



Date: November 30, 2022

To: Vending Oversight Committee

Re: Downtown Madison Vending Discussion

I write this representing Madison's Central BID, and particularly our Downtown Madison Information Ambassador program. I have managed this program for 13 years, and spent 5 years as an Information Ambassador prior. These years of experience have not only given me a sense of pride in our downtown, but also has allowed me to experience first-hand much of the processes and history of the area.

Our Downtown Information Ambassador Program is a cornerstone to our goal of creating a welcoming environment in the downtown area. Our goal is to help visitors and residents navigate downtown and help bring them to the doors of our shops and restaurants. Each year our Ambassadors have assisted an average of 40,000 people, distributed tens of thousands of brochures from our partners, distribute 100,000 Downtown Map & Guides, and are supported by hundreds of volunteer hours allowing our program to succeed.

One of our most prominent volunteer shifts and one of our biggest opportunities to reach visitors is in our Info Booth at the top of State Street on Saturday mornings. I have seen the vending layout change slightly over the years in this location, but recently we have felt more and more like the vendors are crowding us out. With the current vendor layout our info booth, which is a relatively large and visible facility, is nearly invisible from the street during the markets. We have seen a lot of success in this location, except during these markets. Our volunteers have noted this and have begun to lose interest in this critical shift for us, which is a concern for our program as a whole.

I appreciate our arts and crafts community, they add a unique flair to the street, and we see their drive and value during our Madison Night Market events. However, I appreciate the discussion regarding re-thinking the vendor layout. I am confident this group can find a way to support the arts community as well as the brick-and-mortar businesses in a way that benefits all, and creates the most welcoming environment possible for our visitors. I also feel this discussion is critical at this time as we have been made aware that the Wisconsin Historical Museum project will be extremely disruptive to the area. This disruption adds to the need for a solution that works for all so that we can all succeed during what will be a unique stretch of time at this location.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Timothy W. Jenquin".

Timothy W. Jenquin
Operations Director
Madison's Central BID