

VILLAGE OF COLFAX

PLACEMAKING DOWNTOWN COLFAX

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PREPARED BY
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Project for Public Spaces, Inc. (PPS) is a nonprofit planning, design, and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities.

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC), a multi-county planning agency statutorily charged with planning for the physical, social, and economic development of the region, has formed a partnership with PPS to advocate for and facilitate placemaking activities in west central Wisconsin.

The placemaking concepts discussed within this document, including the four attributes to a great place (place diagram), the ‘Power of 10’, and managing your public space, are provided by or adapted from PPS materials and



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I. INTRODUCTION

Downtown Colfax has a great potential to be a true center of community life. The placemaking approach looks to enhance the character of places where people gather, while building on existing initiatives in a community, and to connect spaces physically and thematically, through partnerships and cooperation. The goal of this initiative is to introduce the placemaking concept to the Colfax community, build enthusiasm and support, and identify both short and long term opportunities for the Colfax community to pursue.



In its comprehensive plan adopted in 2002, the Village of Colfax recognized the need for a more diverse and visually appealing downtown to help improve community identity and build on assets such as the Railroad Museum. Since 2002, positive strides have been made, such as new street lighting with a historic flavor. The Village's plan also stressed the importance of involving residents, business owners, and community organizations in determining and achieving the community's vision and goals. With these themes in mind, this report presents the results of a 2012 placemaking exercise which brought business owners and residents together to take a fresh look at the parks, sidewalks, buildings, and other places of their downtown.

The following summarizes the primary steps in this placemaking exercise:

- In late 2011, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) applied for an EPA *Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities* grant for technical assistance from the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) to conduct placemaking exercises in two small, rural communities. WCWRPC identified Colfax as a candidate due to the Village's commitment to improving its downtown, as identified in its comprehensive plan. The Village agreed to participate and the technical assistance grant was approved.
- On May 31, 2012, WCWRPC conducted a brief downtown assessment with a Colfax High School World History class.
- The Village advertised the July 10, 2012, community placemaking workshop through the newspaper, flyers, and by word-of-mouth. During the three-hour workshop facilitated by PPS, participants received an overview on placemaking, then split into teams to conduct on-site evaluations of four key nodes within the community. Each team identified short-term, and longer-term opportunities to improve the space, as well as potential resources.
- WCWRPC then compiled this report for presentation at a follow-up community meeting. A corresponding one-page report summary was also prepared by WCWRPC.



II. PLACE MAKING PRINCIPLES

a. What is Placemaking?

Placemaking is the planning, design, and management of public spaces. Placemaking involves listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work, and play in a particular space, to determine their needs and aspirations. This information is then used to create common goals. The goals can evolve quickly into an action plan, beginning with small-scale, do-able improvements that can immediately bring benefits to public spaces and the people who use them.

Simply put, placemaking allows people to make extraordinary improvements, both big and small, in their communities.

b. Benefits of a Great Place

Great places have many far-reaching benefits:

- Places nurture and define community identity
- Places benefit cities economically
- Places promote a greater sense of comfort
- Places draw a diverse population
- Places create improved accessibility
- Places foster frequent and meaningful contact

c. What Makes a Great Place?

Great public spaces are where celebrations are held, social and economic exchanges take place, friends run into each other, and cultures mix. They are the “front porches” of our communities – libraries, field houses, cafés, neighborhood schools – where we interact with each other and government. When the spaces work well, they serve as a stage for our public lives.

What makes some spaces succeed while others fail? In part, it is having a variety of things to do in one spot. When the space becomes more than the sum of its parts, it becomes a place. For example, an area in a park that has a fountain, a playground, somewhere for parents to sit in the shade, and a place to get something to drink or eat will attract people to stay there for more than a few minutes, and to return. If the park had a library across the street, with an outdoor area that had storytelling hours for kids, and exhibits on local history, people would come to both the library and park, again and again. Easy access to a bus stop or bike trail and proximity to residential areas are additional components that cumulatively add up to create a very successful place.

