



Vergas

Population 354

District 9 Senator Jordan Rasmusson

District 9B Representative Tom Murphy

CEDA, a nonprofit economic development firm based in Chatfield, Minnesota was appropriated \$627,000 in the 2023 session to help 18 non-metro, rural cities under 3,000 in population with basic economic development initiatives. This state funding provided selected cities up to 150 hours of technical assistance and \$15,000 in project funding. Cities applied for help in one of the following areas: childcare, downtown revitalization, downtown business retention & expansion, revolving loan funds; and were selected based on need.

The technical assistance hours coupled with the \$15,000 grant, enabled critical economic development work to take place in Vergas. Some examples of the work being done in Vergas can be seen below.

- Launched a Commercial Rehabilitation Program with an initial funding pool of \$50,000 to revitalize local businesses and enhance community infrastructure. The program provides targeted financial support for upgrading and improving commercial properties, helping to foster economic growth, attract customers, and elevate the community's overall appeal. By investing in the business district, the program strengthens the foundation for a thriving local economy and a vibrant commercial landscape.
- Secured \$10,000 in local support through generous contributions from key community stakeholders, including the Community Club and Vergas State Bank. These contributions reflect the strong community commitment to economic development and the shared vision of enhancing the town's commercial spaces. The support from local partners has been instrumental in building momentum for the Commercial Rehabilitation Program and ensuring its success.
- Successfully applied for and won the Otter Tail County Community Growth Partnership grant, bringing in an additional \$25,000 in matching funds. This 1:1 match effectively doubled the locally raised contributions, significantly amplifying the program's impact. The combined funding has established a robust foundation for the implementation and long-term sustainability of the Commercial Rehabilitation Program, ensuring that local businesses have the resources needed to thrive and grow.