

# Economic Development Listening Session Comments from Handouts

Alliant Energy Center

Nov. 28, 2007

6:00-8:00 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?**

- No
- Yes
- More proactive!
- Yes, needs to invest in local business & workforce development, investing in workforce development means turning these unskilled economically disadvantaged people into productive people-this requires social justice goals such as training child care, health care etc.
- We have long suffered from our fairly stable economy. Without economic crisis and stress this City has stagnated and from a lack of real need /hunger have always said," We've no need to take an initiative like Austin." So we have gotten behind from our own arrogance.

### **2.What should our economic development goals be?**

- Job Creation
- Diverse *illegible writing here?*
- Sustainability (relative to natural resources)
- Balance between import/export economic activity and that which is primarily within neighborhoods/Greater Madison Metro area i.e. promote neighborhoods
- Invest in people
- Invest in growing local basic sector business
- Stop flow of \$ to outside by growing business in areas where too many \$ are leaving, example, can we do more energy production.
- In response to criticism of Madison as "unfriendly" to business-don't blame the image on Madison's commitment to social justice. First of all, we don't want a "race to the button". Secondly a lot of the problems business has with Madison are the result of management problems in City Hall.
- 1.create x thousand new jobs of \$xx level salary (i.e. increase tax base and increase average salaries).
- 2. Correct once and for all our school system's real issue-teachers salaries and benefits so entrenched and protected that to meet the union contract we have to cut everything else. I.e. the union owns the school board and superintendent. That has to change with ED goal bring: Right the school system's financial model, contract s, budget, salaries + benefits.

- 3. Become famous in our state for being exceptionally welcome to and supportive of business of all kinds/sizes.
- 4. Lobby/get State Legislature to accept and support a. same sex partnerships and benefits as this will help UW faculty recruitment and retention and also get legislature to better fund UW budget and salaries.

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

- Downtown Entertainment District
- Research Park growth/retention corridor
- Distinguish between wealth and value-Quality of life is based on a context which promotes what people value-economic development may erode the context of value, sacrificing our unique community networks for pursuit of wealth.
- High tech, Biotech business attracted to Madison because of QOL.
- Great neighborhoods, low crime, low cost of schools & housing.
- Leverage the Center for Discovery on UW campus-use it to attract related industries/research but also as a center (world class) of discovery related to life sciences & businesses.
- Do national/Internal P.R. campaign to build positive awareness and preference of Madison as a place to work, play, start your business or locate your next branch office of (Microsoft, Oracle, Google, you name it)
- Do concerted local "education effort of elements-i.e. Big op here is to use creation of this plan to educate & inspire better local pro-biz culture and appreciation

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

- Not much
- Has kept neighborhoods livable, likeable and given residents opportunity to participate in community garden and to enjoy a variety of park environments-keep it up as redevelopment /infill proceeds.
- CDBG Commission & staff does great job with neighborhood development promotes a healthy viable urban community and grants small & micro businesses start-up loans
- Traditionally little. In 30 years of business across many Mayors-my experience is they're pretty much been(alder and Mayors-with exception of Soling in his later years) "business and profit are evil" and "we should expect only greed and unethical behavior from business leaders, so lets not encourage them."
- One good hire-Mark Olinger. He is the rare guy in government who gets ED and business.

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

- Partner with surrounding communities
- Listen to Phil Lewis

- Intercede with Mayor & Common Council to lure desirable business to Madison.
- Get rid of holier than them” and “we know best practice that serve leadership.”
- When Mayor says” tell me I want to hear” make him mean it or get rid of him. In other words –there is little trust or expectation that he will do anything with this ED plan or listen to what any of input is. For example, as I sit here writing this in this meeting I cannot see him anywhere in the room.
- He started the meeting then left how disingenuous.

## **6. What are your other comments and suggestions?**

- We need to clean up the lakes of Madison make them clean and not green again!
  - Concerns-eventual loss(5-6Yrs) of \$250 m/yr UW Madison has spent on construction for the last 15 yrs(approx)
  - Deterioration of Mad. Public Schools
  - Lack of “customer service” approach by City of Madison Need for more “future thinking’ & community partnership[ priorities by the City.
  - Madison and Dane County & villages & towns need to work together to create jobs & economic growth based on our local asset & resources-educated based, agriculture base-added value to produce, UW, Hospitals, location
  - Econ Dev. needs to be a dream of what can be and finding /encouraging environment to make it happen, capital, markets, innovative products & services
  - See Peak Oil Task Force report at [www.myspace.com/citieswithoutcars](http://www.myspace.com/citieswithoutcars)
  - ***Social Justice and “good” jobs are equally important***
1. ***An economic development plan must emphasize social justice. This counts with residents of Madison:***
    - *City economic development policy should promote and expand job training and educational opportunities, particularly to benefit those members of our community who are low-income and members of minority racial and ethnic backgrounds.*
    - *City policy should prioritize programs of economic and social aid and protection to our community's most vulnerable residents and should protect funding for such programs as part of an economic development agenda.*
    - *City policy should seek opportunities to make affordable, quality health care benefits available to small businesses and the self-employed*
    - *In granting contracts and economic support for development projects and when purchasing goods and services, the City should prioritize and favor locally owned firms, unionized firms and firms with a proven track record of recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce.*
    - *Investment of economic development monies into community development helps economic development by providing the skilled workforce, social safety nets and quality-of-life infrastructure needed for attracting and insuring the success of new businesses. In other words, economic development investment in social justice enables strong economic development.*
  2. ***An economic development plan must create good jobs:***

