

March 23, 2022

Dear Alders,

On behalf of Destination Madison and our board of directors, I am pleased to offer our full support for the city's proposed legislation to make Madison's "Streatery" program permanent. The program was a life-saver for local restaurants during the pandemic thanks to the open space dining it provided. Sidewalks became hives of customer excitement and community engagement. Replacing spaces reserved for cars with restaurant seating converted city property occupied by vacant machines into vibrant social hubs of life and livelihood.

Since its inception in 2020, the program has fostered a socially connective experience for residents and visitors. Participating restaurants, many of whom are Destination Madison partners, have found the program breathes energy and innovation into their business. Making the program permanent will give Madison, particularly downtown Madison and some of our city's distinct neighborhoods, a new "vibe" which will benefit residents and enhance the visitor perception of our community.

While the Streatery program is widely considered successful for helping businesses during the pandemic, there are some areas to pay special attention to if the program is made permanent. The first area is business equity. Some restaurants may feel the program gives unfair market advantage to establishments who are able to use public spaces for additional seating, while their restaurants do not have that possibility due to location.

A second concern is that events needing to use streets (such as advocacy marches, outdoor festivals, or sporting events like IRONMAN) may have difficulty receiving permits for streets that have restaurants participating in the program, particularly downtown. Destination Madison hopes the city will ensure the needs of the Streatery program are balanced with other community needs.

Destination Madison thanks the common council and city for your ongoing prioritization of the local small business owners at the heart of our hospitality community. Making the Streatery program permanent will be another step toward ensuring their important place in our local quality of life.

Sincerely,



Ellie Westman Chin  
President & CEO  
Destination Madison



February 15, 2022

Dear Alders:

Downtown Madison, Inc. (DMI) strongly supports legislation seeking to make the highly successful Streatery program permanent in Madison. Since its inception in the summer of 2020, the Streatery program has positively and uniquely transformed how our community interacts within public spaces downtown and throughout Madison. Madisonians have rethought how we can use public spaces to connect, dine, socialize and be outdoors opening more opportunities for our community to interact and experience our city.

Created in response to COVID, Streatery found ways to keep our community safe through more outdoor activities. The added ability to create more activities saved many downtown businesses. Without these outdoor dining and retail locations, more locally owned and operated downtown businesses would have permanently closed, thereby altering even more lives in our community. By using public spaces often dominated by single occupied cars in new ways, the City created a model program to not only help downtown businesses survive a difficult period but a future template on how we ensure more of our public space is used by the entire community.

DMI has long supported creating a vibrant and welcoming downtown for all. One way to ensure vibrancy and accessibility is through more communal outdoor spaces through programs like Streatery. The complete transformation of downtown's South Pinckney Street into an open, inviting, and busy outdoor dining space creates a welcome energy and vibrancy in downtown. This is just one example of how Streatery has made downtown Madison a more attractive, welcoming, and engaging place for our residents and visitors.

We strongly encourage the City Council to support making Streatery permanent. By taking this first step, we will allow our city to continue to rethink how we use our public space thereby finding new ways to bring our community together more often and in more places. Spending more time together in outdoor accessible locations will benefit us all. In creating a permanent Streatery program, we can reimagine so much more of our city and downtown.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Ilstrup".

Jason Ilstrup  
President  
Downtown Madison, Inc. (DMI)