

Albert Lea “Building One House at a Time”

CHAD ADAMS, CITY MANAGER
JANUARY 22, 2016

Albert Lea Background

- Rural regional center located 100 miles south of Twin Cities
- 18,000 population and slowly declining
- Cross-section of I-90/I-35
- Historic Downtown, Blue Zone community, and Lakes are key assets
- Vacant SF lots; < 10 new permits/yr.
- Several jobs open, but lack of workforce
 - Housing is one core goal for attraction/retention

Projects

- 2014 Housing Study
 - Workforce Housing
 - Senior Housing
- Wedgewood Cove Townhomes, LLC
- St. John’s Lutheran Home Expansion
- Downtown Redevelopment
- Single-Family Rehabilitation

Housing Study

- The report indicated that the City needs between 80 and 100 market rate rental units (approx. \$1000/mo.)
- No market rate rental complexes have been constructed in AL in the last 25 years
 - Teachers, physicians, and other local professionals with good wages/salaries can not find a place to reside temporarily
- City is an aging community and existing housing stock does not meet needs of present senior population

Wedgewood Cove Townhomes

- Partnership and Collaboration
 - City, County, and School agreement on 85% tax abatement for 10 years for 24 units
 - Market rate rentals meet housing study needs
 - First 12 units recently opened
- Developer (TSB Janesville, LLC.) worked with existing SF development/lot owners to acquire shovel ready sites (infrastructure already completed)

St. John’s Lutheran Home

- St. John’s acquired additional acreage two years ago for relocation of nursing home beds, but also campus for new independent, assisted-living, and duplex homes
- TIF Housing District created
- Project provides additional diversified housing options for seniors

Downtown Revitalization

- 2013 Streetscape project
- City acquiring substandard buildings for future demolition and redevelopment
- Historic Tax Credits (State and Federal)
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Historic Façade matching grant program
- Up to \$50,000 in matching grant
- Small Cities Grant Application – Commercial and Residential Rehab
- Metrics and Success

Single Family Rehabilitation

- HRA success with obtaining SCDP grants in past
- Growing number of single-family housing stock falling into disrepair or tax forfeit status
- “Rock the Block” event is helping to keep some housing stock in fair to good livable condition

Future Goals

- More Workforce Housing
 - Tax Abatement and State assistance
- Senior Housing (one-level condos or rentals)
- Downtown revitalization and increase density
- Continue Single-Family Rehab., Rock the Block
- Blazing Star Landing (retail, condos, rentals, lakeshore development, community center)
- Develop other defined redevelopment corridors
- Grow our workforce and community

Questions?

- Contact Information for Chad Adams, City Manager.
- Email: cadams@ci.albertlea.mn.us
 - Phone: 507/377-4330