

# NEWS BULLETIN

## AUGUST 2025



### IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

**18<sup>th</sup> Annual Fondue Fest** – Saturday, Sept. 6, 2025, 9:00am – 5:00pm

**Downtown Fond du Lac Farmers Market** – Saturdays through October 25 – 8:00am – 12:00pm

### BUSINESS & PROPERTY NOTES

- **Craft City Bottle Shop and Taproom** at 103 S. Main Street has been purchased by a new owner will be reopening under the same name.
- **The Wood Sampler** at 116 S. Main Street will be retiring and will be listing the building for sale.
- **Agile 3D Solutions**, a 3D printing business, are in the process of opening at 104 S. Main Street. Andrew and Tasha Rieder are the owners.
- **Arbor Acres** at 45 N. Main has announced they will be closing at the end of October to focus on their tree cutting service and a new farm stand.

### PROMOTIONS & SPECIAL EVENT NOTES

#### FONDUE FEST

The 18th annual Fondue Fest returns on Saturday, September 6, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Presented by Fox Valley Savings Bank, this community favorite features live music, local food, artisan vendors, and activities for all ages.

- **Cheese and Chocolate Fondue** – Moraine Park Technical College's Culinary Arts program will be serving cheese and chocolate fondue starting at 10:00 a.m. at the corner of Main Street and Forest Avenue.
- **Fondue Brew** – In partnership with Lakefront Brewery, this year's limited-edition brew is Caramel Coffee Stout, tapped at noon at the Lakefront Brewery tent (Sheboygan & Main).
- **Fondue Fleet Bike Races** – Hosted by Fond du Lac Cyclery, races are open to kids 10 and under, with divisions by bike type and age. Races begin at noon. Helmets and signed waivers required.
- **Fondue Feast Eating Contest** – Presented by Fond du Lac Festivals, this high-energy contest features giant food courses like pretzels, poutine, pizza, and cinnamon rolls. Sign up at [www.fdlfest.com](http://www.fdlfest.com) or cheer on contestants at Main & Sheboygan starting at 11:00 a.m.
- **Family Fun** – The Kids Zone, presented by SSM Health, has games, inflatables, a petting zoo and pony rides.
- **Shopping & Vendors** – Explore more than 200 arts, craft, produce, and food vendors along Main Street.
- **Car Show** – The Classics Plus Limited Car Show will return with vintage vehicles on Second Street.
- **Live Music** – 3 stages and 3 beer gardens - all day and into the evening.

A friendly reminder: Due to large crowds and high noise levels, please leave pets at home. Complete details can be found at [Fondue Fest](#)

#### FARMERS MARKET

Beginning September 13, the Farmers Market will expand from Western Avenue to Division Street, The 2025 Farmers Market season is going strong, averaging 90 vendors each week. In total, 167 vendors have been approved for the 2025 season, with 99 participating as full-season vendors.

Due to high demand and limited space, new vendor applications were temporarily closed. We have now reopened applications for weekly vendors. The application can be found here: [Farmers Market Application](#). Downtown Businesses are eligible to receive one free 10'x10' Farmers Market space. To claim this free space, simply complete and submit the online vendor application.

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## PROMOTIONS & SPECIAL EVENT NOTES - CONTINUED

### UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

Included with this News Bulletin is a sign-up sheet for our upcoming Special Events include:

- Witches Day Out – Saturday October 18
- Monster March – Saturday – October 25
- Harvest to Holiday - November 6-8 (an event organized by Destination Lake Winnebago Region)
- Holiday Wine Walk – Saturday November 8
- Bucks to Bags – Saturday, November 23
- Small Business Saturday – Saturday, November, 29
- Holiday Cookie Walk – Saturday, December 6
- KFIZ Holiday Parade – Saturday, December 6 (an event organized by KFIZ)

To participate in any of these events, please return the attached sign-up sheet to [info@downtownfdl.com](mailto:info@downtownfdl.com)

### NIGHT MARKET RECAP

The 2025 Night Market, sponsored by Sargento Cheese, has officially wrapped up for the season. This year, the event featured 54 vendors offering arts, crafts, prepared food, and beverages. Attendees also enjoyed live music and a large, family-friendly Kids Zone, sponsored by Ahern Gross Plumbing and Hoppers Screen Printing & Embroidery.

While one event was fully rained out and another cut short by weather, the remaining three nights were highly successful—bringing approximately 1,000 attendees downtown and creating a lively, welcoming atmosphere for the community.

The fun continues into early fall with the Thelma Sadoff Center for the Arts hosting their Thursday Night Concert Series through September 4.

### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We are currently seeking sponsors for the Holiday Cookie Walk and Main Street Holiday Decorations. or more specific information on sponsorship levels available and benefits associated, please see the [2025 DFP Sponsorship Packet](#).

Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership special events and promotions draw over 100,000 attendees annually. Sponsoring a DFP event or promotion will provide your company with the unique opportunity to engage your employees and target audience where they live, work, and play while simultaneously strengthening your company's image within the Fond du Lac community.

