

# AARP: Plan for new farmer's market in Prairie du Chien wins AARP WI 'Small Dollar, Big Impact' grant

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**PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, WI** – A proposal submitted by Driftless Development Inc. and the Prairie du Chien Main Street Program to purchase amenities for a new weekly farmer's market in an unused downtown parking lot has been selected to receive this month's AARP Wisconsin "Small Dollar, Big Impact" grant.

AARP Wisconsin is awarding one grant each month throughout 2022 to projects across the state that are designed to improve communities and make them better places for everyone to live, work and play as they age. Judges selected this project for a \$1,000 grant after reviewing dozens of proposals submitted from all over Wisconsin.

"These grants are exactly what the name describes – short-term, low-cost solutions that could have remarkable impact on the shaping of local communities," said Amber Miller, Associate State Director of Community Outreach for AARP Wisconsin.

"We are so grateful to receive Small Dollar Big Impact grant from AARP," said Carol Roth, Executive Director of Driftless Development Inc., who submitted the grant proposal along with Tammie Katzung, Program Manager for the Prairie du Chien Main Street Program. "This funding will be used to purchase an ADA compliant picnic table for the Thursday Night Farmers Market in Prairie du Chien. We are excited to use the money to help our community become more age friendly."

The new farmer's market opened for the first time this spring and will be held every Thursday through mid-October from 4 to 7 p.m. in a previously unused parking lot downtown at the corner of Beaumont Road and Blackhawk Avenue.

Nearly a dozen vendors selling a mix of everything from food to plants and flowers are already setting up every week at the farmer's market, but Roth said there is plenty of room for additional vendors.

They will use the \$1,000 grant from AARP and hopefully future donations from the community to add several amenities to the event, including tables and benches, trash receptacles, additional signage, and more pop-up vendor tents. Anyone interested in contributing can reach out to Katzung at [mainstreet.tammiek@gmail.com](mailto:mainstreet.tammiek@gmail.com).

Roth said they are trying to get people used to coming downtown for the farmer's market in late afternoon before heading over to the popular Free Summer Music Concerts on the River which begin at 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays and draws large crowds every week.

In addition to supporting the vendors, the farmer's market is also expected to give a boost to local businesses – many of which are staying open later on Thursdays because of the extra people coming in to the downtown area. The market is family friendly, with live music and even a children's table, which has local sponsors.

"We're trying to create an experience for people to come downtown and maybe pick up some things for their picnic basket to eat when they listen to the music later on," said Roth, who said they are hoping to use the vacant parking lot for other events and activities hosted by various community organizations.

AARP Wisconsin's launched its "Small Dollar, Big Impact" grant program in 2020 and is now in its third year of helping proposed projects move forward in rural and urban parts of the state.

"Having ADA accessible seating will ensure everyone can enjoy the farmers market," Miller said. "Our goal is to support communities as they make positive changes that inspire long-term progress on livable issues. This application was a perfect example of this."



The grant program is open to some nonprofits and government entities. For more information on the program, visit [www.aarp.org/WIsdbi](http://www.aarp.org/WIsdbi)