



ECIA Spotlight

November 2021

Award for Pocket Neighborhood

ECIA has received a 2021 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for the Bear River Cottages – Pocket Neighborhood, in Maquoketa.

The Bear River Cottages are Maquoketa’s new affordable Pocket Neighborhood housing development. These ten homes were developed by ECIA’s non-profit arm, East Central Development Corporation (ECDC), providing an affordable option for income-qualified home buyers at or below 80% of the County Median Income to have an opportunity to own a newly constructed 2 or 3 bedroom/2-bathroom single-family home. The Pocket Neighborhood is a planned community consisting of smaller residences designed to promote a close-knit sense of community, increased sense of ownership, and to incorporate sustainability and green building concepts around common amenities such as a courtyard area and gazebo. This community is the first of its kind in Eastern Iowa. The development broke ground in the fall of 2019 and all ten homes are sold.

NADO is a Washington, DC-based membership association of regional development organizations that promote programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies. The association’s Impact Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and their partners for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation’s regions and local communities.

Award-winning projects were recognized during NADO’s 2021 Annual Training Conference, held in Portland, OR on October 16-19. The 2021 class of award recipients consists of 102 projects from 70 organizations spanning 24 states. These projects are presented in an interactive “Story Map” developed by NADO that includes project summaries, partners, and images. The Story Map is available online at: https://www.nado.org/2021_impactawards/.

“During the past 20 months, regional development organizations across the country have shown just how valuable they are in supporting the local communities they serve,” said 2019-2021 NADO President Kevin Byrd, executive director of the New River Valley Regional Commission, located in Radford, VA. “From COVID-19 response and recovery initiatives, to workforce and economic development projects, to social services programs and much more, the 2021 NADO Impact Awardees highlight the many ways our members work on the ground every day to improve quality of life in their regions.”

The NADO Impact Awards are presented in honor of the late Aliceann Wohlbruck who was NADO’s first executive director and served 24 years as a tireless champion for regional approaches to economic development in rural communities.

For more information about this award-winning project, contact Kelley Deutmeyer, ECIA Executive Director, at 563-556-4166.

ECIA Awarded Grant to Empower Communities

ECIA has been awarded a \$150,000 grant from the USDA to establish a Rural Prosperity Training Institute (RPTI). The RPTI responds to the needs identified by low-income rural local government and economic development leaders in ECIA’s region. The goal is to address these needs by developing group trainings, one-on-one trainings, and providing technical assistance to increase the capacity of City staff and elected officials within ECIA’s region.

The Recipient’s capacity will be expanded in the areas of quality-of-life projects and economic development related assistance. This technical assistance, in the form of training; both group and one on one, as well as professional development conferences will enable the recipients to gain the skills to carry out projects to become the communities they envision.

There is Still CDBG CV Money Available!

In March 2020, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Securities (CARES) Act in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Included in the CARES Act was a \$5 billion supplemental allocation to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The State of Iowa has received \$31.3 million in CDBG-CV funding; Approximately \$21 million will be available to non-entitlement communities/counties in Iowa. The State is seeking additional applications in hopes of awarding all available funds. All activities funded through this program must prevent, prepare for, or respond to COVID-19.

Activities funded with CDBG-CV funds must be determined to be a CDBG eligible activity. In addition, each activity funded with CDBG funds must meet one of three national objectives: Prevention and elimination of slum and blight; Benefit low to moderate income persons; Meet an urgent need.

- The seven CV project types are:
- Public Facilities/Spaces Improvements
 - Public Wi-Fi/Broadband
 - Housing Conversion
 - Commercial Façade Improvements
 - Microenterprise Assistance
 - Daycare Assistance
 - Food Programs

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that a minimum of 80% of all CDBG-CV funding must be spent/ disbursed by July 20, 2023. Funds not spent by this date will be repealed by HUD. With this deadline in mind, IEDA will require projects funded under the CDBG-CV program to be completed and have all CDBG funds drawn down by this date. For more information or if you think you have a project, please call Tricia Wagner, ECIA Grant Writer & Program Development Coordinator at 563-690-5770 or visit <https://tinyurl.com/2p93syer>.

Jumpstart your Brownfields Redevelopment

Do you have a contaminant property in your community that you would like to partner with ECIA to cleanup and make ready for reuse?

Contact: Dawn Danielson, Brownfields Project Manager at 563.580.1976 or at ddanielson@ecia.org



Free Shingles to Homes with Roof Damage

ECIA and the Iowa Council of Governments (ICOG) partnered with Good360, a national foundation, to obtain new, high-quality shingles for households that suffered roof damage from the August 10, 2020 derecho. The shingles were



donated to ECIA to assist homeowners in Clinton, Jackson and Cedar counties affected by the Derecho. Shingles were free of charge and provided on a first-come, first-served basis for the rehabilitation of rooftops with derecho-related damage. ECIA’s Housing Specialist, Caitlin Siemionko reports, “The property owners who received these shingles were extremely thankful and we are so grateful to provide this opportunity to them and help our community members.” Ten properties in ECIA’s region benefited from the new shingles: CEDAR COUNTY- 2 properties in Lowden; JACKSON COUNTY- 2 properties in Maquoketa; CLINTON COUNTY- 6 properties in Clinton.

Clinton to Revitalize Dilapidated Building

The City of Clinton has been approved to receive a \$250,000 loan from ECIA’s Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund. This will be the first project financed under the EPA funded ECIA Brownfields program. The City acquired the former YMCA in August 2020 through tax sale. The property has been vacant since the beginning of 2021 and is dilapidated. ECIA has provided the City with assessment work on the site identifying the presence of asbestos and lead-based paint requiring abatement. The cost of which can be a roadblock for future development.

The loan will be at zero percent interest for the first three years, increasing by half a percent every two years until maturity in ten years. Up to a maximum of \$50,000 of the loan may be forgiven once certain loan conditions are met.

“The City of Clinton receiving this Brownfields RLF loan will allow for the asbestos and lead removal from the old YMCA. Without this Brownfields RLF loan this endeavor would not have taken shape and most likely the building would continue to sit empty and uninhabited. This is critical to getting this 1905 building “Developer” ready,”



indicated Matt Brooke, City Administrator. He further stated “The City intends to offer a ready to go, turn of the century building to have a developer turn into luxurious apartments with commercial on the first floor. ECIA guided the Council through the process and understood the full intent of the City to gain approval. The ECIA team continues to be there for us on the coordination of inspections. Thanks to a great partner, I most definitely recommend the Brownfields RLF loan to other cities.”

ECIA Donates Monitors to Tree of Life

Tree of Life Education center is a recent addition to the Clarity Clinic and is a resource for families with children. “ECIA staff had some old computer equipment we were trying to find a home for, and I reached out to them after touring the new center recently,” said Katie Steffensmeier, ECIA Community Outreach & Economic Development Coordinator. Tree of Life was eager to have extra monitors for their staff, who help families in need with resources, education, training and free childcare during programming. The facility also has a room full of clothing, toys and items such as formula for families with children. Many items are free, or clients can earn “dollars” to purchase some of the items.



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