- *Minimum wage jobs that meet the standard of a living wage and are indexed to inflation*
  - *Offer a career path towards improvement.*
  - *Support mechanisms and training to allow for advancement*
3. *If jobs created by economic development are not “good” jobs, there will be a negative benefit impact, creating additional burdens on the community from low wage earners in areas such as:*
- :
- *Education*
  - *Social Services*
  - *Housing*
  - *Public safety*

### ***Growth for growth’s sake gets us nowhere***

*Unbridled economic development simply to raise the tax base and to “grow” the economy can have hidden costs that make it undesirable, such as:*

- *Increasing population without providing accompanying public and social infrastructure. Example, who is going to pay for the new roads, new schools, public works, social services (especially if the new jobs are marginal ones),*

*Density is very important and spending TIF and other monies to accomplish this **does** aid economic development indirectly (example: enabling better public transit).*

- *It is short-sighted to simply say projects to increase density are for “neighborhood improvement” rather than for economic development.*
- *The opposite of density is sprawl which impacts agricultural land – an important “local” resource and it places additional stress on the area transportation networks.*

*The charge has been leveled that there are people in the Madison community who don’t want economic development.*

- *The issue isn’t economic development vs. no economic development. The issue rather is what kind of economic development do we want? It is more accurate to say that there are people in the Madison community who don’t want unbridled, thoughtless economic development.*
- *Growth for the sake of growth can be detrimental (more traffic, stress on infrastructure, more crime, additional burdens on schools, housing, a larger economically disadvantaged population, etc.).*

***What could be more inherent to Madison's Culture than the Wisconsin Idea?***

*Emphasize the "Wisconsin Idea" in economic development planning, meaning a close partnership with the UW's capacity for generating new business should be a major focus of any economic development focus and spending.*

*This partnership needs be applied to generating a broad range of job types, not just high-tech jobs.*

***Coordinate with surrounding Communities***

*Economic development must be coordinated between all the Counties boarding the Madison Metropolitan area. This applies to:*

- *Coordination and delivery of social services and infrastructure*
- *Developing solutions*
- *Creating regional authorities to solve problems that span municipal boundaries*
- *Developing appropriate revenue streams to fund solutions and multi-jurisdictional entities*

***Invest in local and basic sector industries***

*Investment in basic sector companies should **focus on locally grown businesses whenever possible**. Local companies have more of a commitment to the community and given Madison's resources and with the UW as an economic engine, there should be a broad range of such investment opportunities without needing to cater to national and multi-national corporations that have no such community ties.*

*If Madison does invest in attracting an "outside" business, it should do so when that **business is a basic-sector business** (i.e. not a retail business, restaurant, etc.), and when:*

- *That business does not compete directly with existing locally-owned businesses*
- *That business provides good-paying jobs and good career ladders*
- *Factors exist to insure that business will make a long-term commitment to the community.*

*Regarding both non basic-sector and basic-sector businesses, **investment of city resources should favor those businesses that re-circulate dollars within the local economy**.*

- *Example, a business that uses banking, accounting, and other sourcing from outside the community is basically draining money from the local economy.*
- *Preference should be given to businesses that re-circulate dollars by using other local businesses and that invest profits locally.*

### ***Development must be sustainable***

*The City should critically evaluate prospective development projects to fully understand any potential environmental and economic impact.*

*Preference should be given to initiatives and programs that promote energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy by the City of Madison and its residents.*

#### ***Leverage the use of TIF financing***

- *City policy should require businesses that receive economic subsidies, including Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) funds, from the City to pay their employees a living wage, indexed to inflation and provide health insurance benefits.*
- *TIF should be used to support projects that would not otherwise occur and where there are clear public benefits, economic and otherwise, and include Public Benefit Agreements.*
- *The location and scope of TIF districts should be driven by priorities set by the City.*
- *There should be a uniform application of minimum financial feasibility criteria for funding TIF Districts.*
- *There should be tangible, measurable economic benefits from developers receiving Tax Incremental Financing and developers who fail to produce these results should be required to repay the TIF subsidy with interest.*
- *City policies should promote and expand affordable and accessible public transportation options to promote economic development along transportation corridors making jobs and commercial activities more accessible.*

### ***In conclusion***

*City policy should promote economic development that:*

- *Benefits the general public in ways that favor and further the creation of family-supporting jobs; equal opportunity; a rising standard of living; a more equal distribution of wealth and workers' rights.*
- *Preserves the environment*
- *Strengthens neighborhoods*
- *Is guided by local resident associations*
- *Follows neighborhood plans*
- *Pursues transit, bicycle and pedestrian friendly designs*
- *Improves the quality of life of all city residents.*

#### **7. What is your single highest priority?**

- **Keep QOL high in Madison—that is what lures business.**

- A city culture-government, citizens, press that gets business is the only way to fund the taxes (business and employees) that maintain and improve quality of life we all seek and initiatives like being more green in our transportation i.e. business is not evil (a necessary evil) but rather, a hope, enable foundation to quality of life to be embraced, welcomed and pursued within this there is no appetite for gov. to form a public private partnership for business to partner with a gov. who disdains them! And what business wants top come locate here where they know they'll not be welcomed!