective visions of the future.*
7. *Analyze implications, and initiate actions to retain the viability of the CentralWisconsinAirport.*
8. *Develop a long term facilities' plan for the UWMC.*

Core Strategy #IV. *Pursue local, regional, and state collaborative working relationships, public involvement and communication strategies which position Marathon County Government as a recognized leader in coordinating resources for the purpose of meeting community needs in Marathon County and the surrounding area.*

1. Complete the implementation of a regional ADRC.
2. Propose a regional long term care CMO (Community Care of Central Wisconsin) initiative in cooperation with Portage and Wood Counties.
3. Lead a regional information/ communications system development initiative e.g., emergency services.
4. Partner with North Central Regional Planning to formulate proposals to regionalize appropriate initiatives.
5. Develop a consumer (citizen) focused County website.
6. Develop and implement an improved public information/ media relations program.
7. *Establish a series of public presentations to the community fostering communications about the County's mission, vision, and accomplishment of the same, engaging the CountyBoard membership in these activities.*

Core Strategy #V. *Attract, develop and retain staff capable of the leadership and vision necessary to provide excellent services. Educate and encourage public involvement in County Government, while developing the governance skills of elected officials.*

1. Provide governance education sessions for the County Board.
2. Craft and implement staff development policies and practices focused on the successful completion of the core strategies.
3. Develop an improved Board and employee orientation process/ program.

4. Implement an ongoing employee satisfaction survey process focused on engaging the employee as a means to make Marathon County a preferred employer.
5. Develop a leadership succession plan for Administration.
6. Conduct an organization-wide communications/in-service initiative to incorporate an understanding of the mission, vision and core strategies in the daily work of every employee.
7. *Study a compensation philosophy/plan which links compensation to employee performance.*
8. Design and promote leadership development opportunities for the board and administration.

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Marathon County Board of Supervisors Core Values

The Marathon County Board of Supervisors adopted six core values—service, integrity, quality, diversity, shared purpose, and stewardship of resources—in February, 2004 to communicate how our County will conduct its business. The role of the Marathon County Board of Supervisors is to lead our staff in becoming the best County in the State of Wisconsin. To do this, we commit to living the six core values as outlined below:

SERVICE is responsively delivering on our commitments to all of our internal and external customers. County Board members will provide leadership in **SERVICE** by:

- Doing the job we were elected to do focusing on the needs of the whole County and on the needs of our constituents.
- Establishing appropriate timelines for all County Board activities consistent with excellent customer service.
- Allocating resources to assure our employees are capable of providing excellent customer service.
- Directing that administration establish and monitor customer service metrics for all County departments.

INTEGRITY is honesty, openness, and demonstrating mutual respect and trust in others. County Board members will provide leadership in **INTEGRITY** by:

- Establishing an expectation and practice that County Board Supervisors and administration will refer to and treat each other, employees, other levels of government, and the public with respect.
- Making decisions that are in the best interests of the County's residents.
- Conducting oneself in a manner that reflects well upon the reputation of Marathon County.
- Upholding high ethical standards, including declaring conflicts of interest when they arise and removing ourselves from the decision making process in such cases.

QUALITY is providing public services that are reflective of “best practices” in the field. County Board members will provide leadership in **QUALITY** by:

- Gathering and using information to make decisions focused on the best future for the citizens of Marathon County.
- Supporting and expecting County employees to create an environment of continuous quality improvement.
- Directing that administration establish benchmarks for success and monitor County services against these benchmarks.
- Creating a work environment that makes Marathon County a preferred employer as

evidenced by excellent employee recruitment and retention, performance, staff development, and positive union and management relations.

DIVERSITY is actively welcoming and valuing people with different perspectives and experiences. County Board members will provide leadership in **DIVERSITY** by:

- Welcoming and respecting persons of all cultures and backgrounds.
- Listening to and valuing the opinions of all constituents.
- Refraining from making statements or decisions that demeans any group.
- Encouraging the sharing of diverse opinions.
- Ensuring minority representation/participation appropriate to County Board issues.

SHARED PURPOSE is functioning as a team to attain our organizational goals and working collaboratively with our policy makers, departments, employees, and customers. County Board members will provide leadership in **SHARED PURPOSE** by:

- Recognizing we are in partnership with all County employees, citizens, elected officials, and contracted service providers to achieve our goals.
- Conducting strategic planning to align County Government on its mission and future vision for success.
- Defining short-term and long-term goals and focusing on outcomes to maximize benefits to Marathon County residents.
- Working appropriately with all parties when disputes arise to find workable solutions.

STEWARDSHIP OF OUR RESOURCES is conserving the human, natural, cultural, and financial resources for current and future generations. County Board members will provide leadership in **STEWARDSHIP** by:

- Making policy decisions that value and protect the human, natural, cultural, and financial resources and infrastructure of Marathon County.
- Being futuristic when we discuss and set goals.
- Expecting that all County Departments and employees will use state of the art, best practices in delivering services to the public.
- Evaluating and monitoring standards which assure the effective and efficient use of County resources.

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The county board: providing leadership through strategic planning

Kenneth Day, Marathon County Board
Supervisor & Brad Karger, Marathon County
Assistant Administrator

Why should a county spend time doing strategic planning, especially during this time of uncertainty?

That was the question on the lips and in the minds of some members of the Marathon County Board of Supervisors when the topic of strategic planning was discussed in late 2004 by the administration, department heads and the board itself. What could be the benefit of completing a strategic plan? After all, the board had reviewed and revised its mission statement two years earlier. Based on that review, the board created and implemented a process as a means of prioritizing, and then reducing, the county's expenditures. Overall, Marathon County's financial health was excellent. In addition, the local economy was growing and Marathon County was identified as one of only two locations in the state that was retaining a larger number of college graduates than it was losing. The county had implemented a smart-growth planning project and most of the local municipalities were participating. Then why would the county government want to spend the time, money and effort necessary to perform a comprehensive strategic plan?

The answer to the question why became apparent

when the board began to explore its future.

As a result of a presentation provided by WCA Executive Director Mark O'Connell and an initial environmental scan conducted by the board, the board was motivated to move forward with strategic planning because of the certain and uncertain aspects of Marathon County's future.

The uncertainty of future state funding was a concern of the board. While county finances are good at present, no one expected that monetary resources would be as plentiful in the future. It was clear that while the county had made some program modifications and reduced expenditures, additional program reductions and establishment of funding priorities would be required. The board determined that the use of specific, objective criteria as rationale to discontinue or modify programs in the future was necessary in order to convince employees, special interest groups and the public that board decisions were not arbitrary.