Principles of Placemaking

1. The community is the expert
2. You are creating a place, not a design
3. You can't do it alone
4. They'll always say, "It can't be done"
5. You can see a lot just by observing
6. Develop a vision
7. Use is more important than design
8. Cluster elements to foster activities
9. Start with simple, short-term solutions
10. Money is not the issue
11. You are never finished

d. Four Key Qualities of a Successful Place

PPS has identified four key qualities that successful places have in common:

1. **Access and Linkages**
They are accessible and have linkages to other places;
2. **Uses and Activities**
People use the space and are engaged in activities there;
3. **Comfort and Image**
The space is comfortable and has a good image; and
4. **Sociability**
It is a sociable place – one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit.

PPS developed the Place Diagram as a tool to help people in judging any place, good or bad, by using the four key qualities of a successful place:



Imagine the center circle on the diagram is a specific place that you know: a street corner, playground, or area outside a building. You can evaluate that place according to the four criteria in the orange ring. In the green ring are a number of intuitive or qualitative aspects by which to judge a place; the blue area shows the quantitative aspects that can be measured by statistics or research.

III. OPPORTUNITIES - DOWNTOWN COLFAX

a. Identifying Places in Colfax

Four places, or nodes, were identified as targets for the placemaking exercise by PPS and WCWRPC staff before the workshop. The following criteria were used in selecting the nodes:

- Small-scale
- Easily identifiable and comprehensible
- Issues and clear opportunities available
- Transition zones (gateways, park entrances, focal point, intersection, or offers linkages to other places)
- At least one site must create interest and excitement

At the workshop, four groups were formed and each was sent to one of the nodes to identify:

- What do you like best about this place?
- What can be done right away and at a low cost to improve the place?
- What long-term changes would you make that would have the biggest impacts?
- What local partnerships and resources are available to implement some of your improvements?

Figure 1: Identified nodes in downtown Colfax



b. Nodes

The following node information was provided from the groups at the workshop. The reported issues and opportunities are just ideas at this point and will need to be further discussed.

NODE #1: RAILROAD MUSEUM



Issues

- **Underused**
The Railroad Museum does not have set hours of operation and hosts only a few events throughout the year that are open to the public.
- **Wayfinding**
The museum is hidden, off of Main Street.
- **Aesthetic and Comfort**
The landscaping is dull and there is no seating.

Opportunities

- **Tourism Draw**
There is potential for the Railroad Museum to be a draw for visitors with:
 - improved signage, seating, and landscaping;
 - expanded activities, like a train-set playground; and/or
 - specialized activities like a railroad buff swap meet or a holiday train event.An eventual expansion of the museum to Main Street and acquisition of the other depot building (currently being used for housing) would provide increased visibility and more space to showcase the museum.
- **Aesthetic Improvements**
There is a need for more benches, signage and landscaping at the site. Some flower gardens and bushes would provide natural beauty that would help define the space. A railroad-themed mural on both sides of the Cenex building would bring life to the dull walls as well as provide a means of wayfinding for the museum.
- **Marketing**
There is a need for improved signs at the museum and advertisements of museum events in local papers or other publications.



NODE #2: MAIN ST. AND RAILROAD AVE. INTERSECTION



Issues

- **Pedestrian Hazards**
Vehicles do not normally adhere to the speed limit at this intersection and often do not yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk.
- **Railroad Signal Malfunctions**
The signal on the railroad is sometimes activated inadvertently.
- **Lack of Wayfinding Signs**
This intersection could benefit from a sign indicating the entrance to downtown as well as wayfinding signage directing people to local attractions.
- **State Highway**
The State of Wisconsin has jurisdiction over Main Street, as it is State Highway 40. In the past, the Village has had difficulty working with the State on their restrictions on signage, bump-outs, and pedestrian yield signage in the road.

Opportunities

- **Aesthetics and Comfort**
The following list should be completed in order to improve the aesthetics and comfort of the node:
 - more outdoor seating should be provided;
 - overhead wires should be removed;
 - crosswalks should be painted;
 - a mural should be painted on the Little Italy building (on the Railroad Ave. side, above the awning); and
 - decorative plantings should be encouraged.

Additionally, a screening of some sort should be constructed to lessen the visual impact of the loading dock and railroad tracks.

- **Wayfinding Signs**
A sign should be installed indicating the entrance to downtown and wayfinding signs added to direct the public to other attractions like the fairgrounds and Village Hall.
- **Railroad and Highway**
Correct the problems with the railroad signals and work with the State on creating a safer Main Street for pedestrians.



