



OFFICIAL PUBLIC NOTICE
**MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL - SPECIAL
SESSION**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026 AT 5:30 PM

COUNCIL ROOM, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN ST., RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581 & VIRTUALLY

TEAMS: bit.ly/RCTeamsMeeting

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER *Pledge of Allegiance; Roll Call for the meeting, determine whether a quorum is present; determine whether the meeting has been properly noticed.*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

1. 2027 Health Insurance

GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- [2.](#) Connect Communities Grant Application and Request for Municipal Accounting and Bookkeeping Services

ADJOURNMENT

Posted this 28th day of September, 2026 by 4:30 PM.
Copy to the official newspaper the Richland Observer.

PLEASE NOTE: To request disability-related accommodations, please contact City Administrator Ashley Oliphant (608-647-3466 or 450 S. Main St.) at least 24 hours in advance. Notice is hereby given that a quorum of other city governmental bodies may be present at this meeting for informational and discussion purposes only, and no formal action will be taken by those bodies at this meeting. The City of Richland Center is an equal opportunity employer, provider, and lender.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Common Council
FROM: Karin Tepley, Connect Communities Representative
DATE: 9/29/2026
RE: **Small Business Development Grant (SBDG): Connect Communities as lead, City as fiscal support**

The Ask

Connect Communities is applying for \$250,000 SBDG from WEDC. Every grant dollar goes straight to Richland Center small businesses. We are asking the City to provide minimal accounting support for the grant.

Why Connect Communities Should Carry This Grant

- **It fits the mission.** Connect Communities is the state program Richland Center was accepted into, built around downtown revitalization in partnership with WEDC. The SBDG is a downtown revitalization tool.
- **It fills a real gap.** The City has no revolving loan fund, façade program, or other business assistance program in place. The last downtown façade grant was 7–8 years ago, and economic development is a half-time effort shared with Public Works.
- **The need is documented.** Richland County is a WEDC-designated Distressed County for FY2026. City median household income is \$51,932 versus \$66,420 countywide, and the poverty rate is about 15.9%.
- **It brings free expertise.** Required business advising comes from the Wisconsin SBDC, and Connect Communities adds its own technical assistance. Neither costs the grant or the City.
- **It builds lasting local capacity.** We want the City and Connect Communities, not a different outside group each round, to know how to win and manage state grants. That expertise stays in Richland Center and helps with the next opportunity.
- **It has accountable governance.** A Connect Communities review committee approves awards, with clear priorities: downtown impact, locally owned businesses, and those with limited access to public grants.

Why the City Should Handle the Accounting

- **The systems already exist.** The City is administering a \$2.5 million HUD grant and a prior WEDC CDI grant.
- **Public dollars deserve public-grade books.** WEDC requires an independent Schedule of Expenditures audit. Clean City accounting makes that audit faster, cost effective, and easier to pass.
- **The return is strong for a small lift.** If awarded the up to \$250,000 in direct assistance goes to local storefronts, equipment, startups, and facilities. Businesses add their own match, and stronger downtown properties support the long-term tax base.
- **Minimal Transactions.** Connect Communities will provide: Writing the grant, marketing/outreach and application to businesses once awarded, panel to review and award funds, provide City with documents for the draw, keep records and submit SBDG reports (2).

What “Minimal” for the City Means

- One dedicated fund or account code for SBDG receipts and disbursements
- Preparing draw-down or reimbursement requests
- Cut disbursements for the individual businesses
- Keeping records ready for the required audit

Open Costs and Safeguards

In the interest of full transparency:

- **No admin dollars.** Because all funds go to businesses, the grant does not reimburse City staff time.
- **Audit cost.** The required audit is an unfunded compliance cost.
- **Risk protection.** Businesses will complete SBDC advising, awards are documented and committee-approved, and a written agreement between the City and Connect Communities will define roles, records, and responsibilities.

Recommended Council Action

Authorize the City Clerk/Treasurer to provide fiscal and accounting support for the SBDG grant, if awarded, under a written agreement with Connect Communities that defines scope and reporting. Application deadline: October 2, 2026. WEDC decisions are expected around February 2027.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Small Business Development Grant (SBDG) Administration

This Memorandum of Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into between the **City of Richland Center** ("City"), by and through its Clerk/Treasurer's Office, and **Connect Communities** ("Connect Communities"), effective as of [effective date], for the purpose of defining each party's roles, records, and responsibilities in administering the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Small Business Development Grant (SBDG), in the amount of \$250,000 (the "Grant").

1. Purpose

Connect Communities is the lead applicant and program administrator for the Grant. The City provides fiscal and accounting support so that Grant funds are properly received, disbursed, in accordance with WEDC requirements. This Agreement does not transfer ownership of the Grant or program decision-making to the City.

2. Term

This Agreement begins on [effective date] and continues through the close of the Grant's 18-month project period, currently anticipated to end [end date], unless extended in writing by both parties or terminated under Section 8.

3. Connect Communities Responsibilities

- **Program administration:** Manage outreach, marketing, and intake for the SBDG sub-grant program.
- **Application review:** Convene the Connect Communities review committee to evaluate and approve sub-grant applications against the approved eligibility and selection criteria.
- **Technical assistance:** Coordinate required Wisconsin SBDC advising/classes and Connect Communities business advising for sub-recipients, at no cost to the Grant.
- **Programmatic reporting:** Prepare narrative and outcome reporting content for WEDC and provide it to the City in time for combined submission deadlines.
- **Point of contact:** Designate a primary contact, [name/title], authorized to submit award packets and respond to City accounting questions.

4. City Responsibilities

- **Fund custody:** Establish a dedicated fund or account code for SBDG receipts and disbursements, separate from other City funds.
- **Disbursement:** Issue payments to approved sub-recipients upon receipt of a complete award packet from Connect Communities.
- **Draws and financial reporting:** Prepare and submit draw-down/reimbursement requests, incorporating programmatic content supplied by Connect Communities.
- **Audit support:** Support the independent Schedule of Expenditures (SOE) audit required by the WEDC grant agreement, including providing requested records to the auditor.
- **Point of contact:** Designate a primary contact, [Clerk/Treasurer or designee], authorized to process disbursements and respond to Connect Communities' programmatic questions.

5. Division of Labor — At a Glance

Connect Communities	City of Richland Center
Outreach, applications, committee review, award approval	Fund custody
Business advising and technical assistance through SBDC, Connect Communities.	Draw requests disbursement
Programmatic/narrative reporting content	Audit support (SOE audit)

6. Staff Time and Costs

Because all Grant funds are disbursed directly to businesses, the Grant does not reimburse City staff time for accounting support. Any audit cost not covered by the Grant will be addressed under Section 7.

7. Audit Cost

The independent Schedule of Expenditures audit required under the WEDC grant agreement is an unfunded compliance cost.

8. Term, Amendment, and Termination

- **Amendment:** This Agreement may be amended only by written agreement signed by both parties.
- **Termination:** Either party may terminate this Agreement with [30/60] days' written notice. In the event of termination, the parties will cooperate to transition fund custody, records, and any pending disbursements to avoid disruption to awarded sub-recipients.
- **Records retention:** Both parties will retain Grant-related records for the period required by WEDC and applicable law, currently anticipated to be [] years following Grant closeout.

9. Signatures

[Name], [Title] — City of Richland Center

Date: _____

[Name], [Title] — Connect Communities

Date: _____