

For Immediate Release
Contact: Mark Maley, 608-210-6767
mark.maley@wedc.org

City of Menasha Awarded \$250,000 State Grant for Downtown Grocery Store

*Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation assistance expected to
provide an economic boost to downtown*

MADISON, WI. June 23, 2014 – The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) has awarded a \$250,000 grant to the City of Menasha to assist in attracting a downtown grocery store.

City officials have identified attracting a full-service grocery store as a high priority for the downtown since the closure of Doering's SuperValu nearly a decade ago. The lack of a grocery store in the area has led to the neighborhood's designation as a "food desert" by the federal government. It also has hindered economic development and efforts to rehabilitate housing in the area, city officials say.

Over the course of several years, the city succeeded in negotiating a development agreement with Mike Novak and Paul Fassbender, operators of Webster Avenue Market and University Avenue Market in Green Bay, to open a store in Menasha. The city is providing financial assistance through its Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) District and the WEDC grant provided the final piece of the necessary funding.

The new grocery store, a \$2.6 million project, is expected to open in November.

"WEDC is pleased that it can help City of Menasha fill what is now a large void in the community," said Reed Hall, secretary and CEO of WEDC, the state's lead economic development organization. "Not only does this project have the potential to attract more development downtown, but it has the immediate impact of creating dozens of new jobs."

The state funding is part of WEDC's Community Development Investment Grant Program. The program supports community development and redevelopment efforts—primarily in downtown areas—throughout the state.

State and city officials say the project is a prime example of how public and private entities can work together on initiatives that provide a significant benefit to the community.

"Economic development and job creation result from partnerships like the city helped facilitate here," Menasha Mayor Don Merkes said. "This partnership will



201 W. Washington Avenue
Madison, WI 53703

P.O. Box 1687
Madison, WI 53701

608.210.6700
865-INWIBIZ
inwisconsin.com

generate 21 new full time as well as 21 part time jobs for people in the community.”

A full-service grocery store is an important facility for downtown Menasha as there is evidence that strong downtowns have a balanced mix of retail, commercial, residential, and community amenities. A grocery store increases the health and viability of downtown Menasha by providing an essential amenity for businesses, their workers, and residents of the downtown district.

The store is the latest example of the increased economic development taking place in Menasha. The city recently attracted cranberry processor Simply Incredible Foods. In addition, national children’s clothing designer Lemon Loves Lime plans to open its first retail store in downtown Menasha. A multi-story mixed use building is also slated for construction in 2015.

About the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) leads economic development efforts for the state by advancing Wisconsin’s business climate. WEDC nurtures business growth and job creation by providing resources, technical support and financial assistance to companies, partners and communities in Wisconsin. WEDC has four focus areas: business and industry development, economic and community development, entrepreneurship and innovation and international business development. Together with more than 600 regional and local business development partners, it represents a highly responsive and coordinated network. Visit www.inwisconsin.com or follow WEDC on Twitter @_InWisconsin to learn more.