



DMI Director's Report – May 2022

From Jason Ilstrup, DMI President

Creating Connections and Community:

- DMI hosted several events in April and May including the What's Up Downtown Breakfast with Dean Paul Robbins from UW's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies; a New Faces, New Places at Lodgic Everyday Community; a New Member Coffee; and a Nosh at Noon event focusing on building 8-80 cities with Sally Jo Spaeni from the Madison Senior Center, Michael Johnson from the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, Rob Gottschalk from Vandewalle & Associates, Johnathan Zarov from the Madison Children's Museum and Darrin Wasniewski from AARP.
- Jason spoke to the Town and Gown Dinner about the State of State Street: Challenges and Opportunities. Jason also spoke to Magnet and several other local companies about downtown Madison.
- The City's Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Lake Monona Waterfront Design Challenge ended in early May with fourteen local and national firms submitting. The Challenge is a design competition creating a master plan development for the Lake Monona planning area. The Friends of Lake Monona Waterfront also created a new website highlighting the work in the area: <https://lakemononawaterfront.org/>
- Jason continues working with the University of Wisconsin's School of Human Ecology DS341 class to reimagine several areas downtown. The students in the class, Design Thinking for Transformation, created projects to revitalize Francis Street Mall, Hawthorne Court and Law Park. Leaders from the city of Madison assisted in reviewing the final presentations. Jason also served as a fictional client for a College of Engineering student capstone project. The students redesigned the 400 to 600 blocks of State Street. Several DMI members served as student mentors.
- DMI released a new Downtown Happening's Podcast with InBusiness Magazine Publisher Jon Konarske: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlgF-WcYTPA&t=1s>.
- Jason participated in the Progress Center for Black Women's launch of FOCUS, a program designed to help Black entrepreneurs get focused on key aspects of running their business while providing a supportive community, tools, training, and resources. The launch also included a pitch contest for over a dozen local businesses. https://madison.com/business/business-class-madison-co-working-space-launches-training-initiative-for-black-led-businesses/article_ba6a6231-d4aa-5ff8-9f65-cbe11c3d34f2.html

Economic Development:

- The Economic Development Committee did not meet last month. In May, the Committee is meeting with Matt Mikolajewski, the City's Director of Economic Development, to discuss Tax Increment Districts (TID) downtown.

Challenge Committee:

- The Challenge Committee met to discuss the DMI strategic plan.

Membership Development:

- The Membership Development Committee met in April to discuss the Committee's wins, potential new members and assigned ambassadors. New members to DMI this month include:
 - M3 Insurance - <https://m3ins.com/>
 - Epic - <https://www.epic.com/>
 - Dane Dances! - <https://danedances.org/>
 - The RCC - <https://www.thercc.org/>
 - Connect Search, LLC - <https://www.connectsearchllc.com/>

Transportation:

- The Transportation Committee met this month to hear a presentation from the team at Innova EV (<https://www.innovaevcarshare.com/about-innovaev-car-sharing/>), a car sharing company dedicated to providing affordable zero-emission first and last mile mobility. The Committee also heard updates from local transportation partners.

Quality of Life:

- The Quality of Life Committee heard a presentation on the Lake Monona Waterfront project at their April meeting. The Committee also heard updates from their Communications and University Relations Sub-Committee and several partners including the BID and the Madison Police Department.
- The Committee's University Relations Sub-Committee met to discuss their goals and objectives.

Inclusiveness:

- The Latino Professionals Association (LPA - <http://lpamadison.org/>) and DMI hosted their last Conexiones event of the season in April. The Conexiones series connected mentors and mentees around educational events. Dozens of people participated in this season's sessions.
- The Inclusiveness Committee met in early May to hear a presentation on the upcoming Disability Pride Festival (<https://www.disabilitypridemadison.org/>). The Committee also heard updates from the Committee's various task forces.

Government Relations:

- The Government Relations Committee met with Deputy Mayor Dr. Linda Vakunta at their April meeting. Dr. Vakunta updated the Committee on the City's work downtown and answered questions from the members.

For questions and more information, contact Jason Ilstrup, DMI President at 608-512-1330 or jilstrup@downtownmadison.org.