



Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date: October 6, 2026

Agenda Item: Presentation by Thrive ED on Proposed Changes to its Service Delivery Model

Staff Contact (name, email, phone): Mason Becker, mbecker@whitewater-wi.gov, 262.473.0148

BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

Thrive Economic Development (Thrive ED) is the economic development organization serving Greater Jefferson County. Thrive ED is the private counterpart to the public Jefferson County Economic Development Consortium (JCEDC) of which the City of Whitewater is a member. This public-private model has been in place for roughly a decade and gives the City access to regional expertise in business retention and expansion, business attraction, site selection, housing development, and marketing that would be difficult to replicate at the local level.

The Community Development Department enjoys a strong, collaborative working relationship with Thrive ED. The Community Development Director, representing the City of Whitewater, currently serves as the vice-chair for JCEDC. Staff working on behalf of both organizations are in regular contact and Thrive ED has been a responsive and dependable partner, whether connecting the City with prospects and developers, supporting local businesses, or contributing to conversations on housing and workforce. The department views Thrive ED as a natural extension of the City's own economic development capacity, much the same way Walworth County Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) supports efforts in Walworth County.

Thrive ED is now proposing changes to how the organization is supported and structured. The proposal, referred to as the Regional Prosperity Hub, would establish a partnership with the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation intended to add staffing capacity and long-term financial stability. Thrive ED would remain an independent nonprofit governed by its own board, with a new Public Sector Committee to provide a forum for municipal input. The proposal also contemplates a broader regional service area, an updated municipal participation model, and changes to the current JCEDC governance structure.

Deb Reinbold, President/Executive Director of Thrive ED, will present the proposal to the Common Council. The purpose of this item is to introduce the proposed changes and provide Council with an opportunity to ask questions ahead of any future action.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

None, this presentation is for informational purposes only.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

The current proposal would result in a lower annual payment from the City. This could potentially be offset by separate services paid for through other fees, under a separate service agreement. Any change to the City's annual contribution would be brought back to the Common Council for consideration as part of a future action.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This item is informational only, and no action is requested at this time. Staff anticipates that a resolution related to the proposed changes will come before the Common Council at a future meeting.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

Thrive ED – Regional Prosperity Hub presentation
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