

CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

LYONS, NEBRASKA. POPULATION 851.



CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

WHAT IS RURAL?

A place under 50,000 in population

.....under 15,000

.....under 2,500

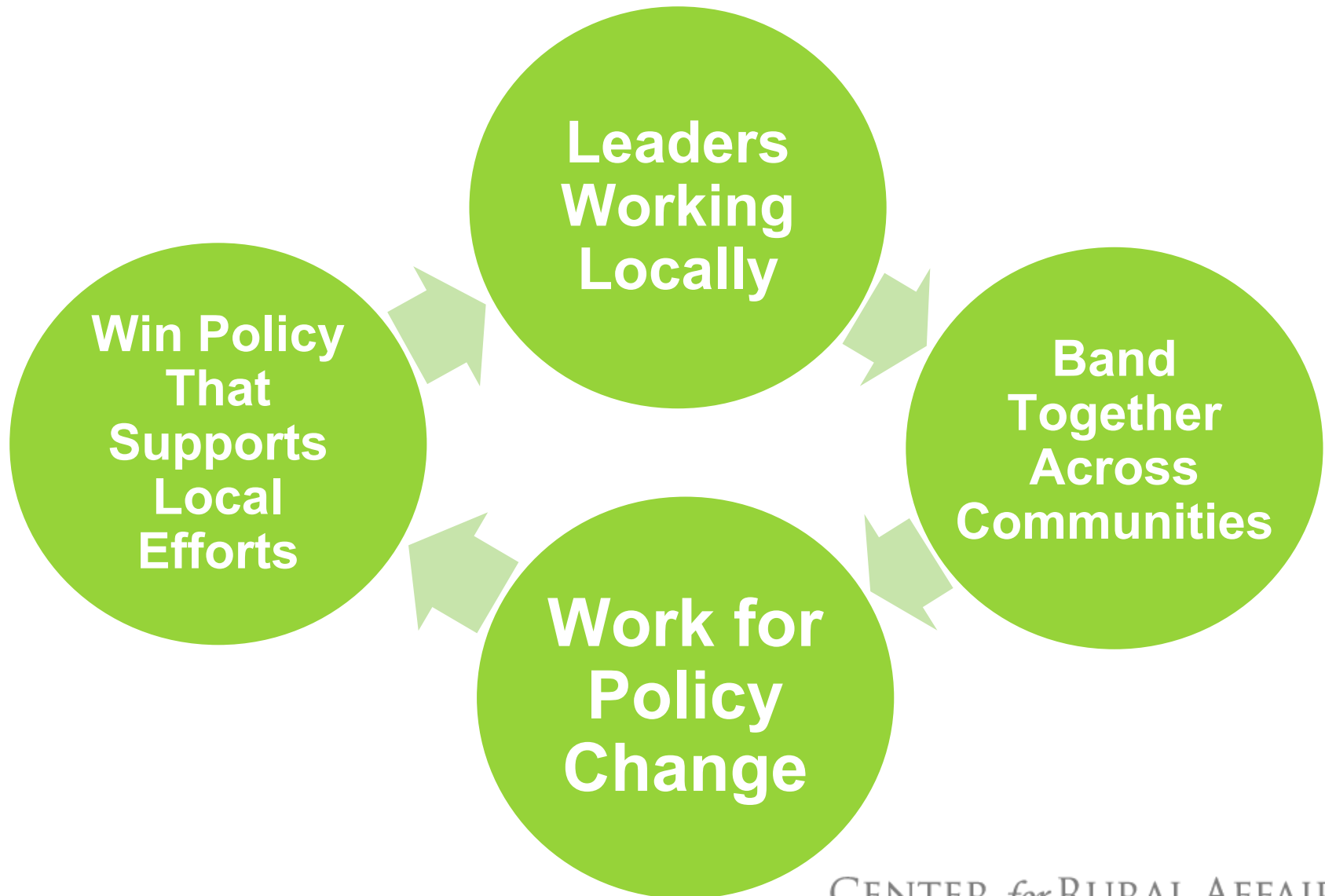
A place smaller than where I live

OUR MISSION:



Create Vibrant
Rural Communities

THEORY OF CHANGE



POLICY ADVOCACY. WHAT'S THAT?

1. Analyze

2. Propose solutions

3. Organize & engage

4. Foster relationships

5. Win & implement

Rural Energy Efficiency

STATE POLICY

- **Defensive stance on Iowa policy since 2016**
- **SF 2311 passed in 2017 rolling back standards**
 - Li-HEAP funds drastically cut
 - Spending caps for energy efficiency programs
- **RECs participate in joint EE studies with G&Ts on four tests:**
 - Participant cost, utility cost, ratepayer impact, societal
 - Next study scheduled this year (2019)

Rural Energy Efficiency

LOCAL EFFORTS

Highlighting 3 local programs:

1. Energy Districts from Northeast Iowa
2. PAYS Programs in Iowa
3. Highlight Rural RECs - NIPCO



Rural Energy Efficiency

THE ENERGY DISTRICT MODEL

- **Modeled after Soil and Water Conservation Districts created in the 1930s under FDR as response to the Dust Bowl**
 - National issue, local focus at the county level <https://energydistrict.org/>
- **First started in Decorah with [Winneshiek Energy District](#)**
 - Home efficiency program
 - Farm energy planning
 - Local carbon offset program to drive investment
 - Funded through memberships, Green Iowa Americorps, NRCS and other grants
- **Other counties: Howard, Allamakee, Chickasaw, Fayette, Clayton and Dubuque**

Rural Energy Efficiency



**Counties with
local Energy
Districts**

Rural Energy Efficiency

PAYS PROGRAMS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

- **Of 150 municipal utilities in Iowa, 3 have created PAYS programs for energy efficiency upgrades.**
 - 2 loan based - Cedar Falls (population 41,570) and Woodbine (population 1,407)
 - First tariff based program being developed in Bloomfield (population 2,676)
 - Bloomfield has set the goal of being 100% energy independence by 2030
 - PAYS program would only be residential
 - Half of city is low to moderate income, many elderly
 - Affordable housing is an issue for many rural communities

Rural Energy Efficiency

RURAL RECs – NIPCO, LeMars, Iowa

- Working to expand broadband access in rural western Iowa
- Offer rebate and incentive programs for Energy Star appliances, heat pumps, water heaters, insulation and other upgrades
 - Has offered a “Switch Makes Sense” since 1984
 - Have installed over 18,000 switches through this program
 - The program offers rebates and special rates to member-owners who would allow specified heating and cooling equipment to be controlled during peak conditions.

CONTACT

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