



City of Waukesha
201 Delafield Street
Waukesha, WI 53188
Tel: 262.542.3700
waukesha-wi.gov

City of Waukesha Cover Sheet

Committee: Common Council	Meeting Date: 9/1/2025
ID Number: ID#25-02058	Ordinance/Resolution Number (if applicable): 2025-20
Name of Submitter: Jeff Fortin, Economic Development Project Manager	Target Next Board/Council Meeting Date: 9/1/2025
Agenda Item Title: Review and possible action on a resolution authorizing staff to apply for a Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Small Business Development Grant	

Issue Before the Board/Council: Community Development is planning on applying for a Wisconsin Economic Development Small Business Development Grant. One of the program requirements is a Common Council resolution authorizing the submittal of the application. This is only for submitting the application. Should Waukesha receive grant funding, a contract between WEDC and the city would be brought back to the Common Council.
Options & Alternatives: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Council can make any program suggestions or changes they feel will strengthen the city's grant application.2. The Council could not adopt the resolution and staff will not apply for the grant.



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Additional Details:

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) launched a new grant program in 2024 called the “Small Business Development Grant.” We had applied in 2024 but did not receive funding. The program was brought back for 2025, so we would like to apply this year.

This grant offers financial incentives for communities and organizations to develop innovative programs that directly support small businesses and small business creation. The program’s goal is to support local and regional economic development programs that provide greater access to capital to small businesses in the state of Wisconsin.

Currently the Community Development Department manages the Central City Storefront Activation Loan Program. Funded by American Rescue Act Funds and authorized by the Common Council in 2022, this program offers low interest loans for commercial property owners to renovate their tenant spaces, repair and restore their buildings, improve fire protection/life safety, and add commercial kitchens and ventilation systems. We lent out the initial round of funding and now are reliant on program income from monthly principal and interest payments in order to make new loans.

Our intention would be to use the grant award to build additional capacity for more loans and to expand the eligibility criteria of the program. We are proposing to expand the eligibility area outside of the Central City area and to include smaller scale manufacturing/industrial businesses. Like the current program, this will primarily offer low-interest loans, with some grants available to both business and property owners. Focusing on loans will ensure sustainability, as repayments (principal and interest) will be reinvested into the program to fund additional lending.

What is the Strategic Plan Priority this item relates to:

People Centered Development



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What impact will this item have on the Strategic Plan Priority?

The goal for this priority is to stimulate economic and community vibrancy. This additional funding will provide low interest loans to assist with improvements to commercial and industrial spaces, which has a positive impact on business recruitment and retention and tax base.


Financial Remarks:

This will not have an impact on the City's budget.

Suggested Motion:

I move to adopt Resolution 2025-20, authorizing staff to apply for a 2025 Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Small Business Development Grant

Reviewed By:

Finance Director	Date Reviewed
City Attorney 	Date Reviewed 26 Aug 2025
City Administrator	Date Reviewed

**City of Waukesha
Common Council**

Resolution 2025-20

A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of an Application for a Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Small Business Development Grant

Whereas, State funds are available under the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Small Business Development Grant program; and

Whereas, the City of Waukesha intends to apply for this grant to create a small business loan and grant program to financially assist businesses with 20 or fewer full-time equivalent employees located in low-to-moderate income census block groups with costs associated with façade improvements, remodeling and expansion, fixed equipment, tenant space improvements signage, website development, and other eligible expenses; and

Whereas, the Common Council must authorize the preparation and filing of the Small Business Development Grant application for the City to receive funding through this program.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that that the Common Council of the City of Waukesha does approve and authorize the appropriate City officials to take all necessary steps to prepare and file the grant application for funds under the WEDC CDI program in accordance with this resolution; and

Be It Further Resolved, that if the grant is awarded, the Mayor may enter into an agreement with WEDC to accept the funds and expend the grant funds in a manner that is in accordance with the terms of the WEDC CDI grant award.

Adopted this 2nd day of September 2025.

Shawn N. Reilly, Mayor

Katie Panella, City Clerk