

From: Marshall Smith [mailto:marketman@sbcglobal.net]

Sent: Sunday, August 15, 2010 1:56 PM

To: Cooley, Timothy

Cc: george nelson

Subject: Economic Development

Tim,

It was an interesting call I received last week from a long time friend and fellow economic development headhunter. A man who helped me reposition Carmel-by-the Sea's business district and Monterey's Cannery Row economically years ago. He said, "I see Madison is still fighting the battle against progress and enlightenment." He was referencing the Edgewater Hotel debacle.

He knew the story because he had a client interested in locating in Madison, and he did what all professional development site hunters do. He did a back research of all the news and feature media in Madison over last year, searching for elements that might seriously impact his, and his clients, decision. Rejection was a forgone conclusion.

Researching a proposed area is a key element in the site hunter's portfolio. Then investigating development packages and attitude of city government. Historically, over the past 50 years, Madison has been a dismal failure.

In its fight against "developers," Madison has set up significant road blocks that seriously impede those business, research, and industrial prospects from out of state or internationally.

Business and industrial prospects do not view as a "crime," risk, venture capital, and the hope that their investment will be profitable. Prospects view their presence as an economic boon to the health and welfare of the cities, neighborhoods they locate in. Prospects expect government enthusiasm, sound assistance guidelines and programs, and the importance of speed and efficiency to move projects along. In their minds, none of these should be protracted, esoteric exercises.

Madison has lost significant employment at Oscar Mayer, the deaths of major employers such as Red Dot Potato Chips, Giddings and Lewis (Gisholt), and the forced move out of city and state by five dynamic high tech companies. The loses are proven, as all were my clients, and all seriously impaired by city government practices, or non practices.

Failing to provide fertile ground for new development has cost the City a major research park at Truax Field, two free convention centers--one at Knob Hill, the other on East Wash, a major redevelopment industrial complex along the East Washington corridor, and a major redevelopment of the old Globe Airport. Again, all my firms clients. And again, blocked at every level by government, special interests and bogus "neighborhood associations."

It is time for Madison to quit defining itself as "the nation's greatest quality of life center." Believe me plenty of people, including past clients, thrive in Colorado Springs, Raleigh/Durham, Austin and Missoula. It is time to revise, and improve, economic development procedures and practices. Quality of life is built on sound businesses and industries, anchoring real jobs with real income.

As we watch once proud and productive business and industrial areas such as the East, North and South sides, deteriorate to be replaced by parks and bike paths, we must remember that a good job with a great paycheck, and profitable companies are the true lynch pins for the retention, and improvement of "Quality of Life."

Marshall Smith