Additionally, it was increasingly clear that the public would require greater accountability from local government, demanding to know what taxpayers would be getting for their expenditures. The public required to know why one service might be discontinued while another would be expanded. The board determined that in order to effectively prioritize ser-

vices, greater clarity and alignment of the county's mission would need to be established and then clearly communicated to county employees and residents.

The board was concerned with other issues as well. The number of individuals 65 and older was projected to become greater than 20 percent of the county's population. The sprawl of business into rural areas was beginning to demand attention if the rural character of the county, which is what attracted residents and what residents value, was to be maintained. Locally-owned businesses, which had grown and prospered in the county, were transitioning to absentee ownership by large corporations outside the community, and leadership for future economic development would be required to replace jobs eliminated by changes in the workplace. Finally, the ability to attract and retain a vibrant, quality workforce for the region and for Marathon County government positions would be a challenge in an increasingly competitive business environment. Because of these challenges, the board recognized that if the county organization were to live by its recently adopted core value statements, which stressed continuous improvement, changes in how the county organization was structured and how it would conduct its business in the future were necessary.

Given the challenges confronting the county, the board decided it must take a leadership role in determining the county's future. It needed to provide direction to its administrative staff and hold them accountable for outcomes. It needed to establish program and funding priorities,

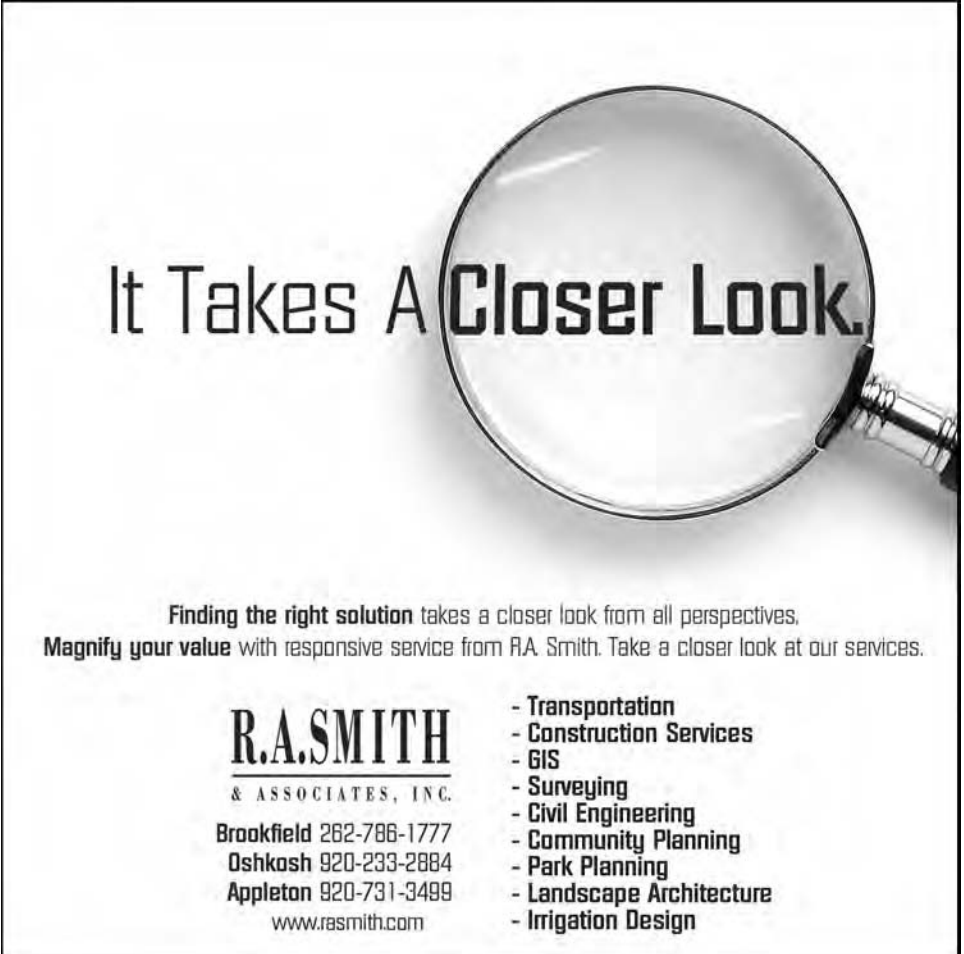
and criteria for success which it could use to measure and monitor performance. Finally, the board needed to establish priorities for its own work to identify those critical issues the organization must address so that the county could deliver the services valued by Marathon County residents. Establishing and implementing a comprehensive strategic plan for the county, rather than reacting in a haphazard way to rising crisis, was the method by which the board determined it could best provide leadership for the organization.

With a sense of accomplishment about the past and the current successes of Marathon County, and with a realization

that the future held challenges and uncertainties, the board agreed to move forward with a strategic planning process in February of 2005. An outline of the planning process was included in a resolution approving the strategic planning process and the specifics of that process were developed by a strategic planning committee appointed by the board in a subsequent resolution.

What can strategic planning accomplish?

Strategic planning can identify and clarify a county's mission, vision for success, critical issues and the core strategies to address



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each. This is critical in identifying the opportunities available to move a county organization forward productively and efficiently in a rapidly changing environment.

Organizational alignment creates an organization-wide team focus and assists the organization in attracting and retaining the talented employees necessary to make a county a leadership organization. Strategically thinking about a county's future and establishing goals for the future helps the organization prioritize its work and establish specific criteria against which it can assess its own performance and the performance of administrative staff.

Is Strategic Planning Difficult?

Strategic planning processes and their results vary from organization to organization. The worst-case scenarios range from a superficial discussion by a board revisiting a draft mission statement provided by administration, to a drawn out process with extensive data which overburdens a board and results in a 300 page, 3-ring binder report accepted by a board and then shelved, never to be implemented.

The key to an effective strategic planning process is to establish a set of activities and a schedule which affords gathering sufficient insight about future issues relevant to the organization, and which is succinct in design so that the board and the organization are not overloaded with minutia. While each strategic planning process needs to be designed to address the uniqueness of the organization, steps in a traditional strategic planning process include: an environmental scan, clarification and alignment on a mission statement, creation of a vision statement, a description of what future success looks like, identification of critical issues (those issues which must be addressed by the organization in order for the desired future vision to be obtained), and a set of core strategies to be used by the organization to address the critical issues.

