



OFFICIAL PUBLIC NOTICE

MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2025 AT 5:30 PM

COUNCIL ROOM AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN STREET, RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581

AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES *Entertain a motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the last meeting in lieu of printed copies and approve said minutes or correct and approve said minutes.*

1. Meeting Minutes

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

2. *Reconsider the Application of Guru Ramdas Shaa LLC for a Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Tree Service and Auto Repair Garage or Facility at 789 Sextonville Rd (Tax Parcel ID 276-2100-7581)*
3. Discussion on Furthering Efforts in the Downtown and Connect Communities program (Tepley)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

REPORTS/UPDATES

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

SET NEXT MEETING DATE *Fourth Wednesday of the month - May 28th*

ADJOURNMENT

Posted this 22nd day of April, 2025 by 4:30 PM.
Copy to the official newspaper the Richland Observer.

PLEASE NOTE: That upon reasonable notice, a minimum of 24 hours in advance, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service contact Ashley Oliphant, City Administrator at 450 S. Main St., Richland Center, WI. 53581 or call 608-647-3466. Notice is hereby given that the council members who are not members of this committee may attend this meeting so as to constitute a quorum of the city council. Any such council member attendance will be for information gathering, discussion, and/or related purposes and will not result in the direct decision making by the city council at the committee meeting. The City of Richland Center is an equal opportunity employer, provider, and lender.



MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2025 AT 5:30 PM

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/Gs5HI3Y5hAC?si=-2LHPTCADEBSPFOk](https://youtu.be/Gs5HI3Y5hAC?si=-2LHPTCADEBSPFOk)

COUNCIL ROOM AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN STREET, RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581

CALL TO ORDER Chair Coppernoll called the meeting to order at 5:31PM. A quorum was present. Members present: Todd Coppernoll, Karin Tepley, Mark Jelinek, Ray Wilson, Lisa Miller, and Chris Jarvis. Members absent: Ryan Cairns. Oliphant affirmed proper notice.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Jelinek, seconded by Miller. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE APPLICATION OF SHAWN'S AUTO REPAIR OF RICHLAND CENTER FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN AUTO REPAIR GARAGE AT 184 E. MILL ST. (TAX PARCEL ID 276-2100-0210)

Chair Coppernoll opened the public hearing at 5:32PM. Zoning Administrator Williams reported that the property has a documented history of operation as an automotive repair facility. Conditional Use Permits (CUP) have been issued with the most recent being granted in 2016 for a five-year term. Consequently, the business has been operating without a valid CUP since 2021. A CUP has been requested to obtain compliance. Zoning Administrator Williams recommended approval with the following conditions:

1. The completed project must be consistent with the plans submitted at time of application.
2. The applicant shall grant City Zoning staff access to the project site for inspections to verify compliance.
3. Outside storage of tires, inoperable vehicles, scrap metal, auto parts, and related materials is prohibited.
4. This CUP shall be valid for one (1) year from the date of approval by the Common Council.
5. This CUP is renewable if compliant with the Code of Ordinances and prescribed conditions of this permit.
6. This conditional use permit is not transferable

After three requests for public participation and receiving none, Tepley moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Miller. The public hearing closed at 5:38PM.

CONSIDER THE APPLICATION OF SHAWN'S AUTO REPAIR OF RICHLAND CENTER FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN AUTO REPAIR GARAGE AT 184 E. MILL ST. (TAX PARCEL ID 276-2100-0210)

Motion by Coppernoll to recommend to the Common Council the approval of the application of Shawn's Auto Repair of Richland Center for a conditional use permit to allow an auto repair shop at 184 E. Mill St. (Tax Parcel ID 276-2100-0210) with conditions as presented, seconded by Miller. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE APPLICATION OF A&G OF RICHLAND CENTER FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A CAR WASH AND OIL CHANGING SERVICE AT 1001 US HWY 14 E. (TAX PARCEL ID 276-2811-2000)

Chair Coppernoll opened the public hearing at 5:42PM. Zoning Administrator Williams reported the request for a CUP was solely the result of new ownership and that permitted improvements to the facility were underway. Zoning Administrator Williams recommended approval with the following conditions:

1. The completed project must be consistent with the plans submitted at time of application.
2. The applicant shall grant City Zoning staff access to the project site for inspections to verify compliance.
3. Outside storage of tires, inoperable vehicles, scrap metal, auto parts, and related materials is prohibited.
4. This CUP shall be valid for one (1) year from the date of approval by the Common Council.
5. This CUP is renewable if compliant with the Code of Ordinances and prescribed conditions of this permit.
6. This conditional use permit is not transferable.

