

Economic Development Listening Session Comments from Handouts

Warner Park Community Recreation Center

Nov. 29, 2007

2:00-4:00 p.m.

Key Questions

1. Should Madison have a more proactive economic development approach, or is it doing so well that it can afford to be complacent?

- It's 2007, we are in a truly global economy. There are no days off when it comes to economic development. Complacency is not an option.
- Yes absolutely! In the global economy Madison can lose. Madison has an elite type of attitude in regards to real world events. Close minded-not as diverse as they may like to think.
- Absolutely! Madison has operated much like a child of privilege-with economics vitality happening in spite of us rather than as a result of us.
- Can't afford complacency
- change-key economic drivers no longer traditional *unreadable word*, mergers & acquisitions, global economy, commercial alignment of UW research, competition beyond our borders, technology changes biz operations eg electronic transfer of \$'s remote inventory control etc ie leakage, e-commerce. Speed to market critical-locals don't appreciate importance of time & project delay
- City should accept businesses as part of a team necessary to enable finances necessary to provide city services.
- It should have a more proactive approach.

2. What should our economic development goals be?

- As many truly sustainable knowledge and skill based jobs as possible. Renewable energy jobs and technology should be a current focus. Improve the environment and economy.
- Create jobs that support families. Regional transportation-when? Labor force-quality people where are they? low skilled work force-they are hidden-language barriers etc drag on the services in county and city-i/e welfare etc. crime!!! Serious crimes are always labeled as a isolated incident-bad mindset!
- First do no harm-overregulation-cumbersome and lengthy process & regulation
- jobs jobs jobs
- tax base
- Consistent of regional plan
- retention
- Attract & develop quality workforce
- stronger public/private partnership focused on economic development
- Forum to hear employer concerns & respond to
- Central business district should be maximized

- Property tax base should be maximized by allowing high density, tall development in CBD.
- Identify our unique strengths/attributes/resources
- Brand and nurture those unique attributes; develop tool kit
- recruit/retain quality jobs/business via brand/tool kit
- workforce development
- start & maintain the dialogue-ongoing roundtable w/city & business community
- change organizational culture of city when it comes to development.

3. What are Madison's best economic development opportunities over the next 3-5 years?

- University & natural resources, etc (assets)
- Develop goals around Madison's unique opportunities based on its assets.
- improve relationship with business development community
- take advantage of econ dev plan, Downtown masterplan, zoning rewrite etc to streamline process & create vision.

4. What has City government done well to encourage quality job creation and economic prosperity?

- Good Question.
- Not much-has become an outstanding welfare magnet attracting low skilled uneducated population-case in point crime statistics etc. Welfare is easily given to non-residents of Madison + Dane county. Many Chicago people are here that are receiving out of state benefits while obtaining state w-z payments. A real bad deal for business owners!
- Attention to quality of life-there needs to be as much attention to economic vitality!
- EDC strengthened-report excellent!
- Took EDC recommendations such as 1 stop shop[, new permitting software, etc. They are starting to make strides
- Create division of economic development

5. Where can City government improve to encourage quality job creation and economic prosperity?

- Overhaul the TIF and TID process to support more mfg. and industrial business and jobs. We don't need more condos, we need businesses and jobs that pay taxes.
- Quit being in denial that Madison's Utopia and the best place in the world. Drop the elitist attitude-speak + work with business-hire real people with real knowledge for your city economic staff. Have lived in different countries-Madison is not as open as it promises.
- Make it a priority!!
- Develop a plan and implement
- align ordinances and committees actions with economic vitality plan.
- Actual implementation, not just a "plan" gathering dust on a shelf
- streamline process

- create ongoing dialogue with business community
- cut down on cumbersome feel good policies that do nothing but restrict business growth.
- Re-establish property rights. The City, nor the neighborhood assn's doesn't own private property. How can economic development occur if property owners' rights aren't recognized? Development must be allowed for prosperity to follow.

6. What are your other comments and suggestions?

- Focus on "green" industry and jobs. Bio-tech is another good area for focusing ED. Continue to make state, county and City of Madison gov't as transparent as possible.
- Madison is known for good human services-and bad Anti business attitude.
- Why has crime risen so much? Welfare magnet attitude. People need to want that come here-to many people come here for welfare!
- Although we are looking @ 3-5 yrs for this exercise I believe we need to think about the poverty level of our elementary school students-to give the middle school students(at least) to expose them to diff. jobs with hands on exposure-making academics come alive through real world applications. We need to fully engage students earlier while also helping to create stability for those kids so they can concentrate on learning & seeing how these opportunities will work for them-offering jobs for their parents as well.
- The disproportionate power of the neighborhood planning process is an issue.
- Downtown plan should be flexible enough to allow major employers to locate there(Think American Family downtown)
- Fix TIF policy.
- Balance neighborhood clout w/business clout; but ultimately staff, experts should be empowered to implement good policy.
- City of Madison — Economic Development Plan
- Opinion:
- City should play a limited role. . . leverage existing resources and initiatives from private sector and other strategically targeted public and nonprofit efforts (i.e. WIRED grant)
- WIRED Initiative [\$5 mil, 3 years]
- Talent Development
- Sector...
- System...
- How do we leverage this initiative and the regional economy paradigm? What does the city view as EDC 's/WDB 's/REDE 's role?
- Job creation goals are very difficult to measure/evaluate..., as state audit has shown, often fall through the cracks. How can Madison avoid this common pitfall as we seek to strategically invest our limited resources to enhance 'good' business and creation of economic opportunity for all?
- As a CDBG commissioner, our Business Development resources are pretty small:
- 2006: 14.1% of total funds: \$1.064 mil on A. and 138K on B.
- • A. Business Creating Jobs [jobs created which meet wage standard levels or create advancement opportunities, with 51% for LMI]

- B. Micro-business (small business entrepreneur)
- [Business created and viable after 4 years]
- Is the city willing to prioritize specific goals that benefit the low income and minority communities?
- Ideas:
 - Talent Development-
 - On the Job Training / Mentoring Component Strategy (modified internships/apprentices)
 - System Development-
 - Collaborate with Pat Schram and the WDBSCW on Talent/Workforce Development
 - Sector Development Continue identifying our natural strengths and assets (land, research university, etc)
 - Social Development Reach out to and invest in low income and minority communities to train (in school)
 - Opinion on recent news events...
 - It is a myopic, shortsighted view of progress in our economic development activities as a city which seeks to separate out workforce and community development from economic development.

7. What is your single highest priority?

- Crime-hire 60 more officers not 30. Ease of welfare given by county to non-WI county residents, become a city that is realistic!
- Creation of well-paid jobs climate in which small business can thrive.
- Reduce difficulty in business interfacing with city government. Eliminate adversarial mindset in city employees & elected officials.
- Make it easier and appealing to develop real estate in Madison.