The design for Marathon County's strategic planning process was lead by a strategic planning committee. This committee was to guide the process and involve the board,

county administration, county management and the community when it was appropriate. The committee consisted of 10 individuals— a cross-section of board members, non-elected citizens, county administrators and department heads.

The process was designed to be completed over a period of six months with a draft plan presented to the board for consideration and adoption after the six months. The plan document was to include the elements outlined above. The planning process would necessitate approximately 10 hours of full board discussion during those six months. It would also include an undefined amount of additional time for community focus groups, strategic planning committee meetings and administrative and management discussion. The strategic planning committee enlisted the assistance of a consulting firm to assist with internal, external and board group discussion and facilitation.

Why is strategic planning so important?

The strategic planning process is as valuable as the plan that it generates. It is through the process of discovery and disclosure that the organization identifies hidden and long-held values, beliefs and practices which may adversely affect its ability to function efficiently, change and improve services to the community. It is through this process of discovery and alignment that groups of people in the organization come together to discuss how the organization could improve. Through this process, the organization develops a clearer understanding of why it exists and what results are valuable. It can begin to identify what accountability to its stakeholders might look like. The process makes it acceptable to re-evaluate and challenge past practices— not by defining them as “wrong” in the past, but by assessing their value in moving into the future.

Marathon County has successfully completed its strategic planning process for a three-year to five-year time horizon. The board completed its final discussion of the plan and adopted it as a holiday gift to the organization on

December 20th, 2005. Further, the board moved with deliberate speed into the implementation phase of the plan. The board requested that administration begin the development of specific actions to bring the goals of the strategic plan to fruition. These annual action plans will become part of the administrative staff's duties and will describe the actions that need to be taken by all areas of the organization in order for the vision of success to become a reality. The board will provide the leadership required for the implementation of these plans, establish criteria for evaluating success and monitor the organization's performance against the goals established in the plans. Perhaps most importantly, the board will allocate available resources consistent with the core strategies.

Strategic planning is not just an event, it is a process through which the organization can develop internal and external alignment on why it exists, what it wants to be and how it will serve in the future. It can identify the most significant challenges faced by a county, and how the organization intends to move into the future. It has the potential of aligning the work of the entire organization, thereby making it more effective and efficient. If these seem like results that would be of value to your county's organization, then perhaps a strategic planning process should be in your county's future.

Kenneth Day is a Marathon County board supervisor with extensive professional experience in strategic planning. Ken chaired the Marathon County strate-

gic planning committee. He has served on the boards of several community organizations and assisted many others with their strategic planning. Ken led the planning, business development and marketing division of a major healthcare system for the past 20 years. For specific information about Marathon County's strategic plan or its planning process, Ken can be contacted at 715.675.3531 or <KLDay1@charter.net>.

Brad Karger is the Marathon County assistant administrator and chief operating officer. Brad has 25 years of leadership experience in the public sector with extensive experience in the area of human resources. Improvement of organization performance, staff development and increased accountability for outcomes are his key areas of interest. Brad can be contacted at 715.261.1404 or <bmkarger@mail.co.marathon.wi.us>.

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2006 BURNETT COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

BURNETT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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Mary Falk, Donald Chell, Gene Olson, James Engelhart,
Wayne Burmeister, Edgar Peterson, Norman Bickford, Christopher Sybers,
Bert Lund, Jr., Emmett Byrne, Richard Anderson, David Alderman,
Philip Lindeman, Carsten Endresen, Maury Miller, Gerald Pardun, Clifford Main

Strategic Planning Committee

Clifford Main (Chair), Philip Lindeman (Vice Chair), Edgar Peterson (Second Vice Chair),
Eldon Freese, Mary Falk, Norman Bickford,
David Alderman, Carsten Endresen, Gerald Pardun

Department Head Participants

Dean Roland, Kathleen Swingle, Dave Ferris, Jake Nichols, Lloyd Arnold,
Trudy Schmidt, Jeffrey McIntyre, James Flannigan

Recording Secretary

Julianne Tuel

Facilitated and Compiled By

Michael Kornmann, Community Development Agent
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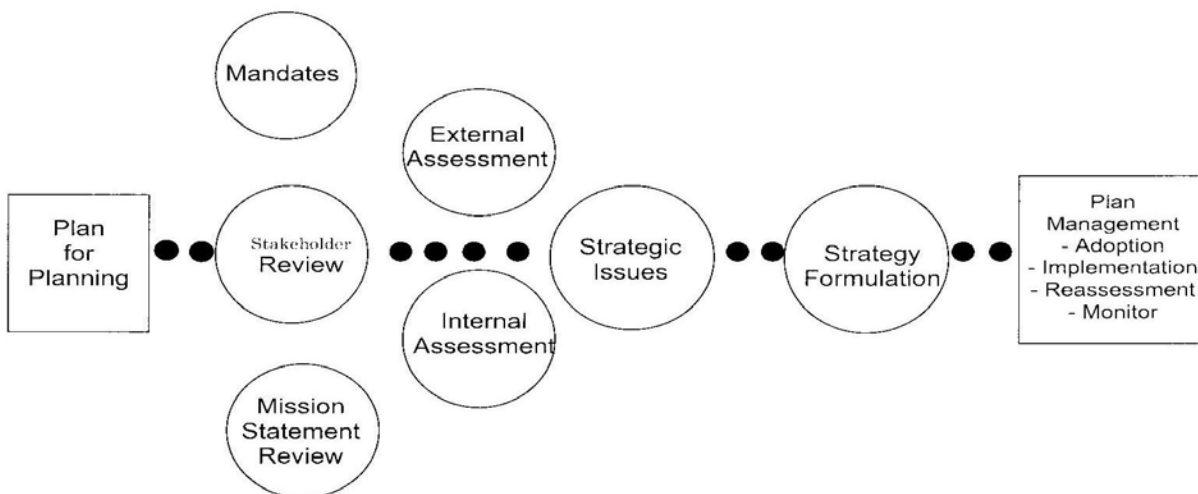
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STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

At the March meeting, a presentation was given on strategic planning and several reasons for planning were identified including changing demands and programs, more pressure to be efficient, a need to integrate at many levels, and diminishing resources to name a few. Many of these issues are facing Burnett County today. Lastly, the definition of strategic planning was defined as “a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide an organization and what it does” (Bryson, 1995). The Burnett County Board of Supervisors committed to pursuing a strategic plan for the County of Burnett by unanimous vote in March of 2005. The process used for the plan is outlined in the graphic below.

OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



- v "Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide an organization and what it does.
- v "It's a powerful tool that helps organizations figure out what's really important and what to do about it."

