

Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership News Bulletin

January 2019

Important DFP Dates and Deadlines

February 5-10 – Sturgeon Spectacular Weekend

February 9, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. – Downtown Fond du Lac Chili Crawl

February 13, 8-9:30 a.m. – DFP Board Meeting at Fox Valley Savings Bank. Public welcome.

February 18 – Building Improvement Grant Application Review

February 21, 7:30-9 a.m. – DFP Annual Meeting at Hotel Retlaw. Doors open for light breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Meeting begins at 8 a.m.

The activities listed here are administered by the Partnership and are open to all downtown businesses for participation or marketing, additional downtown events and activities can be found on our [website](#) or our [Facebook page](#).

Businesses & Property Notes

Building Improvement Grants (BIG)

- The Building Improvement Grant (BIG) is designed to incentivize property owners to undertake exterior property improvements, which will lead to increased property value and a better utilization of properties within downtown Fond du Lac. Grants are awarded based on the following criteria including, but not limited to: projected increase in property value, blight elimination, street front visibility, business track record, impact on surrounding neighborhood, a signed lease from a viable tenant, job creation, readiness to proceed, local economic impact, and new use of a high-profile property.
- \$125,000 is available to be awarded to property owners in 2019. The first grant review session will be on Monday, February 18. Grant reviews will be held on the third Monday of every month until funding has been exhausted.
- If you are considering any improvements to your building façade, please contact Amy Hansen at 920.322.2007 to begin the process of applying for a Building Improvement Grant.
- The DFP would like to thank the City of Fond du Lac for their continued funding of the Building Improvement Grants.
- Information on all local grant & loan programs can be found by [clicking here](#).

IGNITE! of Fond du Lac County

- The DFP is one of 18 community partners in IGNITE!, a resource network for entrepreneurs and small business. If you are considering starting a new business or expanding your existing business, please contact Amy Hansen to learn more about the IGNITE! Program. <http://www.ignitefonddulacounty.com/>

Details about on-going economic vitality support (i.e. Market Analysis, Business Start-up Assistance, Property Listings) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/economic-vitality.html>

Promotion & Special Event Notes

Shop Small Marketing

- This year's "Shop Small and Win" Sweepstakes \$500 winner was Laura Hynek. An economic impact report for this year's campaign was created by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.
 - 166 individuals who submitted an entry by shopping downtown, 73% were from the Fond du Lac or immediate surrounding communities.
 - Visitors were most likely to shop on Saturdays (28% of all spending), with Friday a close second at 22% of sales.
 - Participants spent money at 53 total businesses. Spending was more concentrated, with six businesses comprising more than half of submitted spending. It should be noted that these businesses heavily promoted the contest, likely influencing the rate of participation by their customers.

Chili Crawl – Saturday, February 9, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

- Restaurants will compete against one another to be named Downtown's Best Chili. Additionally, home cooks will compete against one another to be named the Downtown Chili Crawl's Best Homecooked Chili.
- Sites must provide enough chili for 200 1-ounce servings. All other supplies will be provided by the DFP.
- Please contact haley@downtownfdl.com to secure a space.

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- 200 first-come, first-serve event tickets will be available for \$10 (cash or check) at Hopper's (77 N. Main) beginning on January 4 and include chili samples at each location and an 'I Survived the Downtown Chili Crawl' t-shirt.

Sturgeon Spectacular Weekend – February 5-10, 2019

- Destination Lake Winnebago Region (DLWR) will be presenting the 4th Annual Sturgeon Spectacular from February 5 - 10. In 2019, DLWR will be welcoming back the World Ice & Snow Sailing Championship to Lake Winnebago February 5 - 9, as part of the festival. Downtown will also be welcome back the Wisconsin Snow Sculpting Competition (on Sheboygan St). New this year is the inaugural 'Downtown Curling Funspiel'.
- Last year, the Fond du Lac community saw an estimated 20,000 people. This year DLWR expects to see upwards of 30,000. Below are ways in which local business could get involved and create exposure for your business.
- **Sturgeon Window Displays** - Window displays featuring sturgeon or winter fun are strongly encouraged! Let DLWR know if your front window can support a 6ft or 9ft colorful sturgeon. They would like as many sturgeons in downtown store fronts as possible. [Here is an example](#) of giant paper sturgeon in a window from last year. If you are interested in creating your own unique painted sturgeon, please contact Haley Madson at haley@downtownfdl.com for a full-size template.
- **Sturgeon Specials** – Downtown businesses are encouraged to have fun/creative special that you will offer during the Sturgeon Spectacular.
- **Sturgeon Spectacular Rack Cards** - Let DLWR know if you have counterspace to help promote Sturgeon Spectacular.
- **'Running of the Sturgeon' Parade** - Mark your calendars for the 2nd Annual Running of the Sturgeon Parade on Friday, February 8 at 5:30 p.m. If you're participating with a Sturgeon Special, a sponsor or a partner, you will be entered into the parade for free!
- For more information on all Sturgeon Spectacular events please contact Pete Wilke at DLWR pwilke@fdl.com or 920.923.3010. Also, please check out the website www.fdl.com/ss.

Details about on-going marketing support (i.e. Marketing Assistance, Wednesday and Saturday Downtown Fond du Lac Farmers Market, Fondue Fest, Chili Crawl, Monster March, Shop Small Holiday Campaign, Downtown Gift Certificate) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/promotion.html>

Streetscape Design Notes

Utility Box Artwork

- The Utility Box Art Program is accepting applications for 2019 installations. The application and link the program can be found by [clicking here](#).

Details on how the DFP enhances the attractiveness of the business district. (i.e. grant programs for building and façade improvements, Adopt-A-Planter program, investment in signage, trash receptacles, holiday decorations) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/design.html>

Organization Notes

Wisconsin Main Street Accreditation

- Darrin Wasniewski, Director of the Wisconsin Main Street Program, attended the DFP's January board meeting for the Annual National Main Street America and Wisconsin Main Street State Accreditation. The DFP has received its accreditation for 2019.

Staff Announcements

- Resumes are being accepted for the position of Farmers Market Manager to begin in spring of 2019. A complete job description can be found by [clicking here](#).

Details about on-going organizational support (i.e. Monthly Newsletters, Networking & Educational Sessions for Business Owners, Volunteer Coordination) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/organization.html>

Stay Connected

- **Facebook Group** – This closed group welcomes downtown business and property owners to discuss with one another or with DFP regarding questions, promotions, events, and services in the downtown area. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DFPeeps/>

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- **Facebook Page** – Our public page showcases great things happening downtown!
<https://www.facebook.com/DowntownFDL/>

Contact Us

General inquiries or responses to items from this news bulletin can be sent to info@downtownfdl.com or reach us via phone at 920.322.2006.

Our staff includes:

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