

# SAUK COUNTY

## PLACEMAKING GRANT ANNUAL REPORT







# PLACEMAKING GRANTS

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	4
<b>PLACEMAKING GRANTS</b>	
<b>At a Glance</b>	6
<b>PLACEMAKING AND</b>	
<b>Tourism</b>	8
<b>PLACEMAKING AND</b>	
<b>Public Space</b>	10
<b>PLACEMAKING AND</b>	
<b>Smart Growth Development</b>	12
<b>GRANT RESULTS</b>	
<b>Location</b>	14
<b>Development</b>	15

---

## GRANT PURPOSE

---

The Placemaking Grant initiative falls under the Sauk County Placemaking program, and celebrates the individuals, and organizations within the County who are striving to make positive changes, and establish the region's "sense of place." The placemaking program recognizes that creating unique, authentic experiences will promote the creation of emotional connections to Sauk County, and ultimately help it become a destination of choice to live, work, and play. The cumulative impact of small efforts affects the overall vitality, and health of our county, communities, and neighborhoods. By supporting ideas, and initiatives that promote Sauk County as a desirable destination, and place to live, this program focuses on driving the grassroots efforts that strengthen the social, environmental, and economic framework of the County.

Sauk County is a rural region punctuated by a string of unique, small communities. While developed largely on agricultural resources, which are still plentiful, Sauk County also has a landscape rich in natural, and cultural resources. In fact, placemaking, and innovative thinking have created opportunities to highlight our rural character, and have provided the flexibility for outside-of-the-box thinking.

Our communities are made up of an intricate quilt of history, business, industry, and individuals who believe in the opportunities available here. These individuals are continuously striving to enhance the local quality of life, and are the fabric of our region. The grassroots efforts initiated by these individuals, and their representative organizations are responsible for many of the resources, and activities in place throughout Sauk County today.

None of the achievements made this year would have been possible without the support of the Sauk County Board of Supervisors who approved the use of \$90,000 to fund this grant program. A special commendation goes out to the members of the Economic Development Committee, and Revolving Loan Fund Committee who oversaw the implementation of this program.

2019 was the first year this program was available, and the impacts have already been seen. As of November 18th, all the funds have been awarded, helping to support numerous programs across the entirety of Sauk County. The following report details the impact these funds have had on our communities, and will showcase the progress we have collectively made to ensure Sauk County continues to be a place people want to live, work, and play in.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Pinkus", is positioned above the name and title of the signatory.

JARED PINKUS  
*Community Liaison*

---

## PLACEMAKING GRANTS AT A GLANCE

---

*The intent of the grant program is to promote the exploration of ideas that will enhance the quality of life in Sauk County, to enhance the vibrancy of our communities, and our sense of place. Collaboration between applicants, the County, and other entities were critical to achieve this vision which is why the program required a monetary matching requirement of 2:1, and an emphasis on in-kind donations, and community support. In all, 23-applications were submitted with a total request amount of \$150,750. The impact of each projected ranged in scope but all required extensive community support, resulting in over \$4.3-million in matching funds raised for program implementation. Of the approved applications, the average total cost per project was \$271,508 with the average award being \$5,625, a ratio of 54:1. If not for this program, twelve of the sixteen approved projects would not have been possible.*

The 2019 Sauk County Budget included \$90,000 in funding for the newly established Placemaking Grant program. These funds had been approved by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors during the November Budgeting meeting. Prior to the official kickoff of the new grant program, many hours had been put in to ensure this program would attract the unique opportunities described in the 2017 document Making Sauk: A Place Plan. The place plan first described a grant program which would open up County support to organizations across the area which had generally not received financial support in the past.

Between December 1, 2018, and January 5, 2019 a concerted effort was put to work on ensuring the proper marketing of the Placemaking Grant program. A website ([www.OneSaukWI.Com](http://www.OneSaukWI.Com)) was created using the umbrella of a previous initiative, One Sauk, Naturally. Additionally, social media use expanded, newsletters were published, and brochures were handed out at various public meetings.

Through the Grow in Sauk Social Media Strategy, led by the Placemaking Grant program, the County saw a large increase in public support through various uses of social media. Our general Facebook account has seen an increase in 25% of active followers, our newly established Instagram account has over 1,200 followers nearly 15,000 likes, and over 500 tags. The use of these accounts has had a visible impact to other community events as well. The official start date of the Placemaking Grant program was January 15th, 2019, and the final review of applicants was November 16th. In addition to the 23-applications, there were an additional 11-inquires. The second year of this program will be much more competitive given the fund balance is \$40,000, and the fact that five organizations have already expressed interest in applying for the grant.





