

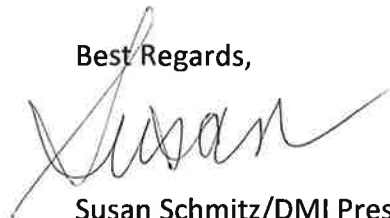
Dear City of Madison Alders:

There has been a lot of conversation about the retail mix and the future of the downtown retail district the last few months. Downtown Madison, Inc. (DMI) and Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID) are very pleased that the City of Madison has moved forward to hire a consultant to do a downtown retail study that will take a look at the current situation, look at retail trends and also look at cities that have successful downtown retail districts. DMI and the BID were pleased to be involved with the RFP that went out to potential consultants. We are currently looking forward to being involved in discussions that will bring about positive results for downtown retail.

State Street and the Capitol Square (the BID area) are central to the success of not only downtown Madison, but the city as a whole. When our forefathers laid out our city, they put our State Capitol building on one drumlin and Bascom Hall on another drumlin connected by a retail street—brilliant! State Street has seen livery stables, gas stations, breweries, department stores, specialty stores, etc. It has always represented its users and uses. But one thing it has never been is stagnant—it is always evolving. We are now at a time of even greater change! People buy many of their goods on-line—including their clothing, people are looking for services and different types of entertainment and people eat out and they like to eat outside! None of these changes are bad—they are different and the street needs to adjust—like it has for over 150 years.

DMI and BID think this is the most exciting time for downtown Madison in decades! We have thousands of new residents in the downtown with many new businesses deciding to locate in the central city. We have a seasoned Business Improvement District and active downtown organization. Our downtown is also the place that showcases our fabulous food resources from surrounding counties including four nationally recognized chefs who provide the best in food experiences in the Midwest. We are very much looking forward to working with the City of Madison and the chosen consultant to not only look at our business mix but to also grow downtown retail/entertainment. Thank you all for your support of a healthy and vital downtown Madison.

Best Regards,



Susan Schmitz/DMI President



Tiffany Kenney/BID Executive Director