

Dept. of Administration: DOA visit highlights \$7.8 million state investment for West Bend infrastructure and businesses

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West Bend, Wis. - Today, Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld toured the West Bend Riverwalk project and downtown businesses as part of a visit to highlight state investments. Governor Tony Evers made a combined \$5.1 million investment in small businesses in the City of West Bend as part of overall pandemic relief efforts, and Washington County received an overall \$63.6 million investment, including a \$2.6 million grant through the Neighborhood Investment Fund.

The Secretary-designee, City Administrator Jay Shambeau and Parks Director Mike Jentsch toured the Riverwalk project currently under construction that was funded through the Neighborhood Investment Fund, part of a \$230 million investment from Governor Evers to help communities deliver vital public services.

“Thank you to Governor Evers and Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld for awarding the City of West Bend with a \$2,655,000 Neighborhood Investment Fund Grant,” said City Administrator Jay Shambeau. “The Downtown Riverwalk project will be catalytic for the Downtown area. This project has long been anticipated by our business community, visitors, and recreational enthusiasts. Improving the Riverwalk will increase economic development opportunities for building owners. The new underpass will provide pedestrian access to North Main Street businesses and residents.”

The tour also involved stops at several downtown West Bend businesses that

received \$10,000 Main Street Bounceback Grants, including Urban Farm Girl, a home décor shop, and Augustine Financial, which offers financial planning services, and the recently renovated Bend Theater, at the heart of downtown West Bend.

“The Governor made a significant investment here in West Bend for overall pandemic recovery, and the impact of those dollars is already being felt today,” said DOA Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld. “When it comes to helping our main street businesses and communities recover, these investments are helping our downtowns bounce back and thrive.”

Governor Tony Evers announced the [Main Street Bounceback grant program](#) in the spring of 2021 with the first grants made in August 2021, to help small businesses and communities grow by populating vacant storefronts with new businesses and nonprofits. In September 2022, Governor Evers announced state will [provide an additional \\$25 million investment](#) into the program, for a total investment of \$100 million to help entrepreneurs open new businesses or expand their existing operations. Overall investments supporting small businesses across the state total over \$1 billion.

The Neighborhood Investment Fund program was initially announced in [August 2021](#) and is administered by the Wisconsin DOA. A second round of investments were [announced in May](#). Grants awarded range in size from \$1 million to a maximum of \$15 million and are funded through the American Rescue Plan Act. A complete list of grant awardees and additional information can be found on the [program website](#).

Visit BadgerBounceback.wi.gov to view pandemic-related assistance information as well as the latest data and success stories about how COVID-relief investments are making a difference across the state. For updates on other recovery-related grant opportunities, sign up for the [Badger Bounceback update list](#).