



**Department of City Development**  
City Plan Commission  
Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee  
Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation

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October 6, 2014

Ald. Joe Davis, Sr., Chair  
Community and Economic Development Committee  
Milwaukee Common Council  
City Hall, Room 205

Dear Ald. Davis:

This letter responds to your request that the Dept. of City Development provide periodic updates to the Community and Economic Development Committee regarding commercial revitalization activities.

Commercial revitalization grant programs

Through the third quarter of 2014, the Department approved the following commercial revitalization grants:

<b>Grant type</b>	<b>Number of grants</b>	<b>Amount awarded</b>	<b>Private investment leveraged</b>	<b>Jobs created</b>
City-wide white box (neighborhood commercial districts)	7	\$152,849.80	\$172,511.50	n/a
City-wide white box (downtown districts)	4	\$100,000.00	\$180,591.00	n/a
Façade and signage	48	\$319,717.04	\$715,276.85	n/a
Retail investment fund	5	\$191,870.00	\$812,478.00	39
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>\$764,436.84</b>	<b>\$1,880,857.35</b>	<b>39</b>

These grants are awarded on a reimbursable basis. These grant awards will become expenditures at the point that the proposed work is completed by the grant recipients, expenditures are verified by staff, and reimbursement is provided to the recipients.

In addition to grants made by these programs, targeted commercial revitalization resources have been provided to two new businesses located in the Midtown area.

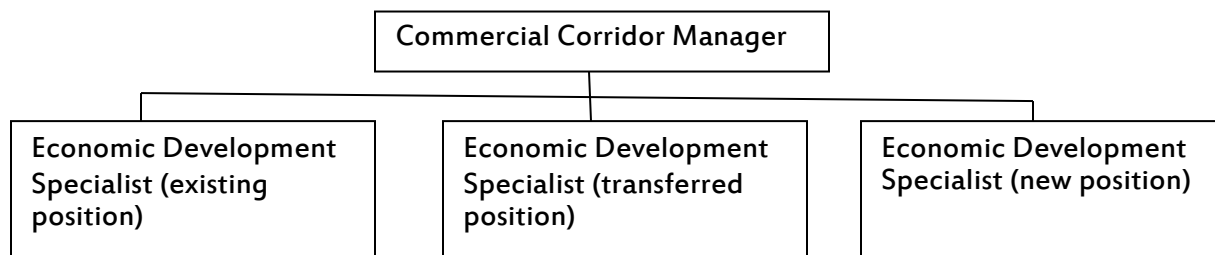
Hiring additional staff

As indicated in the Commercial Revitalization White Paper presented earlier to the committee, the Department seeks to increase the number of full time staff assigned to commercial revitalization from two to four. The following progress has been made toward this goal:



- The Common Council has approved the creation of a new position, Commercial Corridor Manager. Twenty applications were received for this position; eight applicants have been interviewed, and second interviews will be held this week. It is our hope to make a job offer within the next 10 days.
- An economic development specialist assigned to the Commissioner's Office has been reassigned to the commercial corridor team, and will assume fulltime duties with the team upon the hiring of the Commercial Corridor Manager.
- Mayor Barrett's 2015 budget proposal includes the creation of an additional economic development specialist for the team. Depending upon the evaluation of the new manager, this request may be converted to a request for an administrative position. If approved, the position will be filled in early 2015.

These personnel changes are reflected in the following new organizational chart for the Commercial Corridor team.



New lending resources for small business

"Growing Prosperity," the economic development agenda approved by the Common Council in September 2014, recommends that the City of Milwaukee join forces with the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corp. (WWBIC) to bring the Kiva Zip business loan program to Milwaukee. Kiva Zip provides 0% interest, no-fee loans to small businesses. These loans are "crowd-funded" and borrowers are assisted by local economic development organizations such as Business Improvement Districts and Chambers of Commerce that play the role of "trustee." Mayor Barrett's 2015 budget proposal includes \$25,000 to support this initiative.

In mid-September, a fulltime Kiva volunteer arrived in Milwaukee to develop the network of trustees and build a pipeline of borrowers. We hope to officially launch the Kiva Zip product in early 2015, making this tool available to businesses located in Milwaukee's commercial corridors.

Sale of tax-foreclosed commercial properties

Through the third quarter of 2014, seven tax-foreclosed properties have been sold. Proposals are currently being evaluated for an additional nine properties. This compares to the sale of six properties in all of 2014.

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Mayor Barrett's 2015 proposed budget includes a \$500,000 fund to incentivize the sale and renovation of selected tax-foreclosed commercial properties. We also are working with Ald. Milele Coggs to explore the role that commercial brokers might play in marketing the City's inventory of tax-foreclosed commercial properties.

Thank you for this opportunity to update the committee on these matters.

Sincerely,



Martha L. Brown  
Deputy Commissioner