Colfax, WI



Colfax, WI



Colfax, WI

NODE #3: RIVER ST. AND MAIN ST. INTERSECTION



Issues

- **Aesthetics**
The public spaces next to the auto dealer and laboratory business are not welcoming.
- **Safety**
The crossing is long and can be difficult and dangerous.

Opportunities

- **Aesthetics**
The following improvements could be made to improve the aesthetics of this node:
 - create murals on the window panels of the laboratory business building;
 - build benches and plant trees near the auto dealership;
 - plant flowers and highlight intersection as “the middle” of downtown to draw people down the street
 - widen sidewalks and narrow the street on River Street, to the west of the intersection, and locate umbrella tables or plant trees (for shade) and seating;
 - work with WisDOT to consider bumpouts to narrow crossing and calm traffic;
 - paint the bottoms of the light poles; and
 - add signage on the buildings.
- **Activities**
Outdoor activities, such as a farmer’s market and/or street dance/concerts would fit nicely into this node, just west of Main Street on River Street.
- **History**
The stately sandstone buildings were constructed with sandstone that was quarried and cut locally. The buildings could be showcased as part of a walking tour with an accompanying brochure explaining their history. The buildings could also have their own plaques describing the local history.
- **Business Association**
The formation of a business association in Colfax would greatly benefit the downtown. An association would allow more open communication amongst business owners who could collaborate on some of the improvements suggested for downtown.



Colfax, WI



Colfax, WI



Colfax, WI

NODE #4: VILLAGE HALL



Issues

- **Hidden & Underutilized Park Space**

The open space adjacent to the municipal building is easily missed by passing vehicles and lacks adequate signage to signal its existence. This small, but very nice park is underutilized and could accommodate more uses to attract more visitors.

Opportunities

- **Park Space Activities**

There are many opportunities to enhance the park space, such as:

- improved signage to bring attention to the park (e.g, consider the addition of an electronic bulletin board to display event dates, etc.);
- posting more historic information;
- hosting outdoor library events; and
- adding kid-friendly amenities;

- **Activities and Linkages**

There are a number of activities and linkages that would liven up this node including:

- a visible connection to the river behind the park with public access;
- offer historic tours of the village hall;
- activities (e.g., farmer's market) in the parking lot behind the municipal building;
- community-wide bike share program and establish bike routes/lanes;
- better promotion of the historic walking tour; and
- involve teens to identify appropriate teen activities and amenities at the park and for the area behind the park, including the connection to the river (e.g., open mic. nights, Quonset hut site with kayak/tube/canoe rental with snack shop, small indoor teen facility, skate park)

- **Aesthetics**

Some aesthetic work was suggested to “freshen up” this area, like painting and minor repairs in the park, improved pavilion lighting, and trompe-l’oeil window murals for the building to the north. More planters and other aesthetic amenities were recommended to encourage people to slow down and linger in the space.



Colfax, WI



Colfax, WI



Colfax, WI

c. Common Themes

There were three common themes that emerged during the workshop. They are:

Pedestrian Safety

The main theme that emerged during the workshop was pedestrian safety. Most participants voiced their concern about traffic speed, especially on Main Street. Attendees said vehicles rarely yield to pedestrians at the designated crosswalks, even when additional signage is employed.



Signage and Wayfinding

Another topic that continually arose during the workshop was about signage and wayfinding. Additional signage could benefit the Village in a number of ways. A large, attractive entrance sign could signal to drivers to slow down. Signs on buildings at all the nodes would provide visitors and even residents a better understanding of what downtown Colfax has to offer. Additionally, it was mentioned that a community bulletin board, possibly in the courtyard near Village Hall, could provide timely information for residents on the activities and events in Colfax.



Aesthetics and Comfort

The workshop participants also mentioned node improvements that related to aesthetics and comfort. Façade improvements would make downtown more visually appealing and would help define it. Natural landscaping also beautifies a space, can help define it, and can sometimes act as a visual or physical barrier to conflicting uses.



d. Linkages



Linkages help downtown Colfax capitalize on existing destinations by encouraging people to walk from places like the Railroad Museum to an event at the municipal building or beyond. This visual and activity-based “bread-crumb trail” must provide safe and convenient access for people of all ages and capabilities, especially for those who may not drive.

