



DMI Director's Report – April 2026

From Jason Ilstrup, DMI President

Creating Connections and Community:

- The Envision Downtown Madison project continues to move forward in earnest. Over the past month, several stakeholder meetings have taken place, along with key discussions with partners focused on major initiatives and long-term visioning for Downtown Madison.
- The March DMI Advocacy Update featured a discussion on Regent Street, including a new vision and planning efforts for the road's reconstruction in 2027. Panelists included Sam Brown (Owner, Fabiola's, Greenbush, and Leopold's), Rob Gottschalk (Principal, Vandewalle & Associates), and Stephanie Thomsen (Director of Strategic Growth, JT Engineering).
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hK5bRgnFeo&t=249s>
- DMI hosted this quarter's IDEA Series event on immigration rights and resources at Centro Hispano. Moderated by Brenda Gonzalez (UW–Madison), the panel featured Fabiola Hamden (Dane County), Jennifer Johnson (Boardman Clark), and Karen Menendez Collier (Centro Hispano).
- The April New Faces, New Places event was hosted by HNTB at their newly expanded offices in the U.S. Bank Building downtown.

DMI Media Mentions:

- March 3 – WMTV - ['We Could Not Be Happier': Regent Street Reconstruction Plan Heads To Transportation Commission](#)
- March 20 – CapTimes - [Sale of Two More Downtown State Office Buildings Could Reshape Downtown](#)
- March 21 – WISC - [Two State Buildings Up for Sale in Downtown Portfolio Reduction](#)
- April 3 – The Isthmus - [The Big Issues on Your April 7 Ballot in Madison](#)
- April 13 – The Wisconsin State Journal - [Regent Street's Hong Kong Cafe and Choles Floral Could Be Demolished for Apartments](#)

Presentations:

- There were no presentations this month.

Economic Development:

- At their March meeting, the Economic Development Committee met as a whole to discuss the current state of market-rate housing in Downtown Madison.
- The Cap East Business Association (CEBA) Board met in April.

Membership Development:

- DMI welcomed several new members, including:

Lighthouse Christian School	Jenny Wartinbee	www.lcsmadison.org
Iconica, Inc.	Connor Emmel	www.iconicacreates.com
Kathy & Chuck Kamp	Kathy & Chuck Kamp	
Wildflower Interiors	Caiti Green	www.wildflower-interiors.com
The Sigma Group	Sara Iverson Smith	www.thesigmagroup.com
Chrysalis, Inc.	Imani G. Jackson	https://workwithchrysalis.org
Be Well Chiropractic & Rehabilitation	Courtney Busch	https://www.bwchiroclinic.com

Transportation

- The DMI Transportation Committee’s March meeting included a presentation and discussion on ‘Transit 101’ with Metro Transit’s Chief Operating Officer, Bryan Mulrooney.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8w012s7d5M>
- At the April meeting, Dan Schave, Southwest Region Director, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, presented upcoming transportation projects in the Dane County region.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=idJ4TjT4sXg>

Quality of Life

- The Quality of Life Committee did not meet in March.

Beyond Compliance

- The Accessible and Affordable Housing Task Force met in April and heard from a panel of private housing developers, including Cashton Laufenberg (Madison Development Corporation - MDC) and Dan Kennelly (Range Hill Partners), on the challenges and opportunities of building accessible and affordable housing.

Government Relations

- DMI endorsed several candidates for this year’s Madison City Council elections. Everyone of DMI’s endorsed candidates won their April 7th election:
 - District 2 – Will Ochowicz
 - District 4 – Mike Verveer
 - District 6 – Davy Mayer
 - District 8 – Ellen Zhang
 - District 10 – Yannette Figueroa Cole
 - District 16 – Sean O’Brien
 - District 18 – Carmella Glen
 - District 20 – Barbara Harrington-McKinney
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For questions or more information, contact Jason Ilstrup, DMI President, at 608-512-1330 or jilstrup@downtownmadison.org.