



CDBG Advisory Board | City of Racine, Wisconsin

Agenda Briefing Memorandum

AGENDA DATE:

CDBG Advisory Board – March 9, 2026

Common Council – March 17, 2026

PREPARED BY: Brittany T. Brown, Compliance Specialist

REVIEWED BY: Veronica Seymour, Housing Manager

SUBJECT:

Communication sponsored by Mayor Mason requesting an allocation of **\$400,000** of CDBG Small Business funds to support the Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC) Downtown Business Attraction forgivable loan.

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS:

The goal of this initiative is to reduce first floor commercial space vacancies in downtown Racine. Downtown Racine has been struggling to retain retail companies and as of the Fall 2025, there were 40 vacant commercial spaces. To attract new retail to this corridor a forgivable loan was established by RCEDC.

In addition to the proposed \$400,000 CDBG Small Business allocation, the following entities are making funding available for this initiative.

- The Downtown Racine Corporation (DRC), a designated Main Street organization, has funding available to support a grant program. It is anticipated that approximately \$7,000 in grant funds will be available to eligible applicants.
- Racine Development Group (RDG), Regional Loan Fund (RLF) has approximately \$360,000 available. To assist in reducing downtown vacancies and leverage the City CDBG loan program along with the DRC grants. Staff are seeking the support of the RDG Loan Committee to dedicate the RDG RLF funds exclusively to the targeted areas downtown (*Map*).



This coordinated effort aligns the city, RCEDC, DRC, and RDG resources to revitalize downtown Racine, attract new retail, and strengthen the local commercial corridor.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

There are sufficient funds available within the CDBG Available Loan Fund (ALF) Small Business account to support this allocation.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the CDBG Advisory Board approves the allocation of \$400,000 in CDBG Small Business funds for RCEDC Downtown Business Attraction forgivable loan.