Source: Bryson, John M. and Alton, Farnum K. *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1995.

County Board Appointed by Chairman Clifford Main, the Strategic Planning Committee consisted of the following: Clifford Main (Chair), Phil Lindeman (Vice Chair), Ed Peterson (2nd Chair), Carsten Endresen, David Alderman, Mary Falk, Eldon Freese, Norman Bickford, Gerald Pardun. The group met on a regular basis from April through late fall. Often times the committee met twice a month. Stakeholder involvement included department heads as well as the public. Five public meetings were held throughout the county to collect public input. Also feedback was also collect via the county's web page.

The following pages summarize the proceedings of the process in developing the 2006 Burnett County Strategic Plan. The outcomes that will help guide and shape the decisions and actions of the county are the mission statement, core values, issues, and strategies. However, the process itself is also very valuable. This plan includes the results of exercises that provided insight and learning for the committee members and hopefully also for those who read this plan.

STAKEHOLDERS

EXTERNAL

Taxpayers

State of Wisconsin

Tourists

Townships

Youth

Villages

School Systems

United States Government

Businesses

St. Croix Tribe

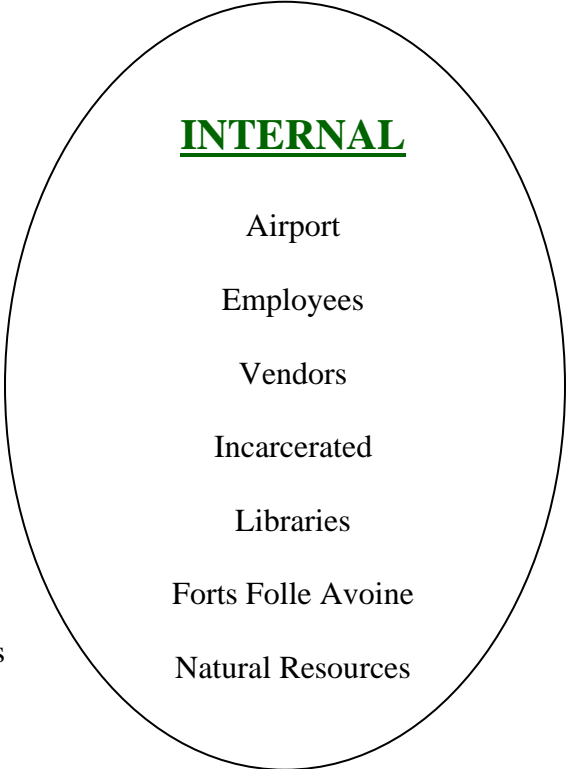
Non-profit organizations

University of Wisconsin

Department of Natural Resources

Hospitals

Polk/Sawyer/Washburn Counties



Stakeholder Evaluation Criteria

In an effort to understand the stakeholders of Burnett County the committee broke into groups and identified criteria for some stakeholder groups use to evaluate Burnett County Government. Each group also then identified a performance rating on how they thought that stakeholder thought Burnett County was performing according to each criterion. An up arrow was “good,” a down arrow was “poor,” and a double-sided arrow was “so-so.”

Stakeholder Criteria for Evaluating Burnett County Government

Group 1

How does each stakeholder rate Burnett County?

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
State of Wisconsin	Delivering services with less funds	↔
	Providing required services	↑↑
	Maintaining State highways	↑↑
	Providing tax dollars and revenue	↑↑

1. How do we respond to this stakeholder?

- Mandates
- Support programs
- Rules/regulations
- Tax levy

2. What do we need from them?

- Money
- Less regulation
- Financial responsibility

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Natural Resources	Managing/creating habitats	↑↑
	Provide financial resources	↑↑
	Responsible use	↑↑
	Environmental integrity – dealing with exotics, watershed protection	↑↑

1. How do we respond to this stakeholder?

Quality of life
 Financing – jobs
 Recreation

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Employees	Quality of workplace (physical)	↑↑
	Spirit of cooperation/atmosphere/friendly workplace	↑↑
	Fair wages and benefits	↑↑
	Elected officials relationship/departmental support	↑↑
	Tools/support equipment	↑↑
	Travel/infrastructure	↔

1. How do we respond to this stakeholder?

Make or break the organization
 Communication

2. What do we need from this stakeholder?

Performance
 Commitment

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Youth	Providing/offering programs	↓↓
	Job opportunities	↓↓
	Available facilities	↓↓
	Law enforcement	↓↓

1. How do we respond to this stakeholder?

Provide programming – 4H, Superior Days, Conservation Days

- Budget

2. What do we need from them?

Finish school

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Businesses	Marketing	↔
	Fair taxes	↔
	Infrastructure	↔
	Development regulations	↑↑
	Law enforcement	↑↑
	Court system	↔
	Assistance/education	↑↑
	Financing	↑↑
	Communication	↔

1. How do we respond to this stakeholder?

Tax dollars
Employees

2. What do we need from them?

Support of programs
Sales tax
Direction

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Incarcerated	Things to do – books and TV	↔
	Housing and meals	↔
	Condition of cells/crowded	↔
	Efficiency of court system	↔
	Fines and court costs	↓
	Medical/dental/healthcare	↑

1. How do we respond to this stakeholder?

Drains resources – money
Psychologically

2. What do we need from them?

Responsibility
Change of lifestyle

GROUP 2

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Schools	Financial support	↔
	Road conditions	↑
	Educational supports – drug, nutrition, history, Youth at Risk	↓
	Libraries	↔

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Economic Development Organizations	New Business – (assisting existing business/attracting new)	↓
	Job base (labor force)	↑
	Money	↔
	Products	↑
	Taxes	↓
	Programs/services/RLF	↔
	Flexibility/willingness to change	↓
	Zoning – should we stay who we are?	↑

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Taxpayers	Taxes	↓
	Services	↔
	Infrastructure	↔
	Budget management	↔ w/downward curve
	Public safety – law enforcement	↔
	Public safety -- fire	↑
	Public safety – emergency	↔
	Human resources (social programs/public health, etc.)	↑
	First responder	↓

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Towns and Villages	Partnership/collaboration	↑
	Taxes	↔
	Zoning	↑
	Safety	↔ spotty
	Communication/information sharing	upward curve
	UDC	↓

Stakeholder	Criteria	Performance Rating
Tourists	Roads (accessibility)	↓
	Recreational services	↑
	Available business (retail)	↔
	Aesthetics	↔
	Fishing/hunting information (web site)	↑

MISSION STATEMENT DEVELOPMENT

A mission statement defines the intended purpose of an organization. It can be used a guide for an organization for what it gets involved in and even specific decisions it makes. In developing its mission statement, the committee members answered several questions individually and then wrote their own mission statements. Each statement was then posted on the wall and members underlined key words and phrases they liked from each statement. New versions were created and discussed. Through this process and a consensus-based discussion, the following mission statement was recommended and approved by resolution in June of 2005.

