



DMI Statement on the City of Madison's Proposed Transportation Demand Management Proposal

Downtown Madison, Inc. (DMI) strongly supports the overarching goals of the City of Madison's proposed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program. The TDM proposal seeks to decrease single-occupancy vehicle travel and increase support for transit-orientated development and greater public transit ridership. The proposal's objectives closely match DMI's new mobility and connectivity goal of championing expanding transportation options with sustainable funding to ensure a safe, accessible, environmentally responsible, and easily navigable multimodal network in and around downtown. Within DMI's new strategic plan, we specifically advocate for the creation of a TDM program, and we believe the proposed program gets our community closer to everyone's goals.

DMI appreciates the outreach and productive discussions about TDM with City of Madison staff, as well as the adjustments to the program the City has made based on feedback from DMI and others in the community. Concerns remain, however, related to the metrics being relied upon to implement and measure the program's success as well as the selective application and enforcement of the program against property-owning businesses. DMI wants to ensure any adopted TDM plan effectively addresses downtown's transportation problems and would like to see data that demonstrate the expected impact of this TDM program to address the admirable goals.

DMI's areas of concerns are as follows. First, the proposal's language on use changes between major land use categories and sub-categories is troublesome and will add another hurdle to negotiating new tenant leases in the downtown. With downtown only now returning to near pre-pandemic health, as seen in new businesses downtown, and rising State Street pedestrian counts and downtown parking data, and with a possible economic recession looming, our community should work together to make it as easy as possible to lease or purchase vacant space. Second, the proposal will also hurt businesses from wanting to locate new uses in existing less flexible or historic buildings. These changes could chill future uses and make growing new businesses and re-tenanting already existing space more difficult. Third, the pandemic has significantly changed downtowns nationwide, with new behaviors, work environments, and traffic patterns, continuing to evolve, it does not appear that any hard data is being used as a baseline of what an acceptable level is or is not for auto-centric travel in our downtown, and specifically for our city more generally.

With these potential unintended consequences, a rapidly changing world, and with DMI's sincere desire to ensure a successful program, DMI advocates for:

- Reconsidering application and enforcement of any TDM strategy against businesses generally, rather than through only property-owning businesses.
- Exempting existing buildings from TDM requirements. Existing buildings were built under the regulations of their times and they are fully constrained by their current footprints, building systems and financing structures. Only extraordinary investment in a new use should trigger TDM requirements in existing buildings.
- Establishing baseline data and specific goals for reducing single occupancy travel within our downtown.
- Creating a two-year pilot program. By creating a pilot, our community can analyze the successes and failures and the changing environment to create a stronger and more effective program in two years.
- Offering more incentives to businesses, such as a fast-lane program for developers, to accomplish the goals of TDM.

DMI shares many goals with the current TDM proposal and applauds the work to date. With these proposed changes, a TDM plan will be more likely to realize its admirable goals and strengthen the downtown and the greater City of Madison. DMI is committed to continuing to work with City staff and policymakers to create the most effective solution for everyone.

Contact Information - Jason Ilstrup, President, Downtown Madison, Inc. –
jilstrup@downtownmadison.org; 608.512.1330