



Contact: Michael Welsh  
608-234-2940; or mwelsh@weda.org

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## **WEDA Announces the 2024 Community and Economic Development Award Finalists**

### *CEDA Celebrates the Success of Economic Development Across Wisconsin*

**Madison, WI** – Finalists for the 2024 Community and Economic Development Awards (CEDA) were announced today by the Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA). The CEDA Awards were established by WEDA to recognize and celebrate businesses, projects, organizations, and communities that are making significant contributions to Wisconsin's economy.

"The WEDA Community and Economic Development Awards is the state's leading awards program for the economic development community and was established to recognize outstanding and innovative projects that are driving economic growth and prosperity across Wisconsin," said interim WEDA President and CEO Kathryn Berger. "The Eau Claire community, which is a tremendous example of economic development success, is a perfect location to serve as the backdrop for the CEDA Awards as we celebrate the impressive achievements of each finalist."

Three economic development projects or programs were selected in each of the four following CEDA categories: Business Retention and Expansion; Community Impact; Real Estate Redevelopment and Reuse; and Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention. The winners in each category will be announced at the CEDA Awards ceremony luncheon, which will be held on Thursday, September 26, as part of WEDA's Fall Best Practices Conference in Eau Claire, WI.

Listed below are the recently announced 2024 CEDA Award finalists in each category:

**Business Retention and Expansion** – This award recognizes a single economic development project in which a community successfully mobilized to retain and/or expand an existing business of great importance to the community. Nominations should demonstrate extensive cross-community collaboration, innovation, and responsiveness to the business in bringing the project to fruition.

- ***Encompass Early Education and Care*** (City of Oconto Falls)
- ***STI Holdings Inc. – Stoughton Trailers*** (City of Stoughton)
- ***BOH Electronics*** (City of River Falls)

**Community Impact** – This award recognizes innovation in community development that promotes and advances health and economic prosperity in Wisconsin communities. Nominations should demonstrate how a program, project, or initiative meet at least one of the following: Development or expansion of the community's entrepreneurial ecosystem; development of quality placemaking or place keeping initiatives; redevelopment of blighted buildings into a project that has revitalized the community; or development of downtown or main street workforce housing.

- ***City of Monona***
- ***Gays Mills Uptown Development*** (Village of Gays Mills)
- ***Green County Home Construction Cooperative***

**Real Estate Redevelopment and Reuse** – This award recognizes innovative real estate redevelopment or reuse projects that demonstrate measurable and quantitative impact on employment and tax base, as well as sustainability measures, such as conservation of energy and water. Nominations should provide details as to why the project will/has served as a catalyst for economic and community development efforts. It should also demonstrate an innovative approach to development.

- **Brooke Street Lofts** (City of Fond du Lac)
- **The District – West Bend**
- **Market on River** (City of Chippewa Falls)

**Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention** – This award recognizes initiatives or programs that can document successful talent attraction, development, and retention outcomes. Nominations should identify how the program or initiative provided a strategic and innovative approach to meet one or more of following goals: Strengthening the skills of the workforce; talent attraction and retention; integration and alignment of economic and workforce development activities; diversity and inclusion; and addressing barriers to employment such as childcare, housing, and transportation.

- **The New North Talent Campaigns** (Northeast Wisconsin)
- **Growing Lancaster** (City of Lancaster)
- **Great Pinery Heritage Waterway Trail** (Central Wisconsin)

Nominated projects were screened and selected by an impartial panel of judges comprised of key WEDA members and partners. The independent panel reviewed many projects that were submitted for consideration, but the 12 finalists were ultimately selected based on the significant economic impact each project has on its respective community or region.

The 2024 CEDA Awards would not be possible without the support of WEDA's generous partners and sponsors, including the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation; Alliant Energy; First Ring Industrial Redevelopment Enterprise; Madison Gas & Electric; US Bank; the Wisconsin Economic Development Institute; and Xcel Energy.

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#### **About WEDA**

*The Wisconsin Economic Development Association, founded in 1975, is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to growing Wisconsin's economy. Driven by the needs of our 400-plus members, we represent the economic development interests of both the private and public sectors through advocacy, education, and leadership on statewide initiatives.*