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### OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### VETERANS PARK GROUND BREAKING

[The Fond du Lac Veterans Park Project](#) is a county-led initiative that will offer a more accessible, educational, and engaging Veterans Park experience, with enhanced walkways, lighting, signage, and landscaping. A central feature of the redesign will be a dedicated ceremonial plaza that honors all branches of the military and provides a meaningful space for Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and other community events.

A ground-breaking ceremony to recognize and thank donors was held at the park on July 23, 2025. Construction is now underway. Hardscape features such as paved walkways and other concrete and stone structures are scheduled to be finished by Veterans Day – November 11<sup>th</sup>, while landscaping will take place in Spring of 2026.

**To support this important and impactful initiative**, community members and organizations can [donate directly to the cause](#), become an official individual or corporate sponsor, and/or purchase custom-engraved bricks as lasting tributes to loved ones who served in the Armed Forces.

For information on individual/corporate sponsorship opportunities, to sponsor an engraved brick, or to learn more about the project, contact the Fond du Lac County Veterans Services Office at (920) 929-3117 or email [Veterans@fdlco.wi.gov](mailto:Veterans@fdlco.wi.gov).

#### MAIN STREET MAKEOVER

The Main Street Makeover Project will wrap up this week with final pavement markings and general clean-up. New trash receptacles will also be installed as part of the finishing touches.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to the City of Fond du Lac Public Works, Community Development, and all of the construction crews for their hard work, clear communication, and commitment to completing the project safely and on schedule.

We also extend our gratitude to the downtown businesses and employees who navigated a challenging summer filled with detours, closed streets, limited parking, noise, debris, and customer concerns. Your patience and resilience made a tremendous difference.

Now, we are left with a beautiful new street, improved water lines, and repaired curbs and gutters—a lasting investment in the future of downtown Fond du Lac.

Thank you to everyone for doing your part to make this project a success!

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### BUSINESS RESOURCES

#### 2025 GRANT PROGRAMS

- **Building Improvement Grant (BIG)** – Designed to incentivize property owners to undertake exterior property improvements, BIG is a matching grant to fund the expense of exterior renovations only. Exterior Renovations must be approved by the Downtown Architectural Review Board (DARB). Property owners may apply for up to 50% of total exterior renovation project costs with no maximum.
- **Creative Sign Grant** – Designed to incentivize property owners to add to the unique character of Downtown Fond du Lac through creative projecting sign projects, this grant reimburses up to 75% of the cost (up to \$3,000) of unique, handcrafted projecting signs, including expenses related to design, manufacturing and installation.
- **Experience Generator Grant** – Designed to attract experience-based businesses that contribute significantly to visitor and tourism spending, and the overall vibrancy and vitality of downtown Fond du Lac. This \$5,000 grant may be used for a variety of business startup expenses.
- **New Business Grant** – An incentive to assist entrepreneurs with expenses associated with starting a new or expanding business in downtown Fond du Lac. New businesses are eligible for a \$2,500 grant to be used towards business startup expenses
- **Security Grant Program** – Assists property/business owners with purchasing an exterior surveillance camera system (in partnership with the FDL PD) and/or a rapid entry system lock box (in partnership with the FDL FD).
- **NEW! The Security Lighting Grant** – Financial assistance for downtown business and property owners for the purchase of exterior security lighting, with the goal of enhancing safety and visibility throughout the downtown district.
- **Downtown Fond du Lac Façade Design Assistance Grant** – This reimbursement grant funds the services of an architect to design the exterior of a downtown property. Maximum grant amount is \$4,000. 25% of design costs are reimbursed when the design is approved by the Downtown Architectural Review Board. The remaining 75% is reimbursed upon completion of the project.
- For full details and contact information on the DFP grant programs listed above, visit: [Grant Programs](#). Please contact [Amy Krupp](#) for more information.

#### DOWNTOWN FOND DU LAC GIFT CHECKS

A great way to support our downtown district is to encourage your customers to purchase Downtown Fond du Lac Gift Checks to share the love with over 70 downtown businesses!

In an effort to make processes more efficient for downtown businesses, the DFP has transitioned from Downtown Fond du Lac Gift *Certificates* to Gift *Checks*. Transitioning to gift checks will allow businesses to deposit funds directly into their accounts upon receipt vs. needing to submit a request for reimbursement to the DFP. Downtown Fond du Lac Gift Checks are sold at the DFP office or online in denominations of \$10, \$25 or \$50.

An emailed memo explaining the new process was sent to downtown businesses on Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> with details and answers to FAQs about this transition. Businesses previously enrolled in our gift certificate program have been automatically enrolled in the gift check program, while others will need to opt in. All Existing gift certificates will be honored until the printed expiration date.

If your business would like to be included in the Downtown Fond du Lac Gift Certificate/Check program, please contact [Darcie Holte](#).

