



Community Development Authority

Meeting Date: December 9, 2025

Agenda Item: Memo regarding future Whitewater WindUp Program continuation

Staff Contact (name, email, phone): Mason Becker, mbecker@whitewater-wi.gov, 262.443.4458

BACKGROUND

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

As the CDA board is aware, the successful Whitewater WindUp program recently concluded, with presentations from representatives of the participating businesses, BaristaCats Café and Stellar Vintage Clothing. This program was a success, in that it generated a good amount of community participation and engagement and placed two new businesses within the city's downtown. The process included prospective businesses making pitches to a panel of judges, attending business workshops, and more. The selected winning businesses received one year of paid-for rent at their current locations.

In September 2025, the city applied for, with the assistance of Thrive ED, another round of funding through the WEDC Small Business Development Grant (SBDG) program. Unfortunately, we learned on December 4, 2025, our application was not selected for a funding award in FY 2026. The process was again highly competitive, with WEDC receiving 48 applications for approx. \$8 million in available funding.

At this time, the Community Development Department does not have immediate plans or a source of funding to launch another round of the Whitewater WindUp program. However, if desired, our department can continue investigating new sources of funding.

Additionally, I was recently approached by one of the tenants in the Innovation Center about interest in launching a revised version of the program, that would focus on technology startups. This could be an avenue to discuss and pursue, if the CDA board has interest.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

To be determined, depending on future sources of funding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

No formal action is needed, though staff would like feedback from the CDA board regarding interest in continuing this program and future program concept ideas.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

- A previous marketing flyer for the WindUp program is attached.