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Wisconsin Department of Administration
Division of Facilities Development and Management
Grants for Local Projects Program

October 15, 2025

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of the Village of Cottage Grove, **I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for our application to the Grants for Local Projects program.** Our Comprehensive Plan identifies the creation of community spaces as a cornerstone of Cottage Grove's long-term vision, essential to fostering cultural enrichment, educational opportunity, and sustained economic vitality. Past and present Village Boards and the broader community have long recognized the need for a welcoming environment beyond home and work where residents can connect, learn, and engage. The current Village Board unanimously endorses this application, reflecting our shared commitment to advancing community-centered development.

The Village of Cottage Grove, now nearing 10,000 residents, is one of the largest municipalities in Dane County without a community center, senior center, library, teen space, or dedicated third space. As the fastest-growing community in the county, we continue to experience increasing demand for gathering spaces, programs, and learning opportunities while balancing investment in public safety facilities and infrastructure. While our vision is to foster a safe, connected, and vibrant community, the lack of accessible public spaces remains a significant barrier to achieving that goal.

The proposed project, a public space within the new police station, addresses this critical need. The design features a 150-person, technology-equipped hybrid meeting room with access to an outdoor green space, an area for municipal court use, and a kitchenette for programs and training. It will also serve the community during extreme weather events and as the Village's emergency command center. Importantly, it provides our Police Department with a welcoming setting for outreach, education, and engagement aligned with the long-term department vision of creating a Community Liaison Officer position. This new community space reflects our Village's core values of inclusion, collaboration, and safety, and demonstrates our commitment to thoughtful, sustainable development that benefits everyone who lives, visits, and works in Cottage Grove.

I recognize the competitive nature of this grant and commend our staff for developing a well-planned and fiscally responsible proposal that aligns with community priorities. This application meets all grant requirements, including cost share and blueprints, and is shovel-ready with an anticipated start date in Spring 2026. I am proud to support this application and urge the Department of Administration to give it strong consideration. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

With Community,

Dr. Cynthia Kelm-Nelson (she/her)
Village President
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