---

## PLACEMAKING AND TOURISM

---



The Annual Big Top Parade is the largest tourism event for the City of Baraboo, and brought in an estimated 25,000 people. \$2,000 was awarded to the Baraboo Area Chamber for promotion, and publicity.



Nearly 10,000 people attended the first series of Night Markets, hosted by the Baraboo Young Professionals. The \$2,500 awarded to them will be used for expansion, and marketing.



The Aldo Leopold Shack is a destination for thousands of visitors annually. A \$5,000 grant was awarded to promote this historic site to those less familiar with Leopold's contribution to land conservation.



The Baraboo Range Preservation Association was awarded \$1,250 to support a series of six monthly hikes. The grant money was used for marketing, and to support six post-hike meals featuring local farm-to-table edibles.

### ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM

Data from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism indicates that visitation to Wisconsin increased by 2 million trips in 2018, a growth of 1.9% from the year before. In total, 112.1-million visitors traveled to, and through Wisconsin, spending \$13.3 billion in 2018 alone. Sauk County ranks third in terms of visitor spending throughout the state, generating \$1.1 billion, an increase of 4.35% from 2017. The money spent within the County as a result of tourism is essential to continue to provide our residents with the level of service they deserve. It is also important that we continue to protect the assets that make Sauk County a destination for so many visitors.

The Placemaking Grant awardees that have received funds for tourism related programs are focused on the nexus of promotion, and protection of our sensitive assets. Sauk County has helped to fund habitat restoration projects, promotional activities through PBS, cultural events in Spring Green among many other opportunities. The grants have also helped to support future generations through funding of both the Baraboo, and Reedsburg Young Professional groups. Both organizations help to groom future leaders of our County, ensuring our tradition of sustainable tourism continue well into the future.





*The culture of Sauk County is that of promoting, and protecting our natural, cultural, and agricultural resources. These resources are crucial to maintain since tourism is a main economic driver of our county as evidence by the fact that Sauk County is only behind Milwaukee, and Dane Counties in generating tourism revenue. Over the years, the County has spent a large amount of time, and money investing in the future of our resources to ensure generations to come will be able to experience the beauty that is offered to us. In the last few years alone, Sauk County has invested in the building, and expansion of the Great Sauk State Trail, development of the Baraboo River Corridor, Sauk County Outdoor Recreation Plan which is focused on silent sports, White Mound County Park development, and a potential new Wisconsin River Recreation Bridge connecting the Great Sauk State Trail to the future Walking Iron Trail in Dane County.*

## WHY WE ARE THE BEST

### Increased Tourism Dollars

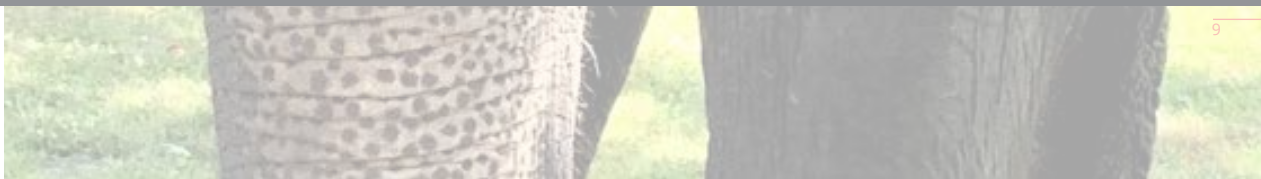
The Baraboo Area Chamber completed an Economic Impact Survey post Big Top Parade which showed lodging partners were at 100% occupancy on the Friday night before the parade, and 98% on Saturday night. Retail chamber members also reported a 60% increase in sales in comparison to the weekends surrounding the event.

### Attracting a new Generation

An estimated 10,000 people attended the first series of Night Markets in Baraboo, far exceeding the best expectations. Businesses reported the September event was one of their busiest days ever, and the ambiance of the December event made attendees feel like they were in a Hallmark movie. The 2020 series will see an expanded profile of vendors, and space.

### Protecting Our Natural Beauty

Sauk County is home to some of the most spectacular natural scenery around as evident by the 3-million visitors to Devils Lake State Park. Over \$20,000 in grant money was awarded to promote, and protect our natural beauty including funds for prairie conservation, promotion of the Sauk Prairie Riverway, and \$10,000 for public art along the Great Sauk State Trail.





