

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 11, 2008

TO: City of Madison Common Council Members

FROM: Susan Schmitz/Downtown Madison, Inc. (DMI)

RE: Proposed 2009 Operating Budget Amendments

Operating Budget Amendment #2: Miscellaneous Appropriations

DMI strongly **opposes** elimination of the Façade Improvement Grant program. The City's Economic Development Plan calls for an increase to the City's tool box. This program has been extremely successful and has proved to be a strong tool for improving neighborhood business districts. If we are serious about keeping and growing locally owned businesses, this is one of the best tools the City can provide.

Operating Budget Amendment #14: New Program: Downtown Residential Exterior Lighting Enhancement Grant Program

DMI **supports** the implementation of this grant program. Like the Façade Improvement Grant program, these funds are from the Capital Revolving Fund. This is another tool for the City to have in its tool box and it is directly related with safety in the greater downtown area.

Capital Budget Amendment #22 & Operating Budget Amendment #33: Parking Utility

DMI **opposes** removal of funding for multi-space meters until cheaper credit card rates can be secured. However, we believe these two amendments will not be removed after communicating with Alders and City Staff within the last 24 hours.

Capital Budget Amendment #21: Parking Utility

After communicating with Parking Manager, Bill Knobeloch, DMI believes it would be a mistake to remove this funding. The Parking Utility needs these funds in its budget because of the deterioration of the Government East

ramp. Bill has the details on the condition of the ramp and how valuable it is to this area of the downtown.

Operating Budget Amendment #40: Community Development Block Grant

DMI **strongly supports** this amendment. Currently, the ReachOut workers in the downtown work through Tellurian and the funds come from a federal grant. The grant money, however, limits the ReachOut workers to working only with the mentally ill and seriously mentally ill people on the streets—and only in the downtown. These funds would allow two additional trained workers on the streets and they can work with the chronic alcoholics and other challenged people who need to be directed into the programs that will give them the help that they need. And in addition, they will be able to work with people on the streets outside of the central business district. These workers will be part of the plans that DMI, Porchlight and the rest of the homeless consortium are working on to get people off the streets and into housing and the services that they need.

*****Thank you all very much and please see the attached ReachOut handout that has been printed and is being distributed to the businesses in downtown Madison and to the City of Madison Police. This is an important part of an educational program so that the people on the streets can be moved into the services that can give them the help that they need.**