

WEDC: State awards \$2 million to communities to help redevelop idle sites

Posted on Thursday, Jun 8, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON, WI. June 8, 2017 - The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) today announced that four communities will receive a total of \$2 million in state grants to help redevelop abandoned industrial sites throughout Wisconsin.

The cities of La Crosse and Manitowoc, the village of Waunakee, and Eau Claire County have each been awarded \$500,000 under WEDC's Idle Sites Redevelopment Program.

"The grants will play a key role in jump-starting redevelopment efforts that will have a significant economic impact in each community," said Mark R. Hogan, secretary and CEO of WEDC, the state's lead economic development organization. "Our \$2 million investment will support projects expected to create hundreds of jobs and generate more than \$60 million in capital investment."

The grant recipients and project details are:

City of La Crosse: Plans call for redeveloping the 108-year-old La Crosse Plow building to include commercial, office and retail space on the first floor, and 60 high-end, loft-style apartments on the second and third floors. Located in downtown La Crosse, this building has been vacant for the last 23 years. The \$33 million project is expected to create more than 270 jobs.

Eau Claire County: The 30-acre site has more than a dozen large buildings that would be razed in the first phase of a \$90 million downtown redevelopment project. Plans for the site include a wellness, aquatics and recreation complex; a major

event center that could seat up to 5,500 people; and a river education center. The project is expected to create 170 jobs once all four phases are completed.

Village of Waunakee: The village plans to redevelop the former Waunakee Alloy Casting site into a new library that would be near downtown, senior housing, Six Mile Creek and a local elementary school. The \$15 million project will provide new and expanded programming space for the library, and will also play a key role in revitalizing the village's downtown corridor.

City of Manitowoc: The city plans to raze the old Mirro Aluminum facility, which has been vacant since 2003, and redevelop the 5-acre site. After the six- and seven-story blighted buildings are demolished, the city will conduct further soil and groundwater investigation and additional environmental cleanup before moving forward with a mixed-use redevelopment plan for the site.

The Idle Sites Redevelopment Program, created in 2013, stimulates investment and job creation in idle, abandoned and underutilized manufacturing sites that cannot be redeveloped solely by the private sector due to their scale and complexity.

The grants may be used for demolition, environmental remediation or site-specific improvements defined in the community's redevelopment plan. The goal of the program is to advance the site to shovel-ready status or to enhance the site's market attractiveness to encourage business growth.

Since the program's inception, it has provided \$12.8 million in grants to 17 municipalities statewide.

[Waunakee Idle Site FAQs](#)