*Photo top left*

*Sauk City Riverfront Park  
Total Project Cost: \$2,406,028  
Placemaking Grant Award: \$10,000*

*Photo bottom left*

*Future Prairie du Sac Riverfront Park  
Total Project Cost: \$953,573  
Placemaking Grant Award: \$10,000*

*Photo top right*

*Great Sauk State Trail Public Art  
Total Project Cost: \$30,000  
Placemaking Grant Award: \$10,000*



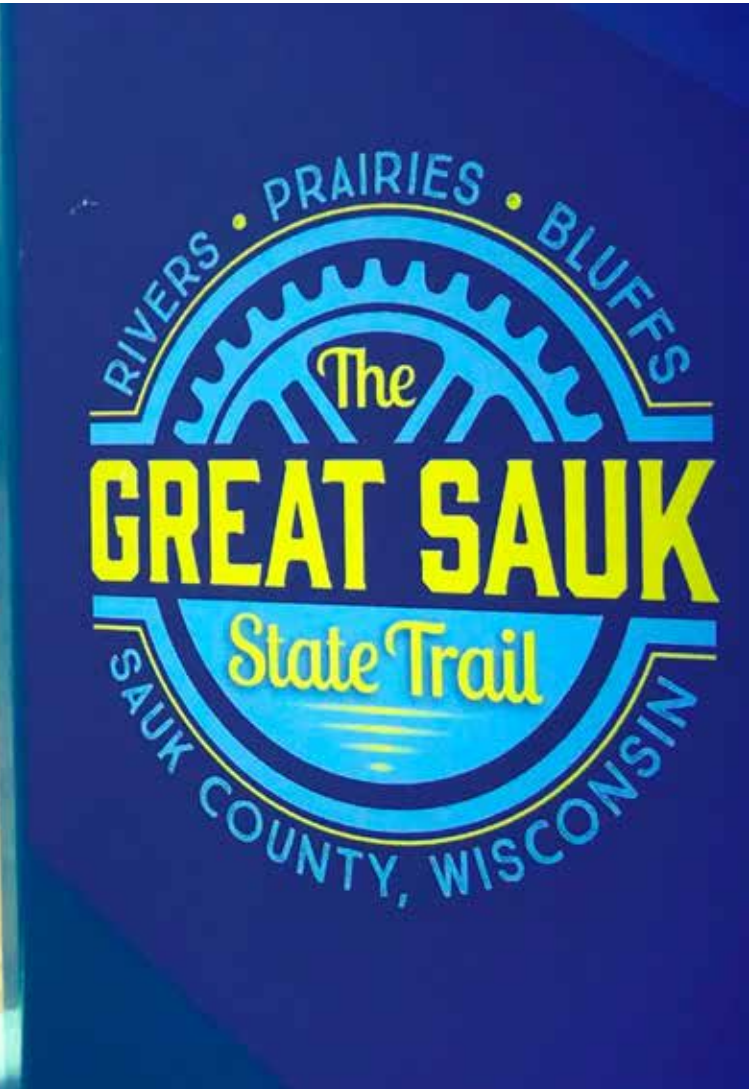
---

## PLACEMAKING AND **PUBLIC SPACE**

---

*Defined in the 2017 Making Sauk: A Place Plan, placemaking focuses on the physical design, and attributes of a space that make it a desirable place to be. The scale of this physical space varies significantly, but ultimately it is about the characteristics of that space that make it welcoming to people, often focusing more on identifying, and leveraging assets that make a place unique. In every scenario, it is about enhancing the opportunities for people to form emotional connections to a place.*





***The notion of placemaking puts an emphasis on creating successful communities that have incorporated all of the sights, smells, sounds, tastes, experiences, and opportunities for interaction that are desired by humans within a space.***

When these characteristics are considered, and designed appropriately, spaces are created that attract people. When enough of these spaces are strung together within a region, that region ultimately becomes a place where people want to live, work, and play.

Among the most common requests for funding through the Placemaking Grant program was for improvements to public spaces. Nearly 45% of the total program funding went to improving public spaces around Sauk County, most notably to support the expansion of public parks. The goal of the 2017 Place Plan was to attract, and retain young professionals, a demographic that comprises young families. The \$39,500 awarded to projects in the public realm directly benefits 2,829

people aged five to 14 (2017 ACS). In addition to the four parks supported through this program, a \$10,000 grant was awarded to the Friends of the Great Sauk State Trail (GSST) to add to an already successful public arts campaign. The GSST is an enormous success, and continues to draw a wider attention as the trail expands north to the 400 State Trail. The Placemaking Grant program has not only helped to fund parks in our larger communities but also in some of the smaller more rural parts of the County such as, Lime Ridge.

