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Bringing a vibrant space to Belleville

Village aims to transform unused lot into downtown courtyard and promenade

BELLEVILLE, WI. MAY 8, 2025 – Downtowns are a community's central hub and Belleville is taking steps to create a vibrant courtyard that will bring residents together as the village grows.

Belleville is one of 27 Wisconsin communities that received a Vibrant Spaces Grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC). More than \$1.1 million in grant funds were awarded last month.

Belleville will use its \$50,000 grant funds to transform a key community hub where the village's major park meets the downtown area into a courtyard and promenade.

"We are actively working to beautify Belleville, and the Vibrant Spaces Project is a key part of that vision," said Gab Altenbernd, Belleville village administrator. "With exciting new businesses opening downtown and a comprehensive park master plan underway, this project allows us to unite these major developments at a central point where the village's core comes together."

WEDC Deputy Secretary and COO Sam Ridders was in Belleville Thursday to learn more about the project.

"Downtowns are the hearts of our communities and we know that part of what makes them so special is they serve as a place where people can gather," Ridders said. "Belleville recognizes the need to create a space where folks can do just that and this courtyard and promenade will help connect everything going on in Belleville."

This central space will be updated with vibrant landscaping and improved water runoff systems to support sustainability. The project will also include expanded and accessible parking, ADA-compliant pathways, and courtyard seating. Seasonal amenities, such as heaters, chairs, and umbrellas, will create an environment that strengthens the connection between nature and the neighborhood.

Altenbernd said the goal is to transform a dull space into a place that encourages community interaction and is welcoming to all while also boosting foot traffic to downtown businesses, supporting public events, and fostering a sense of pride and belonging in the village.

"We're creating a more connected, attractive, and welcoming environment that reflects the energy and growth happening throughout Belleville," Altenbernd said.

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