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AARP grants will help 6 Wisconsin communities fund local projects

More than \$3.2 million in projects across the country are funded through 2021 Community Challenge grants

MADISON, WI – Six organizations located in the Wisconsin communities of Green Bay, Appleton, La Crosse, Madison, Ashland, and Chilton are among 244 projects across the country that will receive [2021 Community Challenge grants](#) totaling more than \$3.2 million this year, AARP Wisconsin State Director Sam Wilson announced today.

AARP Wisconsin will distribute nearly \$88,000 to these six grantees, which are among those that are developing “quick-action” projects across all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Each project will help communities make immediate improvements while jumpstarting long-term progress to support residents of all ages.

“All the Wisconsin communities chosen as grant winners this year showed high levels of creativity, innovation and a desire to help their residents live comfortably and age with dignity in their own cities, towns and villages,” said AARP Wisconsin State Director Sam Wilson.

Grantees in Wisconsin and across the country will implement quick-action projects to promote livable communities by improving housing, transportation, public spaces, civic engagement, and connection with family, friends, and neighbors with an emphasis on the needs of the 50-plus.

Many of this year's awards support revitalizing communities adversely impacted by the pandemic and include a focus on diversity, inclusion, and disparities.

This is the fifth year of the Community Challenge Grant. Wisconsin communities that have received these grants in previous years include: Oconomowoc, La Crosse, Ashland, Sheboygan, Milwaukee, Deer Park, Goodman, Gays Mill, Bayfield, Beaver Dam, Berlin, Ellsworth, Greendale, Sheboygan, Cuba City, and Spooner.

"We are incredibly proud to partner with Wisconsin's grantees as they work to make immediate improvements in their communities, encourage promising ideas and jumpstart long-term change," Wilson said. "Our goal at AARP Wisconsin is to support the efforts of our communities to be great places for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities and the coronavirus pandemic has only underscored the importance of this work.

All projects are expected to be completed by November 10, 2021. Here in Wisconsin, projects funded include:

Appleton: [Creative Downtown Appleton, Inc.](#) – A \$20,836 grant will help the organization create a new parklet equipped with solar lights, art, a bike rack and a hand sanitizer station will provide accessible public seating on College Avenue.

Ashland: [City of Ashland](#) – A \$10,000 grant will enable the city to install Victorian-style wooden benches – decorated by local artists – in the city's downtown.

Chilton: [Chilton Public Library](#) – A StoryWalk® is a fun, educational activity through which the pages of a children's book are posted along a popular walking route. An \$18,911 grant will be used to install bilingual stories at walkable locations around the community.

Green Bay: [The Farmory](#) – A \$15,000 grant will go toward the installation of an indoor aquaponics system that will allow for the growth and harvesting of fresh food year round.

La Crosse: [City of La Crosse Planning Department](#) – Volunteers will participate in walking tours to assess accessibility and make location recommendations for the installation of ramps using an \$11,060 grant.

Madison: [City of Madison](#) – An underused path between a community school and park will be remodeled into a welcoming gateway with solar lighting, native plants, wayfinding signage and accessible seating, thanks to a \$12,000 grant.

The Community Challenge grant program is part of AARP's nationwide Livable Communities initiative, which supports the efforts of cities, towns, neighborhoods and rural areas to become great places to live for people of all ages.

View the full list of grantees and their project descriptions at www.aarp.org/communitychallenge and learn more about AARP's livable communities work at www.aarp.org/livable.

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