

# COMMUNITY NEEDS REPORT



Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



## Community Development Programming Sheboygan County Extension

On June 12, 2025, Sheboygan County hosted a Community Needs Forum with participation from representatives and partners across local community organizations. Attendees engaged in facilitated discussions around current goals, challenges, existing and needed resources, underserved audiences, and opportunities for collaboration. The purpose of this report is to highlight community-identified needs relevant to the Community Development Institute (CDI), and to demonstrate how programming from Sheboygan County Extension is addressing these gaps.

### Forum Discussion Summary

The forum discussion focused on Sheboygan County organizations that are tackling a broad range of interconnected challenges rooted in **housing instability, limited transportation, social isolation, and a lack of accessible community resources**. There's a pressing need for more affordable and emergency housing, especially for those without specific qualifications, as well as expanded long-term care and shelter options. The region also faces difficulties in serving rural populations, diverse language groups, and younger generations due to gaps in communication, transportation, and engagement. Mental health services, youth behavioral support, and peer-led community-building efforts have emerged as crucial needs, alongside the desire for **more cohesive partnerships and better resource sharing among agencies**. Across the board, organizations are aiming to reduce stigma, strengthen connections, and build infrastructure that supports equity, accessibility, and long-term community development.

Additional input came from those unable to attend the forum in person and shared thoughts within an online survey. The responses raised up the conversation held at the forum about the need to connect with government officials and the need for education and training for government officials.

### Identified Community Needs & Gaps

Analysis of the forum data revealed a key need that aligns with the scope of Community Development Institute (CDI) programming.

- **Local Government Educator and Engagement**

### EXTENSION ALIGNMENT

Move from the previous 50% Local Government Education / 50% Organizational & Leadership Development Educator position to a 100% Local Government Education Community Development Educator.

The Community Development Extension Educator designs, delivers, and evaluates research-based educational programming and services aligned with the Local Government Education Program at the Community Development Institute.

The Community Development (CD) Extension Educator will prioritize and spend most of their time on a clearly defined programmatic focus: local government education with a focus on zoning, land use and comprehensive planning, strategic planning, and community engagement.

To the degree local needs shift or other programmatic needs arise, the CD Educator will serve as the primary conduit for the community to access the appropriate research and educational resources, if they are available within the [Community Development Institute](#). The educator serves as the 'on-ramp' for the community to access the wide range of resources in Community Development and Extension more generally. Examples of such resources include training for local government officials, assistance with housing needs studies, broadband, and food entrepreneurship.

Recognizing that, regardless of programmatic area of focus, CD Educators are often called upon to support the facilitation of community and group processes (e.g. action planning, visioning, group decision-making), all CD Educators will have these core competencies and support these efforts as resources allow.