The mission statement of Burnett County Government reads:

“To Provide Vision and Stewardship”

CORE VALUE DEVELOPMENT

Core values also help guide an organization by defining what is most important to the organization. The committee used the same exercise to write the core values statements. To help identify core values, however, an organizational highlights and lowlights exercise and others to identify core value themes. The statements were then drafted and agreed upon by consensus.

- **Quality of life.** We value quality of life meaning friendly communities, wildlife, natural resources, jobs, and education.
- **Efficiency of services.** We value services and work to implement them in financially sound ways that affect both the short and long-term financial health of our organization.
- **Common goals.** We reach out, listen, and develop common goals to focus our work and foster community wide support on issues and programs.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

S.W.O.T. Analysis – Committee

Brainstorming strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats helps to begin to frame the issues facing an organization or community. The internal strengths and weaknesses are those within Burnett County Government and external opportunities are those outside of the control of Burnett County Government. Two separate lists were made, one by the committee and one by the department heads. The two groups brought their lists together and then discussed them.

Strengths (Internal):

- Professional, skilled employees
- Good leaders in Department Heads
- Good, professional administrative staff
- Willing to embrace new technology
- Excellent benefit package – retirement, leave, health, fair wage
- Major revenue from forest and highway
- Department and County Board work together
- Good place to live
- Ability to process and obtain grants
- Technology mindful people
- Not afraid to be the first one to try something
- Departments fight for departments

Weaknesses (Internal)

- Training grounds for entry-level positions – parks / forestry / airport
- Overlap in services
Communication between department and other agencies
- Not working as well with Tribe
- Communication with Tribe (Tribe does not respond, Tribe does not have stable leadership, cultural differences)
- Fight for own Department
- Relation with Union

Opportunities (External)

- Work with Tribe on inmate populations and rehabilitation
- Logging museum – Visitors' Center
- Countywide room tax
- Challenges create creative programs
- Water supply
- Greater sharing of Department leadership with County-elected officials without adding costly positions
- Seek programs/cooperation with other counties
- Education of public on County government
- Expanded airport
- Consolidation of County services
- Untapped resources of people (skills to help government)
- County Board dialogue – “less structure”

Threats (External)

- Infrastructure investment (highways and highway building), work in opposite direction by implementing local resources
- Make up of economy -- lack of industry (small diverse economy) not on major highway or access to a major airport, no large spurts of growth, we will see more 40-acre farms
- Unfunded mandates
- Increased taxes on long-time residents. In 1990 census 50% were seasonal residents and now seasonal residents make up 45% of our population. 52% of homeowners are non-resident. Two-thirds of taxpayers have no children in school.
- Change of population – aging population
- How schools are funded at State level
- Population increases
- Misunderstandings

S.W.O.T. Analysis – Department Heads

Strengths (Internal)

Burnett County is a desirable place to live
Employees have a variety of training and skills
County offers a stable work environment
Employees have positive attitudes are loyal to county
County government offers a good benefit package
The managers are forward thinking
People and employees want to be here
The County is advanced with its technology
The County Board of Supervisors is supportive of our department
Department Managers work well together
Managers deal with issues before they get out of hand
County forest offers substantial revenue
The County is not at its maximum levy limit, we are funded by taxes
Nice interior working environment

Weaknesses (Internal)

Reactive/don't plan/change out equipment
Unspoken collusion
Luck of public understanding of county programs
Victims to vendors
Employee training (new skills/maintenance)
Need more communication and leaderships state to county
No long range planning
More demands-unable to keep up
Lack of staff. Lack of resources (space/time to train)
More people coming to county/demand are created
Internal competition for resources
Lack of markets for wood and contractors
Tourism-increased service demands
Managers play good cop/bad cop

Don't (share/know) internal resources or availability of
Generational attitudes of entitlement
Funding from taxes
Lack of pay compared to neighboring counties
Physically divided departments
Lack of communications
Trainings are located far away
Equipment needs
Employee lack of technical skills
Retirement and turnover
Keeping staff motivated with increasing work loads
Elected official turnover

Opportunities (External)

Use the Web-Site to educate the public about county government and our departments
Write grants to offset our cost
Long Range Planning
Evaluate expansion and specialization
To form good policies for the future
To pay more competitive wages
We are funded taxes
Improve our image – make government less of a dirty word
Utilize technology – wireless, DSL, fiber optics, internet
Expand our public lands
New facilities to bring departments together
Licensing of restaurants to bring in revenue
Recreation, wildlife, economics
Memberships in WI Counties and other Professional Organizations
Ability to match State and Federal dollars
Employees are flexible/adaptable to new situations

Opportunities (External) cont.

Our government is small – less people to convince of our needs
Some departments generate revenue doing work for towns and villages
We have the ability to develop/guide/influence the future of the county
Money earned by working for towns/villages is money retained within the county
Specialized treatment programs – drug courts
County receives revenue from other sources (fees, timber harvest, labor and contracts)
Public Land
Tourism

Threats (External)

Lack of public understanding of county govt/services
Loss of revenue (labor/loss of revenue/spending caps)
Ultra conservative leadership that prohibits long range planning
Requirement to provide more services –do more with same amount
Negativity
Demands for services from weekenders unrealistic
Increased population puts stress on county government
Competitors can make in roads to take earmarked county revenue
Funding-state and federal
Increased mandates
Legislature
Elections-political change
Meth
Fear of change (everybody)
Loss of public lands
Tourism (secondary home owners)-land owners
Diminishing labor force
Gambling expansion

Technology/info revenue loss
Special interest groups
Public perception of govt/services –taken for granted
Increase of costs due to local, state, and global markets
Loss of youth opportunities (reasons to stay)
School position cuts—shift of services to county
Natural disasters

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Hopes and Concerns

To assess the external environment, five public meetings were held throughout the county. Meetings were held in Siren, Jackson, Danbury, and Grantsburg (2). Also feedback was collected via the county web page.

At each meeting public participants were asked to identify their hopes and concerns for their community. The combined list follows and helped to identify issues and develop strategies later in the plan.

