



Legislation Text

File #: 00049, **Version:** 2

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Requesting a review by the Plan Commission, Urban Design Commission and the Common Council Organizational Committee of the Economic Development Commission's recommendations from their report entitled " Opportunities to Make Madison City Government More Friendly to Business" dated December 2004.

Body

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Commission held a series of listening sessions for the business community in the City of Madison to provide them an opportunity to comment on their experiences with the City of Madison development review and approval process, code enforcement and inspection and other issues; and,

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Commission has issued a report containing many recommendations that affect the Plan Commission, Urban Design Commission and Common Council; and,

WHEREAS, the Common Council desires to take a proactive approach to the findings,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Common Council requests that the Plan Commission, the Urban Design Commission and the Common Council Organizational Committee review the Commission's recommendations and **report back to the Common Council by March 29, 2004**, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that committee's shall review and comment on the following recommendations identified in the Economic Development Commission's report:

- * The city should adopt a pro-business economic development mission statement and align city agencies and staff around measurable goals to fulfill the mission.
- * The mayor should consider creating a cabinet-level office of economic development as a way to ensure that economic development is treated with equal priority as other important city goals.
- * Renew the city's focus on customer service and quality improvement, particularly within agencies that have regular contact with businesses.
- * Make a number of internal changes to processes that affect business, including:
 1. Creating an ombudsman / project manager as a "first point of contact" for business;
 2. Redesigning the application, review and approval processes for development projects;
 3. Making better use of technology to enhance communication about such projects among city staff, boards and commissions.
- * Incorporate *presumptive approval* into the development review process. Under this standard, a project that is not approved or denied with 180 days is deemed approved unless there is a mutually agreed-upon cause for extension.
- * Consolidate existing commissions, such as the Urban Design Commission and the Plan Commission, to eliminate the fragmented approach to projects, and to reduce the number of reviews. Included in this recommendation are the ideas of ending certain practices that essentially "hold hostage" businesses for issues unrelated to the core approval parameters of the project and of limiting the introduction of legislation, e.g. new ordinances, by title only

for Common Council action.

- * The Common Council, either through the Common Council Organizational Committee or a separate committee, should institute a regular review of existing ordinances and regulations to get rid of the obsolete and eliminate conflicts and inconsistencies.
- * The Common Council and City staff should use "carrots" - encouragement and rewards - rather than "sticks" or legislative mandates to promote a culture supportive of business and encourage private investment that benefits the community. Incentives might include expedited reviews, reduced fees, city-sponsored recognition and awards in addition to free workshops and seminars on industry best practices.