As communities of all sizes struggle with ever limiting resources, tradeoffs are made, and it is generally the public spaces which take the brunt of funds being cut. The Placemaking Grant has been instrumental in helping to close the gap that our communities face, ensuring the goals set forth in 2017 are realized. These investments are a tangible representation of the fact that Sauk County strives to provide its citizens with the highest level of government service possible.

---

## PLACEMAKING AND **SMART GROWTH DEVELOPMENT**

---

### VISION

Sauk County has experienced a tremendous increase in population over the past few decades, exceeding the growth rate of many other counties in Wisconsin. Growth presents a tremendous opportunity for progress if directed in a way that maximizes investment. Sauk County is undergoing considerable change as a result of population trends, the loss of farmland, and an increase in economic opportunities. What is the best approach to direct the growing pressure of our changing communities? Members of the Economic Development Committee support the idea of using Smart Growth strategies.

*Sauk County has a rich and diverse history that has helped to shape the unique culture of our communities. The Placemaking Grant program offers both public, and private partners the opportunity to influence development in a way that positively impacts the three spaces: Community, Home, and Work.*

Growth is smart when it provides residents with more choices, and personal freedoms, when there is a good return on public investment, and a greater opportunity for all members of a community. When communities follow these strategies, they can create new neighborhoods while maintaining existing ones that are attractive, convenient, safe, and healthy. We can create more choices for residents, workers, visitors, families, and people of all ages, and class. We can provide choices in where to live, how to get around, and how to interact with others. If we can follow this line of planning, we can preserve the best that Sauk County has to offer while creating a desired future for our next generations.

### SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

- Mixed land use
- Create a range of housing opportunities, and choices
- Strengthen, and direct development towards existing communities
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas



*Photo top*

*Plain Apartments:  
Grant Award: \$10,000  
Smart Growth Principles: Housing & Historic Preservation*

*Photo bottom*

*Lexington Street Development  
Grant Award: \$10,000  
Smart Growth Principles: Housing, mixed-use &  
Historic Preservation*



## PLAIN APARTMENTS

**Plain, WI**

Cassel Remodeling is a local husband, and wife team focused on repairing, and resorting old buildings into quality living spaces. This project was awarded \$10,000 to provide gap financing for a rehab projects of a blighted property in downtown Plain. The building, once fully occupied, will include eight quality apartment units which will help to support the local economy by increasing the density of this small community. Rental rates for this project start at \$625, below the 2020 Fair Market Rental Rates determined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for low-moderate income households.