After three requests for public participation and receiving none, Tepley moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Wilson. The public hearing closed at 5:42PM.

CONSIDER THE APPLICATION OF A&G OF RICHLAND CENTER FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A CAR WASH AND OIL CHANGING SERVICE AT 1001 US HWY 14 E. (TAX PARCEL ID 276-2811-2000)

Motion by Wilson to recommend to the Common Council the approval of the application of A&G of Richland Center for a conditional use permit to allow a car wash and oil changing service at 1001 US Hwy 14 E. (Tax Parcel ID 276-2811-2000)with conditions as presented, seconded by Tepley. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDER PETITION FOR ANNEXATION FROM MICHAEL LAMONT FOR TAX PARCEL 022-1711-1000

Chair Coppernoll requested petitioner Michael Lamont provide an overview of the request. Mr. Lamont explained he and Ellen Keller-Evans' intent to develop a subdivision on the subject parcel with the next step in the process being annexation. To do so, a certified survey map (CSM) for approximately 12 acres was completed and provided to the Commission. They are working on site/lot layout for several single family zero step homes. It was noted that both Rainbow Drive and Chickadee Lane would be within the City's boundary. Economic Development and Public Works Director Glasbrenner expressed support for the annexation petition and future housing development.

Motion by Tepley to recommend to the Common Council the approval of the petition for annexation from Michael Lamont for Tax Parcel 022-1711-1000, seconded by Wilson. Motion carried 6-0.

REPORTS/UPDATES

Role of the Plan Commission – Administrator Oliphant provided an overview of the Plan Commission's role, highlighting its function as an *advisory* body. The Commission is responsible for preparing the Comprehensive Plan, as well as reviewing and updating it over time. It ensures that any changes to the zoning code remain consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the Commission plays a key role in implementing the plan by overseeing zoning ordinances, conducting plan reviews, and may choose to make recommendations for the implementation of non-regulatory programs. As part of its duties, the Commission also reviews plats, rezoning requests, and applications for conditional use permits.

Oliphant also shared several training and educational resources available online.

1. UW Stevens Point [Center for Land Use Education](#) (CLUE)
 - a. [Plan Commission Handbook and related materials](#)
2. UW-Extension [Land Use Training & Resources](#)
 - a. [Plan Commission Training](#)
3. UW-Extension Local Government Center
 - a. [Community Planning, Land use Regulation and Design](#) FAQ

Comprehensive Plan – Administrator Oliphant provided an update on the progress of implementing the Comprehensive plan over the past three years. Some of the achievements include launching new city and tourism websites, creating consistent branding, and promoting local attractions and lodging. Efforts are underway to develop public spaces, support events, and expand outdoor dining. Modernization of the zoning code, conducting infrastructure assessments and improvements compliant with ADA standards, and collaboration with local partners are ongoing. The City has also enhanced public communication through social media. Some current projects include but are not limited to updating the Community Outdoor Recreation Plan, installing a wayfinding system, conceptual planning for an inclusive park, and conducting a city-wide revaluation.

TID and RDA – Chair Coppernoll asked about the nature of the TID and RDA items and whether they required consideration by the Plan Commission. Attorney Windle explained that the roles of the Common Council's subunits are often vaguely defined, which can create uncertainty regarding their areas of responsibility. He advised against further discussion on these matters by the Plan Commission and recommended that they be addressed by either the Finance Committee or the Common Council.

Other – Chair Coppernoll provided an update on the Panorama development, noting that the developer is awaiting state approval for their revised plans. Director Glasbrenner added that he and Zoning Administrator Williams are working to coordinate a meeting with the development team and the builder. Construction is expected to begin by June 15th.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Request by Tepley: Discussion on furthering efforts in the downtown and [Connect Communities](#) program.
2. Request by Windle: A future amendment to the zoning code to incorporate a provision permitting uses similar to those listed under conditional uses.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, April 23rd at 5:30PM.