Linkages can be formed and strengthened through visual cues, such as unified streetscape treatments, signage, wayfinding, pavement treatments, designated bike routes with signage, and accentuating the sight-lines between key destinations. Colfax’s historic-style street lighting is one such positive feature which can be expanded upon. But activities and amenities between key destinations are also important to strengthening linkages, such as store window treatments, outdoor shopping or dining areas, public art, street furniture, informational signage, drinking fountains, infill development, etc. Clustering such amenities along routes will promote your breadcrumb trail.

Connecting Downtown Colfax

The need to strengthen the linkages between the different nodes and places in downtown Colfax, as well as other parts of the community, was emphasized by exercise participants. Visual cues, such as signage and an extension of streetscape treatments (e.g., historic lighting), is needed to better connect the Railroad Museum to Main Street. A railroad-themed mural on the side of the Cenex building to direct visitors to the Railroad Museum is one such idea. Improving the connections between the different nodes along Main Street is also needed, such as the murals, bumpouts, and amenities discussed in Node #3. Participants also discussed the need to update and better advertise the historic walking tour, with the potential addition of plaques on buildings and other signage. Improving the visual and public access linkage between the Village Hall park and the Red Cedar River was also emphasized by participants.

Colfax’s comprehensive plan suggests that a common theme and cohesive message about points of interest and destinations in the downtown is needed. Wayfinding downtown could be facilitated by murals, embedding art in the sidewalks, historical signage, or using public art pieces as “bread-crumbs” leading people from destination to destination. Textures or colored concrete for sidewalks and street crossings could also be used to encourage pedestrian movement between places. These features and public art in Colfax could have an agricultural, railroad, or river theme, etc. For instance, train features could be painted or embedded in the sidewalks. Another idea for public art is to create a series of art pieces (temporary or permanent) following Colfax’s theme, like the Peanuts characters in St. Paul.



e. Youth Exercise – Colfax High School Results

WCWRPC staff visited Colfax High School's World History Class to gain input from Colfax's younger generation on downtown Colfax. The results are outlined below.

Downtown Colfax Likes

- Bowling alley
- Library
- Country shop/café
- Dollar General, for the food
- Cenex
- Food
- Fitness place
- Salon
- Moms on Main
- Pedestrian-friendly
- 18-mile creek for:
 - Swimming
 - Fishing
 - Tubing
- Tom Prince Baseball Park
- Free fair
- Campgrounds
- Basketball courts @ school
- Landscaping/aesthetics

Downtown Colfax Dislikes

- Green Cow building (always closed/out of business)
- Dog food factory (smells)
- Antique shop (building is run-down)
- Run-down buildings
- Access to creek is overgrown/nonexistent
- Outdated baseball fields/bleachers/fences

Things You'd Like to See in Downtown Colfax

- Affordable clothes store/sporting goods store like Scheels
- Different music/bigger bands for summer's Music in the Park series
- Affordable grocery store
- Outdoor basketball courts with good lighting
- 2-3 store strip mall with clothing stores
- Do something with train station
- Creek converted back to a lake again, with a beach
- Improved access to creek
- Bakery
- Mini golf
- More things to do in the park—not just activities for little kids
- Fountain/splash park in summer and skating rink in winter
- Fountain
- Outdoor pool
- Indoor pool
- Nice softball/baseball fields



Example of waterfront activities

IV. ACTION PLAN

a. Downtown Colfax's Five General Goals

- 1. Connect Colfax's destinations with walkable and bikeable streets**
- 2. Scale back the importance of the car**

Streets should be designed for more than just vehicle speed and the predominance of parking should be reduced. Pedestrians should feel safe when walking or biking throughout downtown.
- 3. Encourage residents and business owners to participate in placemaking activities**

A wide range of stakeholders should be involved in the process of implementing the placemaking recommendations, and no one entity should dominate the planning process.
- 4. Overcome potential government obstacles**

The community should be involved in Colfax's planning efforts, even joining Village committees to help move placemaking forward.
- 5. Don't lose momentum**

Start implementing change as soon as possible in order to keep the momentum strong. If possible, start many of the small, short-term projects at once. Seeing many small changes will motivate the group to continue to move forward.