## LEXINGTON STREET DEVELOPMENT

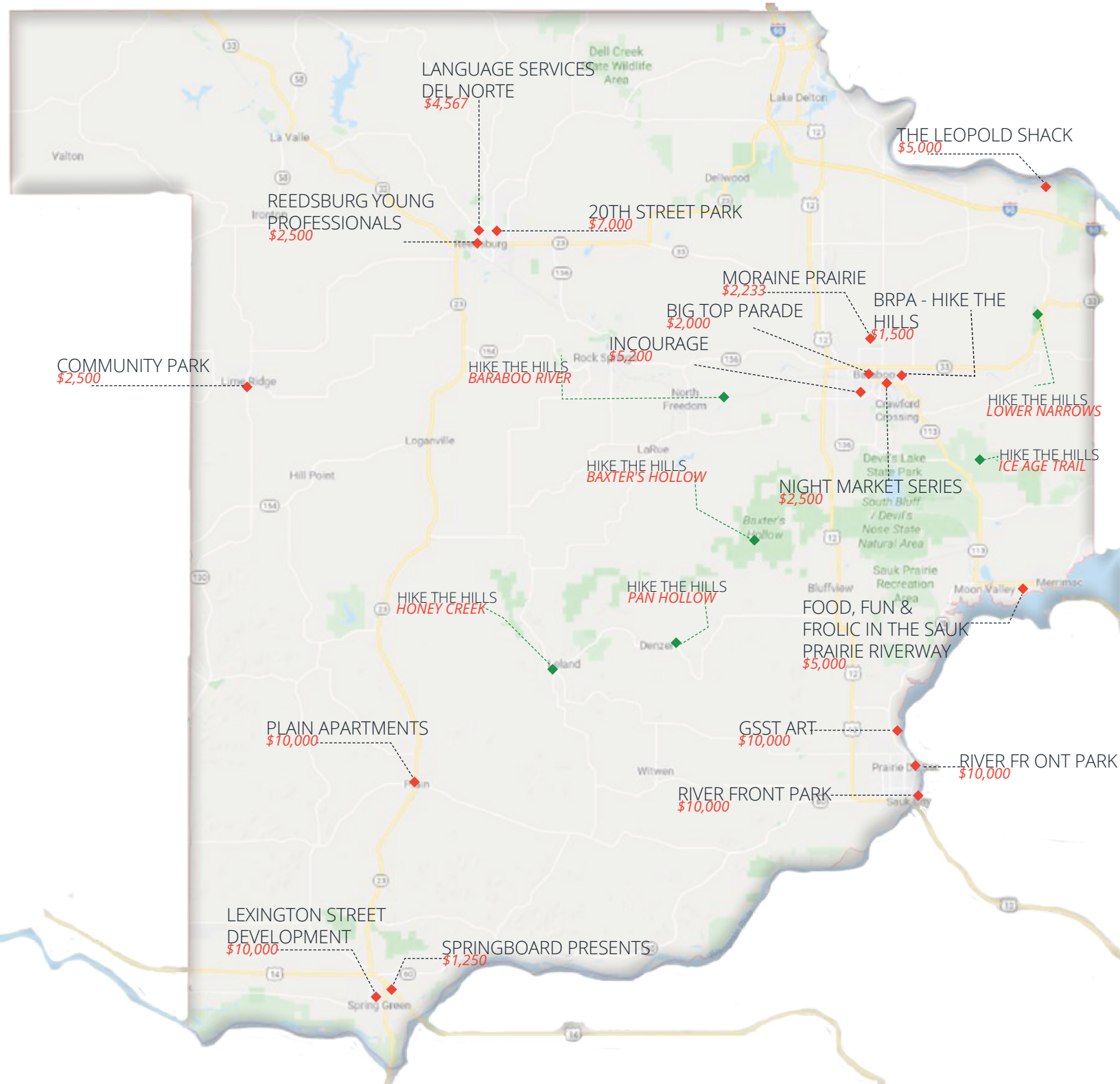
**Spring Green, WI**

The Lexington Street project is a remodel of an historic railway depot property in downtown Spring Green. The rehabilitation of this site will result in a combination of residential, and commercial units including two spaces to be run as a community cooperative.

The redevelopment will impact the community by creating a space to develop new small businesses, gather as neighbors for community events, and workshops, and share space for work, and life in an important rural main street location. This development fits neatly into the creative culture of Spring Green, and is a great example of a project that uses Smart Growth strategies.



Project Location



Applicant	Request Date	Request Amount	Amount Funded	Date Paid
Prairie du Sac	1/22/2019	\$10,000	\$10,000	5/17/2019
Sauk City	2/15/2019	\$10,000	\$10,000	5/17/2019
Phoenix Flight Service	2/15/2019	\$10,000	Not funded	N/A
Baraboo Range Preservation	2/15/2019	\$1,500	\$1,500	5/17/2019
Reedsburg YP	3/5/2019	\$2,500	\$2,500	5/24/2019
UW Baraboo	3/10/2019	\$3,500	\$2,233	5/17/2019
Baraboo Chamber	3/22/2019	\$5,000	\$2,000	6/2/2019
Cassel Remodeling	3/26/2019	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Tires and Torque	3/26/2019	\$10,000	Not funded	N/A
Sauk Prairie Chamber	4/11/2019	\$5,000	\$5,000	5/17/2019
Aldo Leopold	4/17/2019	\$5,000	\$5,000	7/2/2019
Baraboo Broadcasting	4/18/2019	\$10,000	\$10,000*	Project Cancelled
Village of Plain	5/1/2019	\$2,500	\$1,250*	Cancelled (weather)
Springboard	5/8/2019	\$2,500	\$2,500*	Program Change
Baraboo YP	5/14/2019	\$2,500	\$2,500	8/6/2019
City of Reedsburg	8/1/2019	\$10,000	\$7,000	
Lime Ridge	9/29/2019	\$2,500	\$2,500	
River Arts Inc	10/4/2019	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Springboard	10/14/2019	\$4,550	\$1,250*	Project Cancelled
Lexington street Development	10/15/2019	\$10,000	\$10,000	
Language Services Del Norte	10/17/2019	\$8,500	\$4,567	
Incourage Sober Living	10/17/2019	\$5,200	\$5,200	
St. Aloysius	10/17/2019	\$10,000	Not funded	N/A

\* Funds awarded but project not implimented

## PLACEMAKING- DEVELOPMENT

◆ Total Requests: 23  
Total Approved: 20

◆ Programs Funded: 16  
Funds Distributed: 100%



# SAUK COUNTY



**SAUK COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATION**

505 Broadway  
Baraboo/WI/53913

**Phone**  
(608) 355-4840

**Website**  
[www.saukcountywi.gov](http://www.saukcountywi.gov)