

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION**

DATE: February 13, 2026

TO: Supervisor Marcelia Nicholson, Chair, County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Celia Benton, Economic Development and Real Estate Services Director,
Department of Administrative Services

SUBJECT: From the Economic Development and Real Estate Services Director,
Department of Administrative Services providing an informational report
on Economic Development and Real Estate Services year-to-date 2026
update (Reference File 26-39).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REAL ESTATE SERVICES ACTIVITY YEAR-TO-DATE

Building Bridges Small Business Program Activity

Total number of entrepreneurs served: 20
Number of active projects supported: 6
Estimated investments supported: \$465,000
Estimated jobs created or sustained: 50
Community Outreach Events: 11
Grand Openings/Ribbon Cuttings: 2

Economic Development and Real Estate Activity

Active Option Agreements: 4
Active Development Agreements: 1
Active Request for Proposals: 1
Active Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Grants: 3
Current Dollars Utilized in Milwaukee County Revolving Loan Funds (as of 12/31/2025):
\$897,990.73
Active Leases Under Development: 5
Property Sales Information: See Reference File 26-38

Building Bridges Activity Highlights

Since January 2026, we have had meaningful engagement and advancement among our Building Bridges grant recipients. \$60,000 was disbursed to six grant recipients, supporting projects totaling \$465,000 in capital improvements. We also planned and hosted, in partnership with the County Executive and project partners, two Building Bridges showcase events: a work in progress tour of Tootsie's Tea new commercial kitchen, retail and community space on the Near West Side of Milwaukee and a ribbon cutting and tasting event/grand opening for Plant Joy Deli, Milwaukee County's first vegan deli in Wauwatosa.

Prepared By:

Celia Benton

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Economic Development Director, Department of Administrative Services

cc: David Crowley, County Executive
MaryJo Meyers, Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services
Liz Sumner, Comptroller
Community, Environment and Economic Development Committee Members
Clarence H. Kinnard, Committee Coordinator
Jane Geyer, Research Analyst