



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Economic Development Division

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Business Resources
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TO: Business and Economic Resources Committee (BERC)

FROM: Matthew B. Mikolajewski, Director

SUBJECT: 2026/2027 BERC Work Plan Memo (Legistar # 93553)

DATE: August 19, 2026

The Business and Economic Resources Committee (BERC) is responsible for developing a 2026/2027 Work Plan. Following are a series of ideas to assist BERC with the development of this plan, divided into three areas. The first is a section regarding items that BERC must complete per ordinance. It is important to reserve enough time within the Work Plan to complete these tasks. The second section are items that Economic Development Division staff believe would be helpful to work on in the year ahead. Finally, is a list of ideas that BERC members started to share at the June meeting.

The goal of the discussion at the August 19th meeting is to have BERC members add to this list of ideas. From this list, staff are currently planning to prepare a survey for each member to weigh in on regarding their priorities. The results of this survey can then be used to guide the work of the Committee on preparation of a Work Plan in the months ahead.

WHAT MUST BERC DO PER ORDINANCE?

- 1) Complete Economic Development Strategy and assist with implementation.
- 2) Consider referrals of the Common Council.
- 3) Act on street vending and sidewalk café items, as outlined in Ordinance.
- 4) Receive public comments on street vending and sidewalk café policy, and economic development policy in general.
- 5) Provide guidance to City staff, the Common Council, and Mayor regarding City policies and programs in both a proactive and reactive manner.

WHAT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION STAFF OVER THE NEXT 18 MONTHS (DECEMBER 2027)?

- 1) Assist with completion of Economic Development Plan and early implementation.
 - a. What additional information about our business sectors, supply chains, economic development tools, workforce, and other economic data would be helpful to BERC to complete the plan?
- 2) Review street vending and sidewalk café ordinances to identify current BERC requirements that could be completed administratively, as well as other changes the new BERC may recommend.
- 3) Guide EDD staff work on refining the City's small business programs (Small Business Programs 2.0), starting with the Building Improvement Grant Program.
 - a. How have the programs been utilized, what businesses have received funding, and what has the funding been used for?
 - b. From a policy standpoint, are we accomplishing what we want to accomplish?
 - c. Do program goals, eligibility criteria, approval process, etc. need to be adjusted or better articulated?
 - d. What can and should we be doing to better promote programs?
 - e. What can and should we be doing to track the financial condition and employment of businesses in the years following receipt of City funds?
 - f. Can the City be more strategic in using these funds to support its neighborhood business districts?
 - g. Finish "funding cap" and "needs based" discussion started by EDC.

WHAT ELSE MIGHT BERC MEMBERS BE INTERESTED IN WORKING ON OVER THE NEXT 18 MONTHS BASED ON THE JUNE 17, 2026 BERC DISCUSSION?

- 1) A funding forecast of available resources for economic development work.
- 2) An update regarding the Madison Public Market.
- 3) Revisiting City policies, and discussion about strategies, around promoting individual businesses.
- 4) Exploring intersection between housing (especially affordable housing) and economic development.
- 5) Developing a rubric for considering future ideas for initiatives to be completed by BERC.