ADJOURNMENT Motion to adjourn by Tepley, seconded by Jelinek. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:36PM.

Minutes recorded by Ashley Oliphant

DRAFT

STAFF REPORT

Request for Conditional Use Permit

APPLICANT:	Guru Ramdas Shaa LLC	REQUEST:	Conditional Use Permit
ADDRESS:	789 Sextonville Rd.	TAX PARCEL:	276-2100-7581
BUSINESS:	Shamrock Services	DISTRICT:	Commercial General
MEETINGS:	Planning 1/22 & 4/23 Council 2/4, 3/4, & 4/15/25	DESCRIPTION:	Tree Service and Personal Auto Repair

BACKGROUND

Following a period of vacancy, a new business began operating from the subject property which came to the attention of the Zoning Department. After reviewing zoning records, it was determined that a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) had been issued to a previous auto and tire repair shop in this location but was not transferred to the new business, Shamrock Services. A new CUP must be obtained by Shamrock Services to allow for the operation of an auto and tire repair shop in a commercial general zoning district.

After becoming aware of the violation, a Notice of Violation was issued to Shamrock Services on December 3, 2024, for operating without the required CUP. On December 16th, the applicant applied for a new CUP.

At the March 4, 2025 Common Council meeting, the applicant advised that he was operating a tree service business from the subject property not an auto repair facility. He further explained that the auto repair work conducted onsite was for personal vehicles only. Given the discrepancy in use of the parcel, more information was necessary to determine the appropriate path forward and necessity of CUP.

On April 15, 2025, the Common Council reconsidered the CUP request. During this meeting, Attorney Windle advised the application could either:

1. Be denied as a tree service is not listed as a permissible or conditional use within the zoning code.
2. Grant a conditional use for an auto repair facility but not a tree service.
3. Take no action pending an ordinance amendment to allow for the stated uses.

The Common Council directed Attorney Windle to review the matter in conjunction with the Plan Commission.

ORDINANCE

408.04 CONDITIONAL USES IN A "C-DT" CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT. (4) Auto Repair garage or facility.

No use is listed in the Zoning Code related to tree services

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION

	Yes	No
Is the project consistent with the Comprehensive Plan?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can the request demonstrate adequate public facilities, including roads and drainage, & utilities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the request minimize adverse effects on the natural environment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The request will not create undue traffic congestion.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The request will not adversely affect public health, safety, and welfare.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The request conforms to all applicable provisions of the code.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CONDITIONS FOR APPROVAL

1. The use of the parcel must remain consistent with the use approved by the Common Council.
2. The applicant shall grant City Zoning staff access to the subject site for inspections to verify compliance.
3. Outside storage of tires, inoperable vehicles, scrap metal, auto parts, and related materials is prohibited.
4. This CUP shall be valid for one (1) year from the date of approval by the Common Council.
5. This CUP is renewable if compliant with the Code of Ordinances and prescribed conditions of this permit.
6. This conditional use permit is not transferable.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Some of the available options are as follows:

- a. Recommend CUP denial as the use is not permissible. The business would need to cease operations unless an ordinance amendment is adopted allowing the use.
- b. Recommend approval of a CUP for an auto repair facility only. Follow the enforcement process if a tree service continues operation on premises.
- c. If it is believed that a tree service could be a valuable addition to the zoning district, recommend an amendment to the zoning code to allow tree services as a permissible or conditional use.
- d. Other as recommended by the City Attorney



Main Street and Connect Communities Program

Program Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2025			
Lead Division: Business and Community Development			
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Revised		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant	<input type="checkbox"/> Loan	<input type="checkbox"/> Tax Credit	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical Assistance

Introduction

Background Information: WEDC provides technical assistance to communities in the planning, management, and implementation of strategic development projects in downtowns and urban neighborhoods. This includes Main Street support and Connect Communities, which is aimed at supplementing the Main Street program by expanding services to more downtowns across the state. WEDC will maintain partnerships and develop new ones with other state and local public and private entities such as the UW-Extension and USDA Rural Development to provide services to municipalities undertaking downtown revitalization projects.

