



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

5A
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: 05-12-26

Title of Item: Award Grants: Revitalization Grant Program

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA	Action Requested:		<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Information Only

Submitted by: Mark Jeffers	Department: Economic Development
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Presenter (Name and Title): Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator	Estimated Time Needed: 10 minutes
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Summary of Issue:

The Aitkin County Economic Development Committee has received and reviewed grant funding requests for the Revitalization Grant Program. Grant applications and grant award summary are included.

The Committee was unanimous on the recommendation. The Committee recommends and requests approval to award the following grants at this time:

Growth Innovations (16 2nd St. NE building) \$5000
 Smokey Jake's BBQ (sign project) \$5000

This grant program is designed to assist local businesses in upgrading and revitalizing the exterior presence of their properties. By investing in visible improvements, we aim to support community vitality and promote economic growth. A welcoming and professional exterior image fosters pride, encourages commerce, and demonstrates a commitment to local success.

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

Recommended Action/Motion:
 Economic Development requests approval of a motion to award the recommended grants.

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$

Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*

Aitkin County has received Federal Fiscal Recovery Funding through the American Rescue Plan Act.

2026 Business Development & Recreation Grant Award Summary

1. 16 2nd Street NE Aitkin (this is the building that that houses Uptown Energy business and also housing on the second level) on Highway 210, owned by Growth Innovations
 - a. The project will reface the building and repair the exterior brick because of deteriorating conditions
 - b. Total project cost has been quoted by a local contractor at \$14,200. Applicant match is \$9,200 and the grant ask is \$5,000
 - c. In review of our guidelines, this project meets our requirements and will add a fresh look to the downtown Aitkin area.

2. 12 2nd Street NW Aitkin (Smokey Jake's BBQ) on Highway 210, owned by Jacob Schanz
 - a. The project will add a digital sign (4x6) on the upper side of the building and be visible from the stoplight at 210 and oncoming traffic
 - b. The sign meets City of Aitkin sign ordinance requirements (recently amended- Projecting signs shall be permitted, provided they are mounted perpendicular (90 degrees) to the building façade to ensure visibility from adjacent rights-of-way.)
 - c. Total project cost has been quoted at \$11,783. Applicant match is \$6,783 and the grant ask is \$5,000
 - d. In review of our guidelines, this project meets our requirements and will add a fresh look to the downtown Aitkin area.

2026 Revitalization Grant

#	Facility Name	Project Name	Contact Name	Email	City	Phone	\$ requested	\$ Awarded
1	McGregor VFW	signage for building			McGregor		\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600
2	REMAX	Front of building remodel	Jared Lundgren	jaredl@remax.net	Aitkin		\$ 5,000	\$ -
3	MacDonald Enterprises	The Landing	Jim MacDonald	218.927.2669	Aitkin		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
4	Rialto Theatre	canopy improvement	Kirk Peysar	kpeysar@yahoo.com	Aitkin		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
5	Petal & Leaf Nursery	outbuilding expansion	Andrea Bohn	bohnandrea@icloud.com	McGregor		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
6	Growth Innovations	16 2nd Street property	Tami Jacobs	tjacobs@growthiv.org	Aitkin		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
7	Smokey Jake's BBQ	outside digital signage	Jake Schanz	jake@smokeyjakesbbq.com	Aitkin		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
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