b. Next Steps

	Recommendations	Priority	Potential Partnerships
Node #1: Railroad Museum	Install benches	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cenex (expansion of museum and mural) • Women’s Club, 4-H, church groups, School Honor Society (plantings and other aesthetic improvements) • Village of Colfax (sidewalk improvements and trim trees) • Foundations (funding) • Possibly a Railroad foundation (funding)
	Plant flower gardens and bushes	Short-term	
	Improve signage on dining car	Short-term	
	Improve sign on Railroad Museum	Short-term	
	Paint murals on both sides of the Cenex building	Short-term	
	Train set playground	Short-term	
	Trim trees near sidewalk	Short-term	
	Fix sidewalk	Short-term	
	Advertise events in papers	Long-term	
	Host a railroad buff swap meet	Long-term	
	Host a holiday train scene	Long-term	
Expand museum to Main St. and acquire other depot building	Long-term		
Node #2: Main Street & Railroad Ave. intersection	Provide more outdoor seating	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WisDOT (signage, bump-outs, and pedestrian yield issues) • Village and County highway (street and sidewalk improvements) • School district (plantings, murals) • Legislators (WisDOT issues) • Businesses, Kiwanis, churches, other service organizations (seating, painting, murals, plantings) • Dunn County EDC
	Remove overhead wires	Short-term	
	Paint crosswalks	Short-term	
	Paint murals on Little Italy building (on RR side)	Short-term	
	Create gateway elements and wayfinding signs to better define downtown entrance	Short-term	
	Correct Railroad signal	Short-term	
	Work with State to address signage restrictions, bump-out restrictions, and restrictions on pedestrian yield in the road	Short-term	
	Install screening to lessen visual impact of the loading dock and railroad tracks	Long-term	
	Close off railroad company access along tracks to keep public from using it to access the parking lot	Long-term	
	Plant flowers and add wayfinding signage on SE quadrant	Long-term	
Node #3: River Street & Main Street intersection	Paint the bottoms of light poles	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school art classes, shop class (plantings, benches, murals, signage) • Discovery Center @ UW-Stout • Historic preservation group (building plaques) • Chippewa Valley United Way (funding) • WisDOT (street/sidewalk improvements) • Business owners (signage and plantings)
	Create murals on window panels at Commercial Testing Laboratory, Inc.	Short-term	
	Build benches near Karl’s Auto Sales	Short-term	
	Plant flowers	Short-term	
	Add signage on the buildings	Short-term	
	Start a farmers’ market on River Street	Short-term	
	Host street dance concerts on River Street	Short-term	
	Install historical building plaques	Short-term	
	Widen sidewalks on and narrow River Street	Long-term	
	Construct umbrella tables or trees and benches on newly widened sidewalks on River Street	Long-term	
	Work with WisDOT to improve crossings-bumpouts	Long-term	
Node #4: Village Hall	“Spruce-up” the park with painting, minor repairs, improved pavilion lighting, etc.	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horticulture & shop classes, Women’s Club (plantings, other aesthetic improvements) • Colfax Public Library (activities) • High school art class & adjacent property owner (murals) • Individual community members (painting, historic information) • Municipal Building Restoration Group (tours, partnering) • Village of Colfax (kid amenities) • Colfax area teens (input, painting) • Colfax Plan Commission (planning for river connection)
	Improve park signage, potentially including an electronic bulletin board if deemed appropriate	Short-term	
	Host outdoor library events in park	Short-term	
	Post historic information in park and partner with Restoration Group on building tours, etc.	Short-term	
	Install kid-friendly amenities	Short-term	
	Obtain the input from area teens on potential improvements and teen-oriented activities	Long-term	
	Paint window murals on adjacent building	Long-term	
	Explore and develop plans for potential public use of areas immediately behind the park and develop a visible linkage from the park to the nearby river which is accessible by the public.	Long-term	
Community-wide	Identify champions	Short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above
	Form a business association	Short-term	
	Update downtown walking tour and brochure	Long-term	
	Develop bike lanes/routes to school	Long-term	
	Create a community-wide bike sharing program	Long-term	

V. MANAGING YOUR PUBLIC SPACE

Public spaces that have the four key placemaking attributes do not occur by accident. While the appropriate design and physical features of the space are important, proper management is even more critical to their ongoing success. The principal public space management tasks are:

MAINTENANCE: The more used and loved a public space is, the more maintenance it requires. But regular cleaning and repair of the facility more than repays the cost. Prompt attention to items that could be easily deferred, such as the removal of graffiti, says that someone is in charge, that the facility is respected, and that the public is protected. Landscaping may require special attention if gardens are extensive, or if rare plants are present.