WEDC will annually develop a plan that describes the objectives of the state Main Street Program and the methods for 1) coordinating with public and private sector, 2) soliciting private sector funds for revitalization of business areas, and 3) helping municipalities engage in revitalization with help from interested individuals and organizations¹. WEDC matches technical assistance from our own staff, the National Main Street Center and outside consultants to needs of respective municipalities and non-profit organizations. WEDC will also work with local communities to set strategies to solicit funding from the private sector in those communities to support the local downtown revitalization effort.

Program’s Purpose: The Main Street program is designed to increase local capacity to carry out projects and initiatives, increase the organizational effectiveness of entities working on revitalization issues, increase the public and private investment in downtown areas and, by extension, reduce vacancy and increase property values in the Main Street member districts.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants: Eligible entities for Main Street and Connect Communities are communities or urban neighborhoods with a central or core business district and demonstrated local commitment to preservation and revitalization activities. Regional entities may apply for the Connect Communities program on behalf of multiple communities (1,000 or less in population) within their region. Regional coordinators commit to meeting program attendance, sharing information and collecting annual reporting information from participants.

Eligible Use of Funds: As a technical assistance program, no funding is directly provided. Technical assistance is given in the form of training, façade renderings, small business consultations, and hiring of outside consultants to address topics such as business recruitment and retention, branding, historic preservation planning and event development.

Matching: There are no matching requirements for this technical assistance.

¹ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(c).

Available Incentives

FY25: \$250,000 (non-aids contracting)

Award Sizes: As a technical assistance program, awards are provided as staff time for approved, enrolled communities.

Activities and Expected Outcomes

Assist 35 Main Street communities, one new community in FY25; 89 Connect Communities, plus 10 new communities in FY25, and 150 small businesses.

Impact: Communities should see an increase in their: local capacity to carry out projects and initiatives, increase the organizational effectiveness of entities working on revitalization issues, increase the public and private investment in downtown areas and, by extension, reduce vacancy and increase property values in the Main Street member districts.

Metrics:

Main Street – includes monthly reporting on all Connect Communities metrics, plus the following:

- Number of events and attendance
- New open or closed housing units
- Development or demolition and value
- Property sales or use changes

Connect Communities – annual survey includes:

- New and expanded businesses, jobs created
- Closed or moved out businesses, jobs lost
- Private investments in downtown, public investments in downtown
- Events of initiative launched
- Wisconsin Main Street services used
- Volunteer hours for downtown efforts

Application Guideline

Timeline: The Main Street application process is competitive. Main Street applicants must be an active Connect Communities participant for at least one year prior to applying for Main Street. Eligible applicants must submit a letter of intent to apply for Main Street to the Program Manager by December 1st of the prior year.

Communities interested in the Connect Communities program submit an application to be considered in one of two annual application periods.

Review Considerations: WEDC will take the following into account when considering Main Street or Connect Communities applications²:

² Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(f).

- Organizational capability: An applicant’s ability to bring financial and volunteer resources together according to the National Main Street Center’s four-point approach to downtown revitalization.
- Public Sector Commitment³: The participation from local government in the form of financial and staff commitment to the local downtown revitalization effort.
- Private Sector Commitment⁴: The participation from local businesses and individuals in the form of financial⁵ and volunteer commitment to the local downtown revitalization effort.
- Financial Capacity: The ability of the community to bring together comprehensive financial resources to adequately support the downtown revitalization program. For Main Street Communities, this includes funds to employ a local program manager to manage the effort for at least 5 years⁶. Communities with populations of 5,000 or more must employ a full-time, paid program manager and meet a minimum budget requirement. Communities of less than 5,000 must employ a half-time program manager and meet a minimum budget requirement. A community’s ability and commitment to hiring design consultants⁷ and providing training⁸ will also be taken into consideration.
- Need: Applicants must show that they need the Connect Communities or Main Street Program. This need is exhibited by vacancy rate, excessive competition from competing areas, blight, building deterioration, and business mix issues.
- Physical Capacity: An applicant’s ability to show that they have sufficient building stock, businesses and a recognizable downtown district.
- Historic Integrity: An applicant’s existing historic resources downtown and genuine interest in saving and restoring their historic structures. WEDC will employ a Design Specialist to assist Main Street communities with design plans.

