

# WEDC: Menomonee Falls receives state grant to support redevelopment of historic downtown fire station

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Iconic two-story building being transformed into restaurant and banquet hall

MENONOMEЕ FALLS – The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) today announced it has awarded the Village of Menomonee Falls a \$79,300 grant to support the redevelopment of the city’s old fire station into a new casual dining restaurant and banquet hall.

The Community Development Investment Grant will be used to help offset the costs of renovating the 89-year-old two-story building on Appleton Avenue. Chris Leffler, who owns Leff’s Lucky Town in Wauwatosa and Revere’s Wells Street Tavern in Delafield, will own and operate the new restaurant, which is expected to open later this year.

WEDC also awarded Leffler up to \$257,600 in Historic Preservation Tax Credits for the project.

“The new restaurant will preserve a historic building in downtown Menomonee Falls that is a key part of the village’s legacy, while at the same time adding momentum to the redevelopment of the historic downtown,” said WEDC Secretary and CEO Mark R. Hogan, who made the grant announcement in Menomonee Falls Tuesday as part of Wisconsin Main Street Day. “I applaud village officials and Chris Leffler for working together on a project that will honor the past and provide opportunities for the future.”

Plans calls for renovating the 8,600-square-foot building into an establishment that will hold about 300 people. The renovation will honor the history of the building and will use its unique historic features to add character and charm throughout the restaurant. In addition to the dining area, the restaurant will include two outdoor patio spaces.

The fire station, which at one time was the village hall, was built in 1929 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was used as a fire station from 1966 until the summer of 2015, when two new fire stations were constructed to accommodate the village's growth and to share resources with the neighboring community of Lannon. The reuse of the fire station will create a unique destination downtown that is supported by numerous business owners, community leaders and village officials.

WEDC's Community Development Investment Grant Program supports community development and redevelopment efforts, primarily in downtown areas. The matching grants are awarded based on the ability of applicants to demonstrate the economic impact of the proposed project, including public and private partnership development, financial need, and use of sustainable downtown development practices.

Since the program's inception in 2013, WEDC has awarded more than \$17 million in Community Development Investment Grants for projects expected to generate more than \$233 million in capital investments statewide.

Tuesday's announcement came as Secretary Hogan joined Lt. Governor Kleefisch, WEDC Deputy Secretary and COO Tricia Braun and WEDC Vice President of Business and Community Development Barb LaMue in visiting eight communities as part of the second annual Wisconsin Main Street Day. Main Street Day celebrates the accomplishments of Wisconsin's downtowns, and highlights the success of the Wisconsin Main Street and Connect Communities Programs, which provide technical support and guidance to downtown groups.

Menomonee Falls has been a Connect Communities member since 2013.

In addition to Menomonee Falls, the Wisconsin Main Street Day tour included the following communities: Ashland (Ashland County); Hillsboro (Vernon County); Little Chute (Outagamie County); Mayville (Dodge County); Platteville (Grant County); Racine (Racine County); and Wisconsin Rapids (Wood County).