SECURITY AND HOSPITALITY: If a space is well-designed and active, security can be comforting without being intrusive. Active public spaces are to a large extent self-policing. The more people feel secure in a space, the more users the space attracts, and the more secure the space will be. Security guards and maintenance workers who are friendly, informed, and helpful can make people feel “hosted” and “welcomed”, without feeling the need to be “protected”.

PROGRAMMING: “Programming” refers to the wide variety of planned activities and to all the facilities and equipment related to them: furnishing the space appropriately, for example, with chairs that can easily be rearranged; operating a retail program with vending carts or a seasonal cafe; producing a regular concert series or a onetime festival; hosting a story time; or operating a regular farmers’ market. Programming a public space successfully is an entrepreneurial art, but does not necessarily imply intensive staffing. It can be something as simple as providing benches or installing a historical plaque or exhibit. Much of it can be retail operations that are contracted to vendors, whether with carts, space for an outdoor cafe, or through retail operations in the buildings that open out to the public space. Programming can be undertaken by community organizations (like youth clubs) that may be given the responsibility for operating a portion of or a specific facility within a park.



Example of “programming”

MARKETING AND PROMOTION: Promoting the events and activities that take place in the public space is an important adjunct to programming, particularly for a space being built or programmed for the first time. The most successful public spaces can reach a point where the space is so well-known and sought-after that no marketing is necessary. But for most spaces, and especially early in a new public-space management program, a commitment to marketing and promotion is needed. Like programming, this is an activity that can be contracted out, or provided by a downtown improvement organization as part of the publicity for a larger district.

COORDINATION WITH ADJACENT USES: Public spaces and surrounding commercial, educational and civic uses should be seamlessly integrated. The activities of nearby buildings should spill right into the park and streets and the outdoor activities and circulation should move smoothly through these buildings. A community entity or organization, whether it be for a park or a market, should play a key role in making sure that these kinds of linkages occur.

VI. RESOURCES

Finding the information and funding required to initiate placemaking or implement a placemaking strategy can be a daunting task. However, the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission can help. While a listing of resources provides the what, where and who of potential placemaking implementation approaches, the WCWRPC can provide your community the how to make them happen. Whether it is performing placemaking exercises, fine-tuning strategies or finding funding opportunities, let the WCWRPC help you continue forward toward your placemaking goals.

The following technical and funding resources were gathered to help communities, decision-makers and citizens understand and use the principles of what makes for vibrant downtowns, healthy neighborhoods, and distinctive, special places.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

- **West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's Plan Implementation Guide for West Central Wisconsin:** wccwrpc.org/Regional_Comp_Plan/Plan_Implementation_Guide.pdf

Information about enhancing and managing public spaces in both a local and regional context.

- **Project for Public Spaces, Inc:** www.pps.org

Seminal information from the expert practitioners of placemaking.

- **Partners for Livable Communities:** www.livable.com

Information from a non-profit organization working to improve the livability of communities by promoting quality of life, economic development, and social equity.

- **Wisconsin Main Street Program:** <http://wedc.org/mainstreet>

A comprehensive revitalization program designed to promote the historic and economic redevelopment of traditional business districts in Wisconsin. Annually the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation selects communities to join the program and receive technical support and training needed to restore their Main Streets to centers of community activity and commerce.

- **Congress for the New Urbanism:** www.cnu.org

A leading organization promoting walkable, mixed-use neighborhood development, sustainable communities and healthier living conditions.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- **West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission & Regional Business Fund, Inc.:**

www.wccwrpc.org and www.rbfinc.org

Pertinent funding sources including the downtown façade loan program.

- **USDA-Rural Development:** www.rurdev.usda.gov

Financial programs supporting essential public facilities and services like community centers, water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities and electric and telephone service.

- **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Association (WHEDA):** www.wheda.com

Resources to help families and small businesses.

- **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation:** <http://wedc.org/>

Manages Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs for economic development, and community development planning and infrastructure improvements.



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