

Community Development Alternatives, Inc

2013 Annual Report



Highland Apartment Project—La Farge
Completed in 2013 and now fully rented



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From the Executive Director



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In its role of serving Southwest Wisconsin communities, Community Development Alternatives often finds itself as the primary link between communities and government agencies. Yet the needs of those communities and their residents do not always align with the policies of state and federal government.

In meeting federal housing guidelines, homeowners are faced with making necessary improvements that exceed the equity in their home. Small communities are faced with bringing public facilities up to standards their taxpaying residents can ill afford.

In such confusion over priorities, it's important to keep our focus on the end result, and not get sidetracked on issues of less importance in the lives of our clients. CDA's mission is to help homeowners and small communities navigate their way through this maze; to do what is possible in a system that places more value on rules than results.

Community Development Alternatives continues to serve in that role of finding creative solutions, which bridges community need with government resources. In this way, CDA serves our communities in ways that can be measured in the quality of life, making homes more livable and communities more viable.

Community Development Alternatives recognizes the need and importance to develop and strengthen local economies. Our effort to grow tourism also encourages the use of local foods in schools and farmer's markets; and supports the use of local community kitchens that allow small producers to expand their markets. Developing a link between tourism and local foods is a natural next step in the evolution of agri-tourism in Southwest Wisconsin.

I invite you to review our Annual Report to see the many ways in which we strive to make a difference in an ever-changing world.

Dale Klemme, Executive Director

About CDA

Dale Klemme

Executive Director

Lori Bekkum

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Eric Frydenlund

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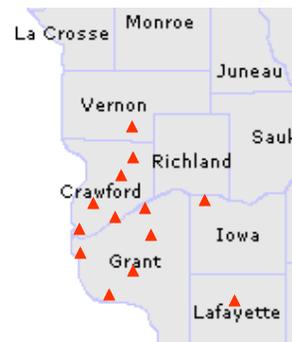
Cheryl Mader

Project Specialist

Kate Maxfield

Housing Assistant

CDA's veteran staff has many years of cumulative experience in housing rehabilitation, government funding, grant administration, grant writing, public facilities management, public administration, and tourism promotion. Our creative approach involves working directly with homeowners and municipalities in developing a plan that meets the client's specific needs. We pride ourselves on developing professional relationships that survive the test of time; and that meets our mission to: Create innovative alternatives for local community development that represent responsible, compassionate, and progressive opportunities for the future.



**Communities assisted
by CDA in 2013**



Housing



Homeowners often face difficult choices in prioritizing home repairs when equity in the home is limited. Do I replace my inefficient windows, which increase my utility bills, or do I fix my leaking roof? Do I add a bedroom for my newborn child, or do I look for a larger house that I probably can't afford?

The living conditions we take for granted become choices between critical needs for low-income households. Community Development Alternatives can be part of the solution, which comes down to proper allocation of resources. In administering housing grants, CDA can help homeowners make good choices that improve their living conditions.

In administering an \$800,000 CDBG Housing Grant in 2013, CDA was able to assist 45 homeowners make life-changing improvements to their homes. Adding a bedroom and bathroom enabled a child to sleep better at night and improve his grades in school, according to a Crawford County social worker. Cleaning ducts and installing a new filtering system improved the life of a child suffering from asthma. By securing funding for critical needs, CDA makes difficult choices easier for homeowners.



Home Before Rehabilitation



Home After Rehab

Public Facilities



In working on housing rehabilitation in communities throughout Southwest Wisconsin, Community Development Alternatives, Inc often develops a working relationship with village officials and staff. In planning for housing stock improvements, CDA also looks at the infrastructure that supports a healthy community. Addressing public facility needs is an important consideration for the economic vitality of small communities.

CDA can help villages maneuver through the complex CDBG grant application process with the State, which recently switched to an annual application cycle. CDA completed a number of projects in 2013, including a \$956,000 sewer main and manhole improvement project in the Village of Readstown; and a \$731,000 project to expand, remodel and re-equip the public library in the Village of Soldiers Grove. The new library (pictured) allows for continued expansion of its rich history of programming.



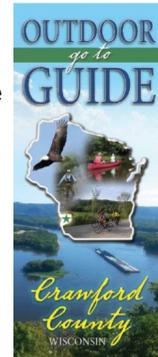
Soldiers Grove Public Library

CDA also secured funding in September, 2013 for a \$236,000 grant to reconstruct storm sewer and water main in a flood-prone neighborhood in the City of Fennimore. Construction will proceed in 2014.

Local Development



The **Crawford County Tourism Council** held a Strategic Planning Retreat in March of 2013 and developed a new mission statement: to Promote Crawford County tourism assets, support eco-friendly tourism as economic development, educate residents on the values of tourism and assist with the creation/development of events. In its continuing effort to foster collaboration, the CCTC worked with Driftless Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Mississippi River Parkway Commission to create a marketing strategy for the area. The Council also published the Crawford County Outdoor Go To Guide as a resource for outdoor recreational enthusiasts.



Brochure to attract outdoor enthusiasts

Driftless Area Art Festival

The 2013 Driftless Area Art Festival drew nearly 5,000 art lovers from across the region to buy artwork created by 79 visual artists from the Driftless region. Visitors enjoyed music by regional performing artists, sampled food and beverages by local culinary artists, and viewed over 400 works by young artists from all grade levels. In support of the Festival, a Spring Gala attracted art lovers from across the Driftless region, and raised about \$9,000.

Driftless Wisconsin Grown's vision is a community where good local food is available in schools, restaurants, grocery stores and at home, and is affordable for everyone. In 2013, Driftless Wisconsin Grown was successful in focusing its attention on its primary strategies for achieving that vision. Assisted by a 2 year \$160,000 Transform Wisconsin grant, some 2013 highlights include:

- Supporting **Farm to School** efforts through networking meetings for food service directors, facilitating Harvest of the Month program, and supporting construction of school gardens around the county.
- Assisting Crawford County **Farmers Markets** by placing rack cards in local lodging and tourist as well as providing marketing materials for county farmers.
- Providing opportunities for **Public Education** through a biweekly newsletter about the local food and hosting an annual Harvest Dinner prepared with ingredients from local food producers.

Driftless Wisconsin Grown is grateful for CDA's fiscal sponsorship—it significantly contributed to our success in 2013!

Dredge William A. Thompson – In its effort to convert the dredge into a Museum of River Transportation, CDA applied to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a Planning Grant. The proposed interpretive strategy of the museum will develop four themes; including life aboard the vessel, the history of dredging technology, impacts of dredging on the river, and the national story of the Nine-Foot Channel Project.

Mississippi River Sculpture Park

In autumn the posts and roof of the new Leamy Shelter went up in the northeast corner of the Mississippi Sculpture Park. After discussion and planning in 2013, two performances of the Fun-Raising Follies were presented in January of 2014. This was a fundraiser to help pay for the next statue in the park, Aunt Marianne Labuche (pictured), the 19th century healer. The first annual Twilight of the Living Statues was held in the park in May of 2013. Actors portraying statues already in the park and some planned strolled around and talked to the almost 200 visitors.



Aunt Marianne Labuche