Hopes

- Businesses along highway 70
 - Good paying jobs
 - Steady growth
 - Better communication between agencies/government
 - New businesses taking advantage of local/natural resources
 - Housing in the Village of Grantsburg
 - Take advantage of training and allocate funding opportunities
 - Enforce current laws
 - Increase school/vocational partnerships with industry
 - Expand cooperation between schools
 - Get state information and talk to “Madison” and make them aware of northwest Wisconsin
 - Encourage secondary homeowners to move businesses here
 - Help existing businesses survive
 - Help businesses deal with “smoke free”; start dialogue
 - Prevent problems – drug addictions; be pro-active prior to court system
 - Support technology think big
 - Tap new residents to participate
 - Quality of living-add parks, libraries that add economic value
- Make government more efficient and less redundant

Concerns

- Growing too fast
- Growing without a plan
- Closing of Businesses
- Keep Grantsburg airport
- Property taxes
- Lack recognition of local resources
- Lack of community interest
- Drugs – methamphetamine
- Lack of county wide zoning
- Wild fires
- Can't burn leaves at dump
- Junk yards (not salvage yards)
- Shoddy construction
- Exotic species in lakes
- Littering
- Vote/voice of secondary home owners
- Uncontrolled sprawl without zoning regulations
- Ruining of beautiful area
- Lack of businesses
- Businesses can't compete – people drive to regional commercial centers
- Lack of tourists (not secondary homeowners) – antismoking ordinances banning smoking
- Taxes
- Meth
- Gangs are coming
- Lack of snow
- Jobs
- Why are we electing “non-legislative” positions
- County board too big
- Uncoordinated development that raises costs for government and difficulty of service delivery
- High real estate taxes along lakeshore
- Keeping businesses clean and uncluttered
- Public safety – enforcement of recreation laws (example: fireworks and four wheelers)
- Dealing with symptoms rather than problems
- Losing young kids
- Junk along the roads – refrigerators and stoves

STRATEGIC PLAN

Goals – Strategies - Objectives

EVALUATE AND REHABILITATE DRUG AND ALCOHOL OFFENDERS THAT ENTER THE COURT SYSTEM

Strategy: Develop and implement a rehabilitation program

Initiator: County Board Chairman

Component: Create a task force of community

- Identify specific members from groups including but not limited to schools, judge, county, clergy, law enforcement, B.C. Health and Human Services, St. Croix Tribe, Village Boards, Town Boards, UW Extension, B.C. Board of Supervisors, District Attorney...
- Create appropriate committee structure

Component: Determine key program characteristics

- Evaluate possible rehabilitation programs
- Identify outside funding sources
- Identify program cost savings/efficiency strategies
- Identify and develop community support and communication strategies

MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF BURNETT COUNTY

Strategy: Initiate comprehensive planning activities for the county and its communities

Component: Encourage un-zoned Towns to adopt zoning

- Educate towns on land management tools and county services

Initiator: Zoning Committee

- Co-apply for comprehensive planning grant with towns, villages and/or St. Croix Tribe

Initiator: County Board Chairman appointing Ad hoc Committee

- Create and adopt county and municipal comprehensive plans

Initiator: Municipalities

Component: Preserve agricultural land

- Develop a Purchase of Development Rights Program for Ag Land

Initiator (*Land and Water Conservation Com.*)

- Promote added value farming

Initiator: (*UWEX, NWRPC, BCDA*)

Component: Preserve private forestland from conversion

Initiator: (*Ad Hoc Com.-County Board Chairman*)

- Develop a conservation subdivision ordinance and development policy
- Develop education and marketing strategies to encourage its use
- Develop a Purchase of Development Rights Program for Forest Land. **Initiator** (*Land and Water Conservation Com.*)

SUPPORT, PLAN AND PROMOTE APPROPRIATE BUSINESS INCLUDING AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM

Strategy: Business Development

Component: Promote entrepreneurial businesses*

- Ag - Tourism web site (*BCDA*)
- Farmers Market Web site (*BCDA*)
- Promote Business Education Resources (*UWEX*)
- Promote air transportation related industries (*BCDA/NWRPC*)

**All other resources including the Indianhead Community Action Agency will be used in implementing these action items*

Component: Infrastructure (*Parks Recreation and Tourism Committee*)

- Complete a feasibility study of a potential campground on county property
- Complete a feasibility study of a potential ATV Park
- Complete a feasibility study of a campground at Forts Folle Avoine

Component: Financial

- Promote use of room tax by municipalities (*Towns and Villages*) (*Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Committee*)

PLAN FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND REPLACEMENT OF COUNTY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategy: Identify Future Needs

- Centralize Committee responsibility for property in the Property Committee including Parks, Courthouse, and Highway (made up of structural committees) *(County Board Chairman)*
- Utilize a capital improvements plan for financial and facilities planning
- Develop reserves for capital improvements fund by depositing the net proceeds of all tax delinquent property sales *(Finance Committee)*
- Consider annual levy percentage to fund capital improvements fund
- Research revenue generating businesses to fund capital improvements fund
- Utilize inmates for making profitable products to fund capital improvements fund
- Research public and private grants to fund capital projects

COMMUNICATE WITH THE PUBLIC AND THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Strategy: Improve communications

- Monthly newspaper column (Chairman or designee)
- Monthly Radio Interviews (Chairman or designee)
- Coordinate activities at Towns Association meetings
- Research use of “Govdocs.com” software to email interested parties for agenda/minute information – for use with county web page
- Utilize ice breakers with full board on semi-annual basis

IDENTIFY COMMON GOALS WITH THE ST. CROIX TRIBE

Strategy: Develop a task force to begin a dialogue with the Tribal Council

Component: Begin a dialogue to identify key issues (*County Board Chairman*)

La Crosse County High Performance Government

*County Board Standing Committees
Department Work Groups*

Wis-Line Program

December 12, 2006

Attributes of the High Performance Governing Body

- Addresses difficult policy problems
- Builds capacity to work effectively together
- Develops productive relationship with staff

Problems w/ Previous Structure

- Little time on long-term, Difficult Policy Problems
- “Agenda” setting is dept driven, bottom-up ↑
decision making: “Reacting” or “Ratifying”
- Reporting to full board is inadequate and inconsistent (minutes). Depts more accountable to committees than board. Reinforces separation, autonomy and “silos”
- Committee work leaves less time for building capacity to work together on difficult community problems
- # of committees & multiple meeting sites is hard to administer and serve

Job Description:

