



MEMORANDUM

TO: Community and Economic Development Committee (CEDC)

FROM: Kara Homan, AICP Director of Community & Economic Development

DATE: December 13, 2023

RE: Resolution of Support to allow Fox Commons Properties, LLC to pursue WEDC CDI Grants to develop “Fox Den” Public Market

Dark Horse Development and Boldt Holdings (Developers)/Fox Commons Properties, LLC (Owner/Applicant) is requesting the City provide a resolution of support (attached) for their Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Community Development Investment (CDI) Grant Application. An overview of the WEDC CDI Grant program is attached to this memo.

The developer is pursuing CDI grant funding to support enhancements to the central atrium of the “Fox Commons”; and to develop a public market, termed “Fox Den” on level one of “Fox Commons.” An overview of their CDI Grant proposal and a conceptual diagram of “Fox Den” are attached.

In the past, the WEDC required the municipality to serve as the grant applicant, and ‘pass thru’ grant funding to the private developer. Recently, the WEDC shifted their grant process, allowing the private developer to be the applicant, so long as resolution of support from the municipality is provided. Under the new model, there is no administrative burden nor fiscal impact to the City of Appleton.

We have determined the proposal aligns with both the College North Neighborhood Plan, as well as the City’s Comprehensive Plan recommendations, as follows:

“Enhancing the City Center Plaza is seen as an opportunity to support a more livable downtown. Incorporating a public market into the existing plaza... is seen as an opportunity to help activate the space and provide additional services to the growing number of downtown residents.”

- *Appleton Comprehensive Plan pg 292*

“The conceptual vision involves increasing the transparency of the structure to promote the visual connectivity to the street and to permit the activity to “spill out” to the streets and engage pedestrians. The planning process identified strong support for a public market concept, which would create another year-round attraction in the heart of downtown.”

- *Appleton Comprehensive Plan pg 317*

“Development Concept #28. City Center Plaza. Addressed by the City’s Downtown Plan, the City Center is a key feature of the downtown redevelopment framework in the creation of a linear pedestrian friendly corridor more prominently linking the library and College Ave.

Adaptive enhancements should include:

- Remodeling the interior space to direct people between College Avenue and the Public Library.”

-College North Neighborhood Plan pg 38

Staff Recommendation:

The Resolution of Support for the Dark Horse Development/Fox Commons Properties, LLC WEDC CDI grant application **BE APPROVED**.

Attachments:

Resolution of Support

Fox Den Project Overview

Fox Preliminary Design Concept

WEDC CDI Grant Overview