

VIBRANT SPACES GRANT

ENCOURAGING PLACEMAKING EFFORTS IN WISCONSIN COMMUNITIES

The **Vibrant Spaces Grant**, an element of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's (WEDC's) Community Development Investment (CDI) Grant Program, is designed to assist communities in creating vibrant and engaging spaces that make it easier to recruit and retain residents, sustain a robust labor force, and enhance local quality of life. With the help of this grant, new and enhanced public gathering places will foster community connections and provide accessible locations for the programming and amenities local residents desire—with the additional benefit of boosting foot traffic for area businesses.

How it works

Grants in amounts from \$25,000 to \$50,000 are available to help local communities develop and enhance public spaces. The application must come from the municipality, and only one application per municipality will be considered per fiscal year. Previous awardees must wait at least one fiscal year between Vibrant Spaces awards (except for the City of Milwaukee, in which different commercial corridors may apply for a grant award annually). A Vibrant Spaces Grant application does not affect a community's broader eligibility for a CDI Grant. In the FY26 grant cycle, no more than 40 grants will be awarded. Applicants must provide a 1:1 match of the grant amount, with the exception of economically distressed communities or communities with population less than 5,000, which need only provide a 25% match.

Eligibility requirements

Competitive projects will:

- Incorporate multiple improvements within or associated with one public space.
- Demonstrate community engagement and support via a community document/plan and/or via letters of support from public, private, and civic partners.
- Be ready to begin construction during the current WEDC fiscal year.
- Create visible and lasting transformations that foster public activity.

Eligible activities

Applications will be evaluated based on criteria including:

- Creation of visible and pedestrian-oriented public space
- Potential of the space to attract multiple user groups and activities

LEARN MORE

For more information about applying for a Vibrant Spaces Grant, contact a WEDC regional economic development director.

You can find the list of regional directors and territories covered at wedc.org/regional.

- Impact of the project on the community, the district, and nearby businesses
- Demonstrated community support for the project (e.g., multiple funding partners, civic organization participation)