



For Immediate

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22 Projects to receive Community Enhancement Grants

The Williston City Commission has approved the 2019 round of Community Enhancement grants. The commission approved \$50,000 for 22 projects at its Feb. 12 meeting.

The Community Enhancement (CE) program supports activities and projects that improve the quality of life in the Williston trade region. The program is made possible through the Williston STAR Fund which receives its funding through a voter approved 1% city sales tax. The STAR Fund was created to provide financial incentives for economic development projects that create jobs.

"The recipients of this year's Community Enhancement funds truly demonstrate the plethora of projects in our region that help build the quality of life, attract workforce and make our region a better place," said Williston Economic Development Executive Director Shawn Wenko.

The CE Program is administered by the STAR Fund Advisory Board. The board evaluated 32 applications requesting a total of \$205,000 on Thursday, Jan. 17. The board approved 22 projects that are located throughout the Williston trade region; from Sidney to White Earth and Crosby to Fort Union. "The CE grant program is a unique program for the community because it supports

Williston and the surrounding region. It's one way to say 'thank you' to these outlying communities who visit Williston and purchase goods and services in our community," said Wenko.

Last year, a Leadership Williston participant received funds to bring public art to Williston. Caitlin Pallai, Communications Strategist at Williston State College, presented a plan to cover traffic light boxes with vinyl covers. She said the STAR Fund Advisory Board was very receptive to her idea.

"Not only did the funding transform my project from an idea to an actionable process, it allowed me to operate on a bigger scale and do more than I anticipated. I would encourage anyone with an idea of improving this community to apply for funding and go through the process. My project would not have happened without this support!" said Pallai.

This year the following nonprofit organizations and projects will receive CE grants: Crosby Country Club - \$1,000 to update irrigation system; Divide County Historical Society - \$1,300 for threshing show enhancement; Upper Missouri Health District - \$1,500 for the Safe Seats Program; Mon-Dak Gymnastics Support Group - \$2,700 for building improvements; Williston Parks & Rec/Leadership Williston - \$2,500 for Raymond Center Ice Skate Rentals; James Memorial Preservation Project - \$2,500 for window restoration; Entertainment Inc! - \$3,000 for backstage curtain replacement; Midwest Baseball Tournament - \$2,500 for event; Fort Union Cooperating Agency - \$2,500 for Digital Marketing; Northern Plains Oyate - \$2,000 for Annual Powow; Marketplace For Kids - \$2,500 for annual event; Richland County Health Department - \$1,000 for strategic planning conference; Prairie Tumbleweeds Association - \$1,000 for building improvements; Empty Bowls Project - \$2,000 for Community Anti-Hunger event; Williston Band Boosters - \$5,000 for percussion upgrades and uniforms; Sunset Park District - \$2,000 for school to park paving project; Williston Downtowners Association - \$5,000 for outdoor speakers; Williston Basin Curling Club - \$2,000 for chiller replacement; Eight Mile Public School District #6 - \$2,000 for gymnasium floor

repair; Dolly Parton's Imagination Library - \$3,000 for early literacy program; One Million Cups - \$2,000 for monthly entrepreneur meetings; and White Earth Development Corp - \$1,000 for event pavilion.

For more information contact Brenda Schmidt at 701-577-8110 or brendsc@ci.williston.nd.us or visit economic development's website at http://willistondevelopment.com/business/williston_star_fund.php.