



**Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)**

**MEMO**

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Date: August 10, 2011

To: Mayor Paul Soglin

Cc: Mayoral Aides Katie Crawley, Astra Iheukumere, Sally Miley, Anne Monks  
Alds. Mike Verveer and Scott Resnick  
Kevin Briski, Parks Superintendent  
Noble Wray, Chief of Police

From: Board of Directors, Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)  
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Re: BID input on city's 2012 Operating Budget

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Dear Mayor Soglin,

Thank you for the opportunity for input on the 2012 city Operating Budget and the values and services important to the central business district. The Board and business owners of Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID) appreciate the city's budget challenges and understand there are difficult decisions ahead.

The BID Board encourages continued city investment in the cleanliness and safety of central downtown to support economic development and growth of tax base. Two city services are especially important in this regard, and we urge you to preserve their funding at current levels:

Police: Downtown foot patrols and neighborhood officer

Parks: Mall Concourse Maintenance

We know you understand that a healthy city needs a healthy downtown. We thank you for your work on key downtown initiatives such as the State Street Mall, Mall Maintenance, the Civic Center and Monona Terrace. Your vision has helped State Street and the Capitol Square thrive as a local business district and grow as a cultural and visitor destination.

Since its formation in 1999, the BID has partnered to build on that foundation to sustain a healthy business district. The BID invests \$350,000 a year in programs to support businesses and attract customers, including visitor services, marketing, advertising and events, planting and floral programs, and holiday decorations. What made it possible for the property owners to agree to form a BID and assess themselves an extra amount is that the BID dollars fund added-value services, and are not used for city services already funded through property taxes or other special charges.

A clean, safe downtown is the baseline for the BID's investment in the district and the city as a whole. Clean and safe are about much more than comfort and aesthetics. A clean, safe downtown attracts people, who attract businesses, which increase rents, which increases the value of the downtown real estate, and ultimately contributes to the city's entire tax base.

In 2008, the city approved a 3-5 Year Strategic Economic Development Plan. Our BID and BIDs in general are mentioned as tools for revitalizing neighborhoods. The Plan emphasizes the importance of growing basic sectors including Conventions & Visitors that serve markets beyond Madison and bring money into our economy from outside. In one example of the economic impact of the visitors sector, data from the 2007 Downtown Madison Market Analysis Study show that visitors to the University of Wisconsin-Madison (academic, cultural, friends & family, athletics) generate upwards of \$163 million in direct spending in Madison each year.

Also in 2008, the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau completed a market study and strategic visioning project, Destination 2020. The study identified that the three top "destination drivers," or reasons people visit Madison, are primarily downtown: University of Wisconsin-Madison, Monona Terrace/Alliant Energy Center, and the Wisconsin State Capitol/Government. Visitors reported that top "destination influencers" in selecting Madison included cleanliness and safety. Among convention and meeting planners, top perceptions of Madison included "clean" and "safe."

The bottom line is that most if not all visitors to Madison will come downtown, and "clean" and "safe" are very important to convention and travel decision-makers. For Madison to grow its Conventions & Visitors economic sector, and to support Monona Terrace and the proposed downtown convention hotel, downtown must be clean and safe.

In addition, Madison residents from throughout the city use and visit downtown for events, business, shopping and dining, and have the same expectations as visitors for cleanliness and safety in the central downtown.

Lastly, the downtown foot patrols and neighborhood officer who know the downtown environment and the players are key to addressing some of our city's most costly safety issues: chronic, repeat offenders who often also face issues of mental health, alcohol and drug abuse. Daytime crime and disruptive behaviors, usually related to alcohol abuse, are top concerns of downtown business owners, their customers, and the visitors we serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.