Changing Expectations of the County Board

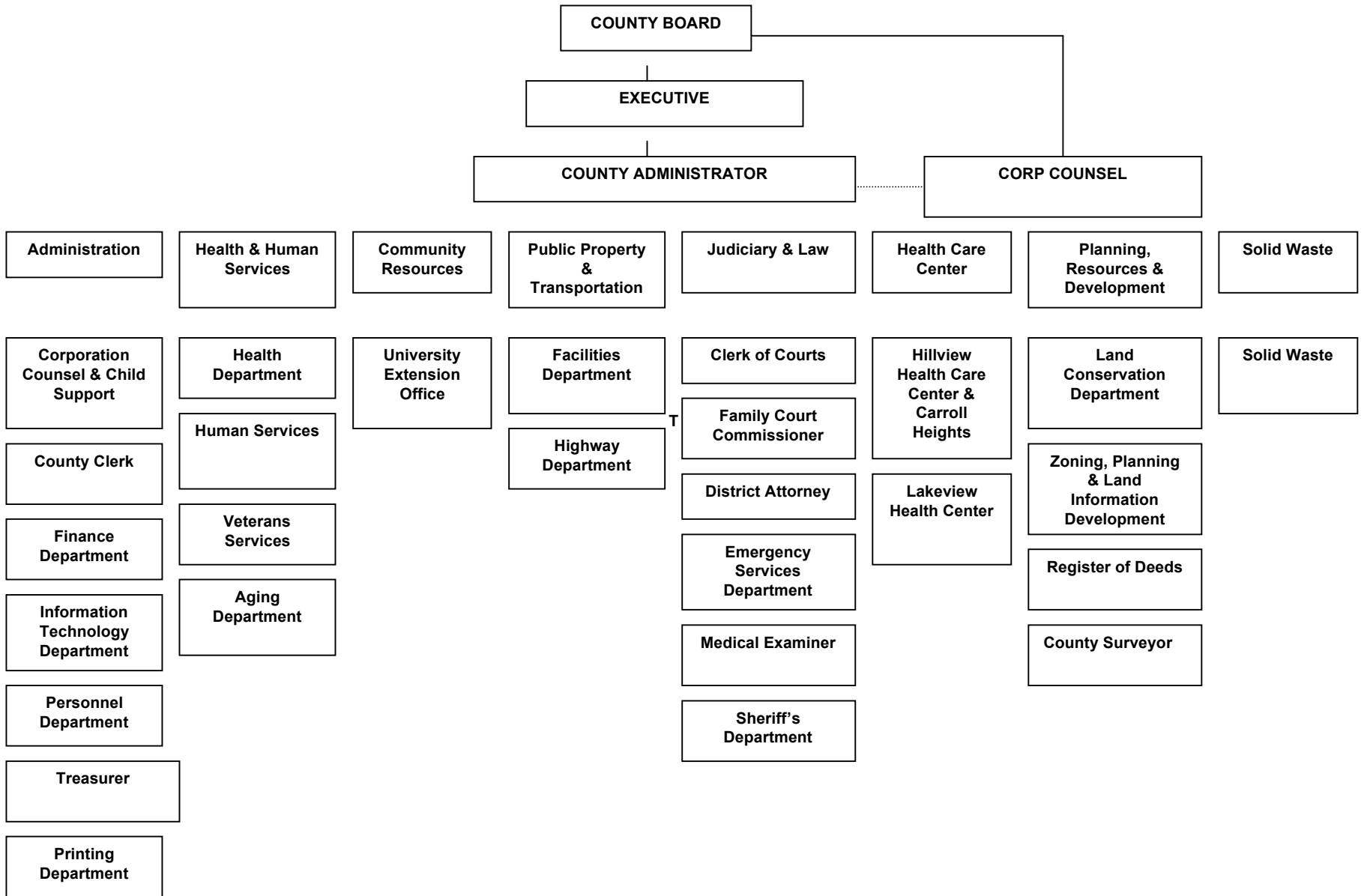
Moving from primarily acting as

- Legislative Body
- Executive / Administrative

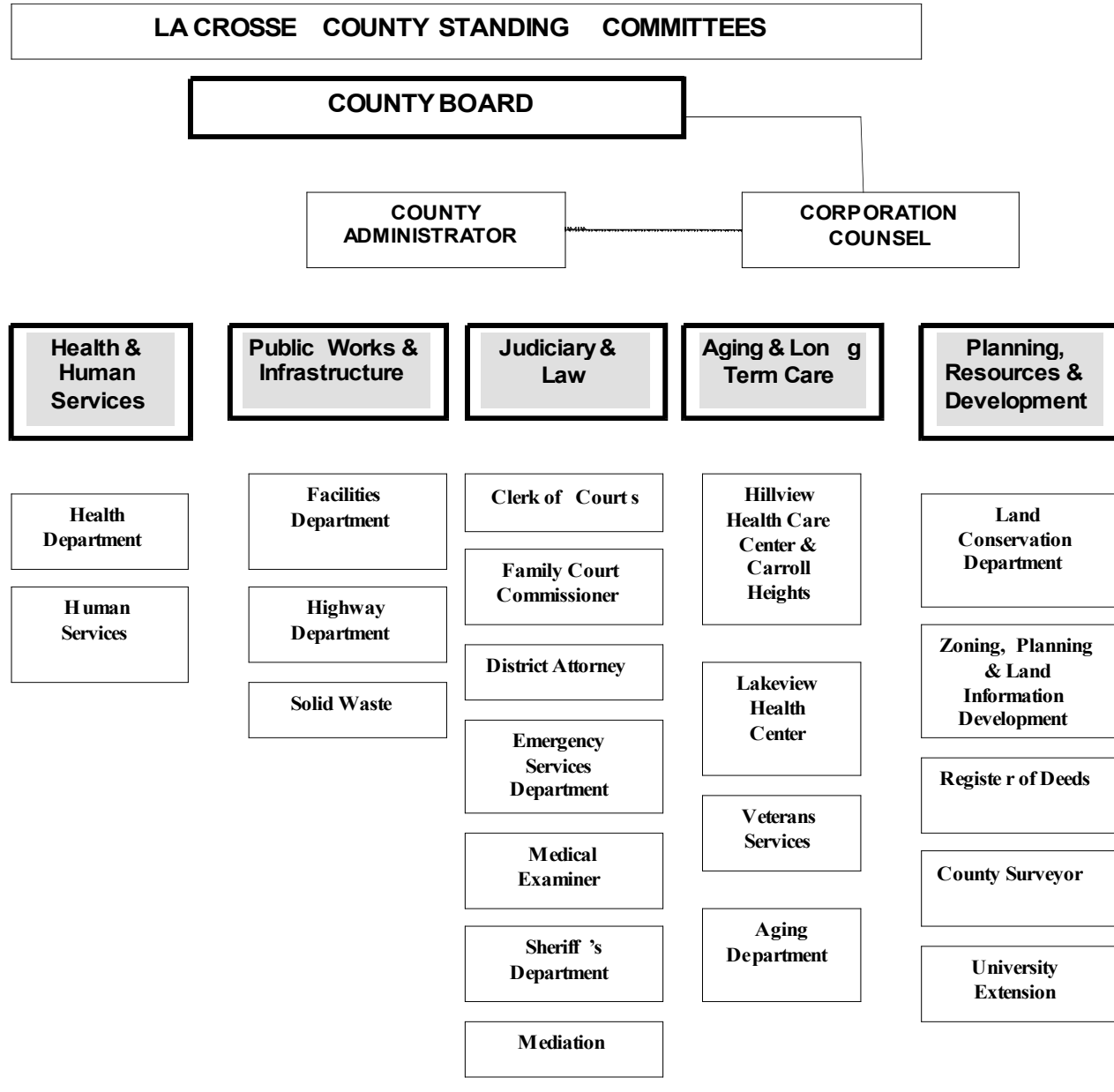
Toward serving as

- Board of Directors, addressing the most difficult policy issues

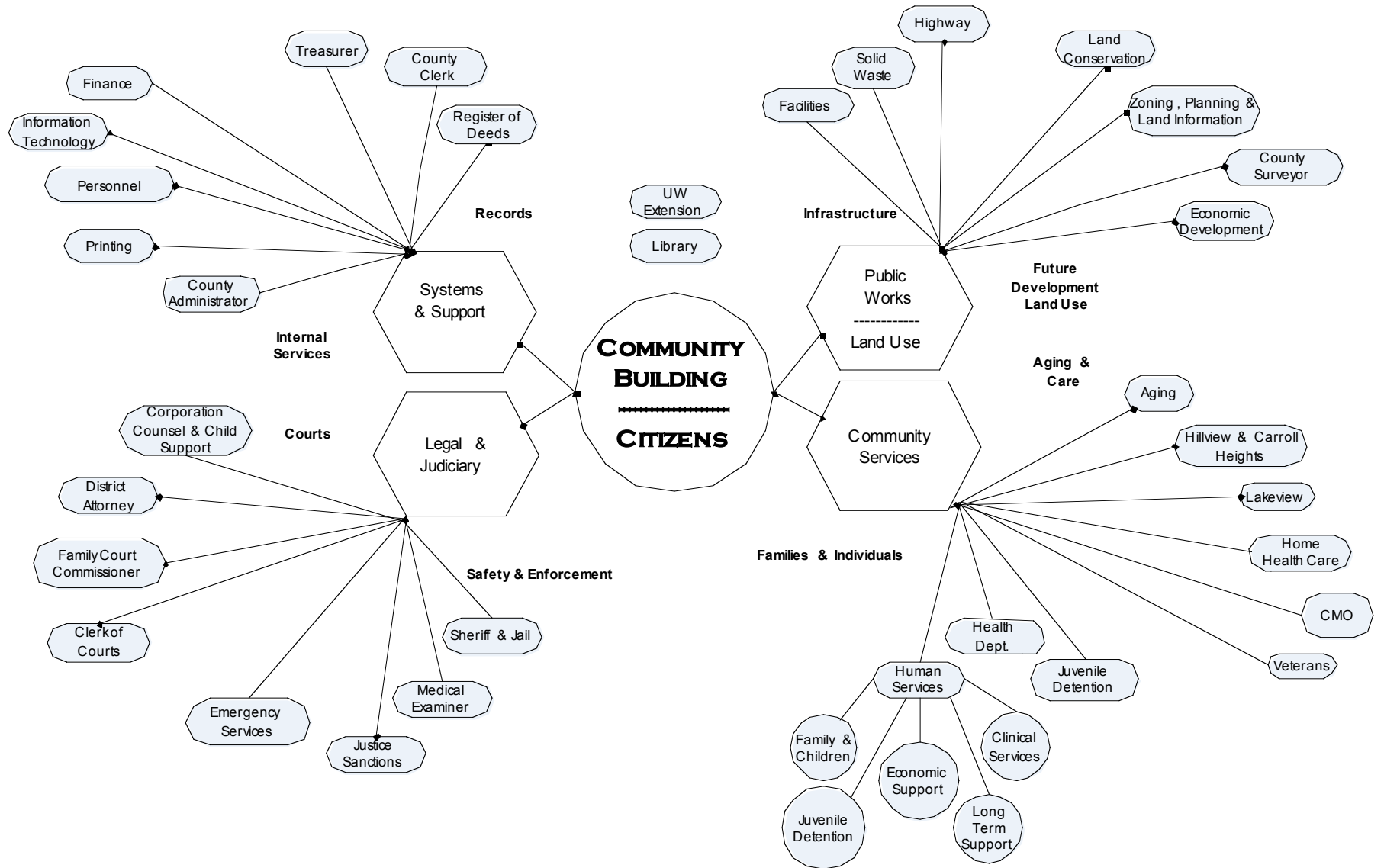
Pre 2004 Committees & Depts



CURRENT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



Emphasis on Cross-Dept. Work Groups



**EVALUATION
WISLINE SERIES
CURRENT ISSUES AFFECTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS 2006-2007**

**The Many Roads to County Strategic Planning
December 12, 2006**

By completing this evaluation, you will help us improve our program development. Please leave this evaluation at the WisLine site. Thank you for your help!

1. Location where attended: City _____ County _____
2. Local Government Official or Staff? Specify Position _____
3. Was this topic, or parts of it, new to you? Yes _____ No _____ Sort of _____

If there were parts that were new for you, please list which ones.

4. Please rate the following program components:

		Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Marathon County Plan	Content	1	2	3	4	5
	Presentation	1	2	3	4	5
	Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Burnett County Plan	Content	1	2	3	4	5
	Presentation	1	2	3	4	5
	Materials	1	2	3	4	5
LaCrosse County	Content	1	2	3	4	5
	Presentation	1	2	3	4	5
	Materials	1	2	3	4	5

5. Did the materials help you follow the presentation? Yes _____ No _____

6. What is your overall rating of the program?
Excellent _____ Very Good _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

7. How do you think you will use the information you learned in this program?

8. What other information would you like to see on strategic planning? Strategic thinking?

*Please use other side for additional comments
Thank you for your feedback!*