



## DMI Leadership Report – November 2020

From Jason Ilstrup, DMI President

### **Creating Connections and Community:**

- DMI and the City of Madison continue to facilitate the Downtown Group. Over the last month the Group created task forces in activation/programming, economic development, and equity. The task forces are working on short, near and long-term projects to create a vibrant and equitable downtown Madison.
- DMI is working with Step Up: Equity Matters and the DMI Challenge Committee on a project to ensure equity, inclusion and diversity are at the heart of the 2021 DMI Civic Agenda. Over the next several months, Step Up and the Challenge Committee will work with each standing committee to review the Civic Agenda and add equity, inclusion, and diversity throughout the entire Agenda.
- DMI released the 2020 State of the Downtown Report and hosted a panel discussion at our annual event. The report contains relevant facts and figures for Downtown Madison and includes some initial data on the effects of COVID. The event included a panel discussion with Dr. Ruben Anthony, Brenda Gonzalez, Tiffany Kenney, Diane Morgenthaler, and Matt Wachter.
- DMI, the Greater Madison Chamber, Destination Madison, the Black Chamber of Commerce, the Latino Chamber of Commerce and several regional chambers sent out a survey to all members asking for information about COVID, current business operations and their challenges/opportunities in the months ahead. The information will be used, as with the first survey, in the critical advocacy work with local elected and public health officials.
- DMI worked with the UW Community Relations team and the Dean of Students to create a better communication between the University and off-campus housing providers. The improved model will assist in ensuring students and their housing providers have the information they need during COVID and/or any other larger campus issues.
- The What's Up Downtown Breakfast hosted Dr. Jack Daniels, Dr. Tim Casper, and Maggie Krantz-Porter for a discussion on Madison College and how the community can support their important work.

### **Economic Development:**

- DMI is working with/assisting the City of Madison on ways to creating more affordable housing. The City's strategy multi-pronged approach includes changing zoning rules, funding parts of projects, a new homeless support network and creating the ACRE program in Madison. The DMI Housing Task Force is helping the City as a private partner on several parts of this plan, most specifically finding mentors and creating networks for the ACRE program participants.
- The Committee hosted a presentation/discussion on the Madison Music City project, a collaborative effort between the Urban Community Arts Network (UCAN) and the City of

Madison to create a stronger and equitable music scene in Madison where all kinds of music can thrive.

- Several changes were made to the proposed electronic vehicle charging resolution working its way through the City. The resolution is scheduled for a final vote in one of the next few City Council meetings.
- DMI wrote a letter of support for the ULI project at the American Exchange location. The letter discussed the merits of the project for downtown.
- The Economic Development and Government Relations Committee met jointly with the Wisconsin Policy Forum to discuss their report of the City of Madison budget.

#### **Challenge Committee:**

- The Challenge Committee met with Step Up to review their upcoming work on the 2021 DMI Civic Agenda.

#### **Membership Development:**

- The Membership Development Committee continues to work on the new DMI scholarship program providing membership dues for prospective DMI members or those who are not renewing their memberships due to hardship through contributions provided by other DMI members and partners. The Committee also continues to provide guidance on membership and fulfilling the important ambassadorial roles.

#### **Transportation:**

- DMI participated in a discussion lead by the City of Madison on their Transportation Demand Management (TDM) concept they hope to roll out in the next few months. Transportation Demand Management refers to strategies implemented to increase transportation system efficiency and shift travel patterns to reduce the number and length of single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips.
- DMI participated in a public meeting on the updated and revised plans for the first Bus Rapid Transit line. The downtown revisions include adding center bus lanes on East Washington (Blair to Milwaukee St.) and moving the Webster and Livingston Street stations to Blair and Paterson Streets.

#### **Quality of Life:**

- The Quality of Life Committee heard a presentation from the Madison Children's Museum on their Our Future in Play initiative – an outdoor play area being developed off Dayton Street in time for next summer. It is a modification of their larger project which they hope to complete in the next few years.
- DMI participated in the Lake Monona Waterfront public visioning session (formally known as the Law Park or Nolen Waterfront projects). The meeting sought input from the community for the newly expanded project, which now includes the Lake Monona waterfront from Machinery Row to Olin Park. With the purchase of the Medical Association building and the planned reconstruction of John Nolen Drive, the project expanded to include a much larger area.
- The City of Madison received a federal Community Based Crime Reduction grant for downtown. DMI, along with CNI and UW Population Health are partners in this innovative project. The goal

of the grant is to build community cohesion by building a multi-stakeholder, cross sector plan to reduce crime and improve public safety of Downtown Madison.

- I continue to serve on the City/County Homeless Issues Committee. At the last meeting we heard updates on the men's shelter (they hope to announce a new location soon) and voted on competing resolutions on homeless encampments in City parks.

**Inclusiveness:**

- The Inclusiveness Committee met to discuss all the ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion work from the Downtown Group, DMI and the Challenge Committee. They also discussed possible projects they can start.
- The Beyond Compliance Task Force continues working on their training guide to the new City ADA regulations on festivals.

**Government Relations:**

- The Government Relations Committee met and approved an endorsement plan for the 2021 Madison City Council elections. The Committee also met with the Wisconsin Policy Forum to discuss the City of Madison budget with the Economic Development Committee.

For questions and more information, contact Jason Ilstrup, DMI President at 608-512-1330 or [jilstrup@downtownmadison.org](mailto:jilstrup@downtownmadison.org).