

2018 Annual Report



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE, INC

CDA Fosters Economic Development in Rural Communities



Go Macro Ribbon Cutting in Viola

At Community Development Alternatives, we focus our energies on serving small rural communities that have many of the same problems as big cities, but fewer resources to address them. The shortage of affordable housing, the funding of rural schools, the maintenance of critical infrastructure, and the creation of employment opportunities; all remain

significant challenges facing rural communities. And all fall under the large umbrella of economic development.

We are pleased to be part of three projects in 2018 that created jobs, improved public facilities, and preserved services essential to small-town survival. In Viola, Dickeyville, and Fennimore, we used our expertise with Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and other funding sources to cultivate development and create 63 new jobs, making a difference in their economic future. You can find their stories on page 3 of this report.

We are also working with 3C Co-op (Crawford County

Communications Cooperative), serving as their non-profit organizational agent, to extend broadband to rural households. Access to the internet will allow school children to access their homework, residents to find employment, and entrepreneurs to conduct business from their homes. Broadband will allow small communities to compete with big cities for limited resources.

All these efforts constitute Economic Development. We at Community Development Alternatives are proud to be a driving force for rural development.

*Dale Klemme,
Executive Director*

CDA Assists Communities with Flood Relief

We have all heard about the flooding of 2018, but few have felt the impact as have the people that live along the rivers of Southwest Wisconsin. As Lori Bekkum of the CDA office said, "A lot of what I could say or show you, you can see on the news or Facebook or hear on the radio. What you can't see on

TV or hear on the radio is what is happening inside these people, the emotions, the highs and the lows, the getting up every morning after you've lost everything and trying to establish a routine. Or how it felt to get your kids ready for their first day of school after digging through clothes in the

community center or tubs of donated items."

CDA is assisting eight communities in Southwest Wisconsin in submitting grants to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for flood relief. Grant application efforts are ongoing and will be awarded based on need in 2019.

Highlights:

- CDA FOCUSES ON SMALL RURAL COMMUNITIES
- CDA ASSISTED EIGHT COMMUNITIES WITH FEMA GRANTS
- HOUSING IMPORTANT TO COMMUNITY'S WELL-BEING
- PUBLIC FACILITY PROJECTS HELP CREATE JOBS

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CDA Understands Importance of Housing



Community Development Alternatives understand the importance of housing, not only to economic development, but to a community's well-being. Housing represents a basic need for adults to be productive in the workforce and for children to feel safe in their environment.

Currently, the housing inventory in our service area does not match what people are looking for. Low-income and first-time buyers are not able to locate affordable

housing to match their limited budgets. Baby Boomers cannot find rental housing with low maintenance requirements to match their changing lifestyle.

CDA also understands the frustration of navigating housing programs that bog down in red tape and don't satisfy these basic needs; that seem to work against the recipients of housing assistance. We know the problems, but the conversations with government housing

authorities are not leading to solutions, resulting in apathy among homebuyers.

CDA works with low-to-moderate income applicants to match needs with resources. We administer housing programs in several Southwest Wisconsin communities, including Bagley, Blue River, Cassville, Eastman, Gays Mills, Lancaster, Prairie du Chien, Readstown, Soldiers Grove, Wauzeka, and the Counties of Crawford and Grant. With limited resources available, CDA finds itself in the good fight for affordable housing.

“The fruit of love is service, which is compassion in action”

Mother Theresa



Flooding in Chaseburg

Driftless Area Art Festival a Winning Event



2018 KidsArt Gallery
Blue-ribbon Winner
by Auden Slaght

Artists, art lovers, and school art programs all came away winners during the Driftless Area Art Festival held in mid-September in Gays Mills, Wisconsin. The festival, temporarily relocated from Soldiers Grove due to flood damage in the park there, offered the crowds sunny weather, the works of 77

visual artists, great entertainment, and culinary treats, all from the Driftless region.

180 Elementary school students from 12 schools exhibited their work in the KidsArt Gallery, and in each of three categories one blue ribbon and several honorable mentions were awarded. Each

of the three blue ribbon winners will receive a check for \$25 and a framed copy of the winning piece, during presentations at their school. All three pieces will be sold at live auction next year, with the proceeds going to the art programs in the students' schools. The annual auction has raised a total of \$11,860 for art programs since 2010.

Public Facility Projects Help Small Communities

Community Development Alternatives' management of public facility projects across our service area offers prime examples of how our work impacts small communities. These projects provide family-supporting jobs to small towns that help them survive in an ever-changing world economy. By creating new jobs and retaining existing jobs, these projects increase the tax base and stabilize the local economy.

A \$206,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and \$125,000 DOT

TEA Grant in Viola for infrastructure and other public improvements allowed Go Macro to expand. The expansion created 39 new jobs, 30 of which are in Low-Medium-Income households!

A \$182,000 sewer project in Dickeyville allowed 1UP USA, a bike rack manufacturer, to expand and create six new skilled jobs. The business sells its products online, providing an avenue for the area to successfully compete in the new internet economy.

And in Fennimore, a

\$720,000 project for relocation and site improvements provided incentives for a local grocery store to stay in the community and create 18 new jobs. A grocery store is a critical component for a small community to survive and attract new residents.

These stories illustrate CDA's proven formula for helping small communities survive the perpetual squeeze between tax base and public facility improvements.



Waterline Extension to New Grocery Store in Fennimore



Go Macro Expansion in Viola



Water and Sewer Project in Prairie du Chien

CDA helps small communities survive the perpetual squeeze between tax base and public facility improvements.

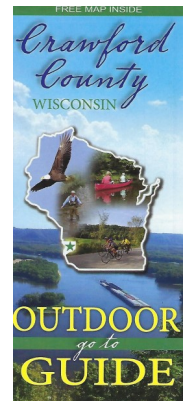
Crawford County Tourism Council Promotes County

The Crawford County Tourism Council continued to promote the county through advertising and marketing collaborations. The Council placed print advertisements in the Prairie du Chien Tourism Directory, Great River Road, Hidden Valleys, and Driftless Wisconsin. Additionally, the CCTC used social media

platforms, including Facebook, Twitter posts, and email blasts through the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, to promote fall colors and events.

With support from Crawford County and county municipalities, the council collaborated with Driftless Wisconsin to release a

\$11,800 advertising campaign in our major markets of Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago.



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Gerry Krachey
Wauzeka
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Gays Mills



Street Improvements
in Fennimore

An Afterword: Why we do what we do

With CDA's unconventional approach to community development, some may ask why we do what we do. The answer can be found in the purpose of what we do.

CDA steps into the void where private business and government do not often venture. "For profits" do not have the economic incentive to do what we do. And government, because of the "don't raise my taxes" mantra, does not have the resources to invest in the areas in which we invest our time and efforts.

It was noted in a recent staff

meeting that the application form for government housing assistance has not changed since 2001. Even as demographics and needs have changed over the years, government criteria for assistance have not. The need for creativity is essential in a constantly changing world. To find "alternatives" to an ever-changing financial environment is part of CDA's mission, and part of our name. It remains a purpose we do not shy away from.

Community Development Alternatives has developed a reputation with small communities for helping

bridge the gap between what is necessary and what is affordable – in housing, infrastructure improvements, and community development. To help small communities survive in a changing world is rewarding – for the community and for us. It is why we do what we do.