

Woodbine Inspired

The objective of selecting [Woodbine, Iowa](#), population 1,450, as a pilot green community was to provide a demonstration community for all of Iowa and beyond to see how an integrated approach to community revitalization that is focused on historic preservation and community sustainability principles can revitalize a struggling, small rural community.

The result was Woodbine Inspired, a holistic and integrated approach to community revitalization that included, developing a sustainable community master plan, intensive energy assessments for all downtown buildings, energy efficiency improvement incentive program, a facade master plan involving all 25 downtown buildings, upper-story housing in nearly all downtown buildings, four building gut rehabilitation projects, a new community health clinic, development of a new community gathering space, and integration of public art.

Between 2008-2012, more than \$9 million of federal, state and local funding comprised of more than three dozen funding sources was invested in the Main Street Iowa district of Woodbine. Community Development Block Grant funds were utilized for a facade master plan project improving 25 building fronts in the Main Street District. Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds supported adaptive reuse of downtown upper-stories for new housing to replace area lost units as a result of natural disasters in 2008.

The Woodbine Green Pilot Initiative won the national 2013 Sterling Achievement Award for Community Development from the Council of State and Community Development Agencies.

Program Results

The following accomplishments have been achieved between late 2008 and June 2013.

- 18 - net gain in new business starts
- 39 - net gain in new jobs
- 36 - rehabbed/new main street buildings
- 17 - adaptive use upper-story housing units added
- 6 - rehabbed upper-story housing units added
- 1 - new health clinic added
- 2 - new dentists recruited to Woodbine
- \$9 million - private and grant funds invested
- 13,500 - community volunteer hours logged downtown
- Only school district in the county with a net increase in enrollment over the last five years