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### BUSINESS RESOURCES - CONTINUED

#### FOND DU LAC POLICE DEPARTMENT RESOURCES

In response to downtown business concerns in regard to Fond du Lac's unhoused community, City of Fond du Lac Chief of Police, Aaron Goldstein offers the following insight and resources to the downtown business community.:

1. Partner with organizations that specialize in providing resources to the unhoused community:  
Kindness and empathy within our community is paramount. Those wishing to help Fond du Lac's homeless community members are encouraged to do so by partnering with local warming shelters, outreach programs, food pantries, etc., rather than pursuing individual efforts. When not done in collaboration with larger community efforts, even the most well-intentioned acts can be disadvantageous to the city's coordinated outreach to connect individuals to long-term resources.
2. See Something, Say Something:  
FDLPD plays a key role in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for both businesses and individuals. Property and/or business owners and staff who encounter unlawful behavior or safety concerns within a public space, and/or unwanted behaviors in a private space, are encouraged to call the police in a timely manner.
3. FDL Community Resources:
  - Fond du Lac Community Resource Guide, FDL PD - [English](#) and [Spanish](#)  
A comprehensive guide on available Fond du Lac emergency services, mental health, abuse and juvenile and family services, and transportation resources.
  - Pathways to Care - [English](#) and [Spanish](#) - A guide for navigating Fond du Lac County's mental health services in crisis and non-crisis situations.

#### OPEN FLAGS

The DFP has purchased "OPEN" flags for downtown businesses. The goal is to create a unified look throughout downtown and to highlight businesses that are open. The flags are available to businesses at no cost. If your business would like a flag, please contact [Amy Krupp](#).

#### DOWNTOWN FOND DU LAC MAPS

The DFP has finalized a downtown map showing downtown retail, bar and restaurant businesses. Pads of 25 are available at the DFP office, or contact [Darcie Holte](#) if you would like one dropped off.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA AUDITS

As members of a Wisconsin Main Street Community, Downtown Fond du Lac businesses are eligible to receive free website and social media audits from Wisconsin Main Street's downtown promotions manager. This assistance focuses on reviewing, evaluating, and assessing the business' website and/or social media pages.

Potential reasons for a website or social media audit include a desire to revamp and/or gain an outside perspective on your website or social media accounts, to obtain assistance with social media content ideas and frequency, and/or assistance with taking over and improving a pre-existing website/social media account.

If you would like to request a website and/or social media audit, please reach out to [Amy Krupp](#).

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### STAY CONNECTED

- **DFP Business and Property Owners Facebook Group** – This private group welcomes downtown business and property owners to discuss general downtown issues, public notices and services. [Biz and Property Owners Group](#)
- **Downtown Events Collaboration Team Facebook Group** – This private group is a place for downtown business owners to discuss ideas to make the most out of capturing the audience of attendees at downtown special events [Downtown Events Collaboration Team](#).
- **Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership Facebook Page** – Our public page showcases great things happening downtown! [DFP Facebook](#)
- **Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership Instagram Page** [DFP Instagram](#)
- **Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership Farmers Market Facebook Page** [Farmers Market Facebook](#)

### BOARD MEETINGS

The DFP Board of Directors typically meets the second Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. at Fox Valley Savings Bank. This meeting is open to the public. If you would like to be added to our meeting notification list, please email Amy Krupp at [Amy@downtownfdl.com](mailto:Amy@downtownfdl.com).

### STAFF UPDATE

We'd like to share a few staffing updates with you:

- **Megan Sigrist** is no longer with the DFP, and we wish her the very best in her future endeavors.
- **Emily Taylor**, our Special Events and Social Media Intern for the past year and a half, has left to continue her education at UW-Whitewater.
- **Julia Pearson** from Winnebago Lutheran Academy has joined us as our new Special Events and Social Media Intern.
- **Shelby Haanstad** has returned to the DFP as Special Events Assistant.

It's been a busy time of transitions—especially during our craziest season of the year—but our team has really pulled together. Everyone has stepped up, taken on new responsibilities, and shown what a strong, dedicated group we have at the DFP. We're excited about the energy and talent each team member brings, and we look forward to continuing our work to support and grow downtown Fond du Lac!

We are currently seeking a part-time Special Events Maintenance team member to primarily assist with operations at the Downtown Farmers Market. If you or someone you know enjoys working outdoors, being part of a dynamic events team, and supporting downtown Fond du Lac, this could be a great opportunity. A full job description will be posted on our website in the coming days—stay tuned for details.

### CONTACT US

General inquiries or responses to items from this news bulletin can be sent to [info@downtownfdl.com](mailto:info@downtownfdl.com) or via phone at (920) 322-2006.

**Amy Krupp**, Executive Director, [amy@downtownfdl.com](mailto:amy@downtownfdl.com)

**Darcie Holte**, Office Coordinator, [hello@downtownfdl.com](mailto:hello@downtownfdl.com)

**Cindy Laubenstein**, Bookkeeper and Research Assistant, [bookkeeper@downtownfdl.com](mailto:bookkeeper@downtownfdl.com)

**Kristin Santini**, Special Events Coordinator

**Shelby Haanstad**, Special Events Assistant

**Julia Pearson**, Special Events and Social Media Intern

**Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership, Inc.**

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