In addition to these criteria, local Main Street communities must commit to training and sharing downtown revitalization information with communities that do not participate in the Main Street Program⁹.

How to Apply:

Main Street:

- The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation will annually select up to three new Main Street communities based on applications submitted to WEDC. Main Street applicants must be an active Connect Communities participant for at least one year prior to applying for Main Street. Eligible applicants must submit a letter of intent to apply for Main Street to the Program Manager by December 1st of the prior year. Applicants will then host an on-site workshop with local stakeholders to discuss the application process, followed by completion of the written application and in-person interview.

³ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(f)1.

⁴ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(f)1.

⁵ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(f)2.

⁶ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(f)3.

⁷ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(f)4.

⁸ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(f)5.

⁹ Wis. Stat. § 238.127(2)(h).

- The Main Street application process is competitive. When applications are received, they go to an outside committee that is selected annually. Committee members have backgrounds related to downtown development. The committee will review applications and in-person presentations from applicants and make a recommendation to management. As this is a technical assistance program, no funds are awarded.

Connect Communities:

- Communities interested in the Connect Communities program submit an application to be considered in one of two annual application periods. Applications are reviewed by WEDC staff, and the recommendations are approved by management.

Award Process: When Main Street applications are received, they go to an outside committee that is selected annually. Main Street communities are approved by WEDC leadership annually while Connect Communities are approved semi-annually.

Performance Reporting: Main Street participants will be required to submit a periodic performance report documenting new businesses, new jobs, buildings rehabilitated, public improvements, attendance at promotional events, new downtown housing units, volunteer hours, as well as any other contract deliverable.

Connect Communities will report annually on local activities including investment, businesses, jobs, volunteer activity and accomplishments for the duration of their program participation.

WEDC may impose additional reporting requirements to evaluate project performance and to ensure compliance with contract deliverables.

Revision History

Program Inception – 1987 Wisconsin Act 109 – Fiscal Year 1987

- 7/1/2019: Added statutory citations; simplified Program Description; clarified Expected Outcomes.
- 7/1/2020: Clarified awards and application process and performance reporting requirements.
- 7/1/2022: Expands eligibility for regional entities to apply for Connect Community status on behalf of smaller communities.



SUCCESSFUL COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS DON'T JUST HAPPEN.

They need to be planned and nurtured. Their prosperity requires interest and action from many stakeholders who share a vision for the community.

WEDC's downtown development programs are designed to help communities identify necessary initiatives, stakeholders and resources to make their downtown or urban commercial district a more vibrant and engaging place to live, work and play.

Our programs are designed around The Main Street Approach®, which provides a holistic framework for downtown revitalization focused on four key points:

Organization establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among the various groups that have a stake in the commercial district.

Design works to create a safe, inviting environment for shoppers, workers and visitors while preserving a place's historic character.

Economic Vitality works to build a commercial district that responds to the needs of today's consumers while promoting economically profitable businesses and properties.

Promotion communicates unique characteristics, cultural traditions and community pride to create a positive image and attract interest in and traffic to your district.

DOWNTOWNS AND HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND IN WISCONSIN'S OVERALL ECONOMY.



Photos courtesy of Main Street Marshfield, Sturgeon Bay Visitor Center, and Eagle River Revitalization Program.

WEDC.ORG



Item 3.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

ACHIEVING YOUR VISION FOR REVITALIZATION

MAIN STREET | CONNECT COMMUNITIES



RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Participants in both the Wisconsin Main Street and Connect Community Programs enjoy access to a wide variety of educational resources, training and tools designed to further local revitalization initiatives, including:

- Regional workshops on pertinent topics
- Annual conference programming
- Regular webinars
- Case studies and best practices
- Regional networking events
- Manager/board orientation/training
- Toolkits on relevant topics such as market analysis, volunteer management, event production, design guidelines, marketing, etc.

