



For immediate release
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City of Brillion receives \$250,000 state grant to support downtown renovation project

WEDC funding will help city raze old grocery to make way for new apartments

BRILLION, WI. March 29, 2018 – The City of Brillion has received a \$250,000 state grant to support construction of a downtown apartment building – a project that will improve the aesthetics of the business district and help meet the city’s housing needs.

The Community Development Investment Grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) will help fund the Calumet County community’s plan to raze a vacant grocery store on Main Street and replace it with a 40-unit apartment building. The project is part of the city’s Main Street Square initiative, which calls for the construction of a new City Hall with greenspace and enhancements to the existing Brillion Community Center.

“The City of Brillion has spent years developing a comprehensive plan to revitalize its downtown through the Main Street Square effort, and WEDC is pleased to support this project, which will pay long-term dividends for the city,” said WEDC Secretary and CEO Mark R. Hogan, who joined city officials in making the announcement in Brillion on Thursday. “Vibrant downtowns and adequate housing are key factors in attracting and retaining businesses and workers, which is why WEDC works closely with communities throughout the state to help them improve their business districts.”

“We are very pleased and excited our project was chosen to receive this WEDC Community Development Investment Grant,” said Beth Wenzel, chair of the Brillion Redevelopment Authority Commission. “It is providing a huge step forward to converting that block into a vibrant city center.”

The Redevelopment Authority recently purchased the grocery store and is building the apartment building in partnership with Northpointe Development. The \$8 million project also includes sewer, water and street improvements.

Construction on the apartment building is underway and should be completed by June 2019. Once completed, the project is expected to add more than \$7 million to the city’s tax base, and generate about \$154,000 in annual property taxes.

In addition to removing a blighted building from downtown, the project also will help meet the need for workforce housing in Brillion. Officials say many workers at the city’s major employers have a long commute to their workplace, which hampers efforts to attract and retain workers.

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The WEDC funding is a matching grant and will help offset site preparation and infrastructure costs. Other funding sources for the project include the Redevelopment Authority; Integrated Public Resources, a public/private partnership; the City of Brillion; and Northpointe Development.

Local and regional officials say the project will have a significant impact on Brillion and the region.

“Brillion is a manufacturing city in a state that needs more places like Brillion,” said state Rep. Ron Tusler, who represents the community and took part in the announcement event on Thursday. “This housing complex pushes Brillion forward.”

“This grant is wonderful news for Brillion and the surrounding area,” added state Rep. Paul Tittl, who represents part of Manitowoc County. “Revitalizing our downtown districts can contribute to economic strength and stability not only in those areas, but in neighboring areas as well.”

“Communities and employers throughout Calumet County have expressed a need for affordable housing,” said Mary Kohrell, the community economic development director for Calumet County. “The WEDC grant to Brillion provides a critical first step in addressing that need.”

WEDC’s Community Development Investment Grant Program supports community development and redevelopment efforts, primarily in downtown areas. Awards are based on the ability of applicants to demonstrate the impact of the proposed project, including public and private partnership development, financial need, and use of sustainable downtown development practices.

Since the program’s inception in 2013, WEDC has awarded more than \$16 million in Community Development Investment Grants for projects expected to generate more than \$186 million in capital investments statewide.

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About the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) leads economic development efforts for the state by advancing and maximizing opportunities in Wisconsin for businesses, communities and people to thrive in a globally competitive environment. Working with more than 600 regional and local partners, WEDC develops and delivers solutions representative of a highly responsive and coordinated economic development network. Visit wedc.org or follow WEDC on Twitter @WEDCNews to learn more.

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