



MEMO

To: Patrick Fuller, Assembly Chief Clerk
Jeff Renk, Senate Chief Clerk

From: Melissa Hughes, Secretary and CEO

CC: WEDC Board of Directors

Date: November 18, 2020

Re: WEDC Calendar Year 2021 Economic Development project report

Pursuant to Wis. Statute §239.07(1), the following is the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's (WEDC) report approved for submittal by its Board of Directors on November 17, 2020, identifying the economic development projects WEDC intends to develop and implement during calendar year 2021 (CY21).

WEDC develops and implements its programs and budget on a fiscal year basis (July 1 to June 30), which is then presented to the Board of Directors for approval at the annual meeting in July. The Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) programs and budget were approved by the Board on July 21, 2020. On November 17, 2020, the board approved a budget amendment to incorporate new dollars and programming related to the federal CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund. A copy of the revised budget is attached with this memo. In early 2021, WEDC will also begin its annual planning process to determine which economic development programs and operations priorities will be incorporated into the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) plan and budget.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for Wisconsin's economy, hitting small businesses particularly hard, especially those reliant on in-person patronage. WEDC detailed the virus's wide-ranging impact on Wisconsin's businesses, communities and people in a report to the Legislature entitled [Wisconsin Tomorrow - An Economy for All](#). Realizing how quickly and dramatically COVID-19 was affecting Wisconsin's economy, WEDC shifted our focus significantly in the Spring. By April 2020, we had effectively rerouted all available program funding and operational budget toward pandemic response and recovery initiatives, with special attention to underserved communities. At the onset of the current fiscal year, WEDC continued to pivot and respond by rapidly deploying \$78 million in federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding while also continuing to resource and activate its regular programs as appropriate across the state.

THINK•MAKE•HAPPEN.

WEDC's unique structure has allowed us to shift and direct resources where most needed in order to navigate these uncertain times, and WEDC will continue to re-evaluate and deploy its resources as we face ongoing economic challenges in the coming year.

Fiscal Year 2022 Planning and Implementation

WEDC establishes its budget based on a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year calendar, consistent with the timeline by which the Legislature allocates funds. Once the plan has been drafted, it is presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

The planning process is collaborative to allow for the input from staff, partners, WEDC Committee and Board members, and stakeholders. Leadership expects to begin to craft the FY22 operating plan and budget during the third quarter of the current fiscal year. Outreach with stakeholders, feedback from staff, and evaluation of program activity and outcomes will be used to assess priorities for the new fiscal year. Executive leadership, divisional vice presidents and the policy and finance teams work closely to create a fiscally responsible and sustainable operating budget to allow WEDC to deliver innovative and effective economic development programs. The FY22 plan is expected to be presented for review to the Board's Budget and Audit Committee and then forwarded for approval by the full Board at WEDC's Annual Board of Directors meeting scheduled for July 2021

As the pandemic continues to threaten both lives and livelihoods in Wisconsin, WEDC remains committed to supporting the businesses, communities and people most vulnerable to the effects of disease spread and the economic hardship left in its wake.

Please visit our website at wedc.org for up-to-date information on all WEDC's programs, initiatives and activities.