



News Release
For Immediate Release
April 16, 2021
Contact: Barbara Peterson
701-577-8110 or barbp@ci.williston.nd.us

City of Williston allocates more than \$700,000 in STAR Fund Grants to 11 Projects in April

The Williston City Commission has awarded up to \$679,000 in STAR Fund incentives to five business at its meeting on Tuesday, April 13, 2021. The projects included Car Tunz, Conlin's Furniture, Fisher Orthodontics, Light of Christ Lutheran Church and the Williston Volunteer Honor Guard.

In addition, Williston City Administrator David Tuan approved five mini match grant applications totaling \$25,000 and one child care assistant grant application for up to \$900. The mini match and child care grants do not require commission approval.

Williston Economic Development Executive Director Shawn Wenko says the STAR Fund is on a record setting pace so far this year.

"2021 has been off to a real strong start for us. I would say in the small business sector, this has been probably the biggest first quarter I have seen helping businesses in the 13 years I have been with the office," said Wenko.

Three of the projects qualified for the Flex PACE Interest Buydown program to purchase and/or improve building space. Conlin's Furniture and Fisher Orthodontics are purchasing and renovating new buildings while Car Tunz is purchasing and improving its current location.

"We are excited to see these projects at three existing businesses," said Wenko. "They are seeing the demand, and they are going to expand their footprint and really that's what we try to do at the end of the day with economic development."

One of the biggest projects approved in 2021 is for a new childcare facility at Light of Christ Lutheran Church. The Williston City Commission approved up to \$540,000 for the project. Wenko says creating more day care space has been one of the City of Williston's goals the past few years.

"The City has really made a commitment to addressing the shortage of childcare opportunities here in the region," said Wenko. "The City has partnered with Williams County and Williston State College to remodel the old Crighton Building on the WSC campus and we are working with Light of Christ Lutheran Church to remodel their basement."

The two daycare projects are expected to create space for approximately 160 children.

"Childcare is a need across the state and it's a big driver for us, as we try to steer more workforce to the area," said Wenko.

The next STAR Fund meeting is Tuesday, May 4, 2021.

The following projects received STAR Fund grants in April, 2021.

Car Tunz – up to \$47,000 from the Flex PACE Interest Buydown program to purchase their current building, improve their parking lot and purchase signage.

Conlin's Furniture – up to \$25,000 from the Flex PACE Interest Buydown program to purchase new signage and remodel a new location for the furniture and mattress store.

Fisher Orthodontics – up to \$62,000 from the Flex PACE Interest Buydown program to purchase and remodel a new location for the orthodontics practice.

Light of Christ Lutheran Church – up to \$540,000 from the STAR Fund to renovate the Light of Christ Lutheran Church for a new daycare.

Williston Volunteer Honor Guard – up to \$5,000 from the Community Build/Growth program to help purchase new uniforms and equipment.

Caffeinated – up to \$5,000 from the Mini Match program to open a second Caffeinated location in the Badlands Town Centre. The new sit-down coffee shop will also feature a drive-up window.

C's Dance Complex – up to \$5,000 from the Mini Match program for a new retail dance store located in the Ebel Building.

Hops & Berry - up to \$5,000 from the Mini Match program to purchase new signage for the self-serve beer/wine taproom located in Downtown Williston.

Mattress by Appointment - up to \$5,000 from the Mini Match program for a new mattress store located at 2006 19th Ave. W. in Williston.

Miss Lissa's – up to \$900 from the Child Care Assistant Grant program.

Young Bucks - up to \$5,000 from the Mini Match program for a new coffee shop and eatery located in LifeChurch.

If you would like to start or expand a business in Williston, contact Keith Olson with the Small Business Development Center at 701-713-3839 or keith@ndsbdc.org. Olson is the initial point of contact for startups and expansions in Williston.