WISCONSIN MAIN STREET communities receive intensive technical assistance from WEDC's downtown development staff and consultants to provide tailored support, design assistance and topical solutions for local challenges as well as targeted support for local businesses and property owners.

OUTCOMES

Downtown development is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor, and local outcomes are as unique as the communities they represent. Ranging in size from 700 to 600,000 residents, each program has made strides in achieving local goals. Participants commonly report increased storefront occupancy, improved environment and aesthetics, increased property values and an expanded customer base, among other outcomes.

PROGRAMS



MAIN STREET

The **Wisconsin Main Street** program was created in 1987, and is affiliated with the National Main Street Center. The **Main Street America™** program is designed to provide technical support and training for organizations dedicated to downtown or commercial corridor revitalization activities. The program is flexible in its ability to accommodate a wide range of community sizes and situations. Successful programs will have established a strong local base of support which enables them to undertake a broad spectrum of initiatives specifically designed to foster local success.

CONNECT COMMUNITIES

Created in 2013, the Connect Communities program is designed to provide training and networking for communities or organizations working on revitalization topics. Connect Communities is a great option for communities beginning new revitalization efforts, those looking to provide additional resources to support local commercial district businesses and property owners, and individuals interested in networking with other professionals and gaining useful information on strategies and techniques to address common revitalization challenges.



APPLICATION INFORMATION

MAIN STREET

Applicants to the Wisconsin Main Street program must be organizations focused on downtown or urban commercial district issues. The organization must have paid staff and an adequate budget for carrying out activities (\$40,000 in communities under 5,000 or \$70,000 in larger communities).

Applications are accepted annually in the spring, and interviews will be held with eligible applicants to determine organization readiness. Up to 3 new communities will be admitted to the program in the following fiscal year.

Participating organizations must complete regular reporting and meet annual attendance requirements to remain in the Wisconsin Main Street Program.

CONNECT COMMUNITIES

Applicants for Connect Communities program may be any organization or governmental entity interested in pursuing revitalization activities at the local level.

Applications are accepted twice annually in the spring and fall, and up to 20 new communities will be admitted to the program in each fiscal year.

Participating organizations must complete annual reporting and meet annual attendance requirements to remain in the Connect Communities program.

MAIN STREET AND CONNECT COMMUNITIES PROGRAMS

REVITALIZING COMMUNITIES IN WISCONSIN

Downtowns and historic commercial districts play an important role in their communities and in Wisconsin's overall economy, functioning not only as prominent employment and business centers, but as the cultural and civic heart of the community. Successful commercial districts don't just happen. They need to be planned and nurtured. Their prosperity requires interest and action from many stakeholders.

How it works

Two programs exist to assist Wisconsin communities with revitalization efforts: Main Street and Connect Communities. These programs help local leaders leverage the unique assets of their downtowns and commercial districts, providing access to resources and networking opportunities.

Participants in both the **Wisconsin Main Street Program** and the **Connect Communities Program** receive operational assistance designed to facilitate revitalization of downtowns and urban commercial districts. These programs benefit a diverse array of communities by size and geography, supporting the efforts of both emerging and established revitalization programs. Resources provided to program participants by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) include:

- Regular training including regional workshops, webinars, and discussion calls
- Toolkits, case studies, and best practice library
- Staff and board orientation
- Business and property owner training and resources
- Annual awards recognition opportunities

Eligibility requirements

Participating communities must have an organization or group focused on downtown/historic district issues, commit to participating in education and training, and fulfill annual reporting requirements. Communities will be required to sign a participation agreement with WEDC, and Connect Communities will pay an annual participation fee of \$200.

Application and selection process

Connect Communities applications are accepted twice per year: in the spring and in the fall. Main Street applications are due annually in mid-April.

APPLICATION DETAILS

A competitive application process is used to identify communities that are ready and able to advance downtown revitalization initiatives.

Both Main Street and Connect Communities applicants should demonstrate the following:

- Defined downtown/commercial district
- Need for assistance
- Organizational stability
- Availability of local support and resources

Main Street applicants must also have paid staff, meet minimum budget requirements, and have successfully completed at least one year in the Connect Communities Program.

For more information about the Main Street and Connect Communities programs, contact a WEDC regional economic development director.

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