

May 5, 2011



Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID)

Advocacy Policy

Approved by the BID Board, May 5, 2011

As outlined in the BID Operating Plan, the VISION of Madison's Central BID is to be a powerful BID that is respected in the Community for getting things done. The AIM of Madison's Central BID is to increase the vitality and health of the district and promote business within it. The CONSTITUENTS are the property and business owners within the district. The ACTION by the BID to achieve the goal is to market the district as a whole, create a welcoming environment, develop community relations, and advocate for the needs and interests of the district.

Advocacy Policy Goal:

- Develop a protocol of how and when to solicit Executive Committee and Board input related to advocacy.
- Conduct strategic planning sessions with the Executive Committee related to advocacy.
- Formulate written advocacy guidelines based on the outcome of these steps.

BID Advocacy Guidelines:

- Positions should conform with the BID Operating Plan scope, objectives and activities, and should be considered in relation to BID's annual goals and priorities.
- Positions should be determined based on a logical process, outlined below.
- Advocacy should reflect the needs and interests of the District as a whole, rather than of a single constituent or a vocal minority.
- Whether to advocate should be considered in relation to available BID political capital, staff time, and advocacy efforts by other organizations.
- BID Board advocacy and actions must conform with city and state open meetings laws and the city ethics code and opinions.
- Underlying all BIDs are the fundamental premises of enhancing the district as a whole and creating a "rising tide" for all property and business owners within the district. Individual attention to or advocacy on issues specific to a single property or business owner goes

against the basic purpose of a BID, unless the issue could or does have broader implications or sets precedent for the district as a whole.

While Madison Central BID staff can assist individual business or property owners as a liaison with city staff, committees or elected officials, neither the BID staff nor the Board as a whole will represent or advocate for or against individual businesses or property owners regarding licenses, permits, development projects, or similar issues

NOTE: The above guidelines apply to Board members when representing BID or advocating on behalf of the BID and BID Board. The guidelines do not apply to Board members acting as individuals, separate from BID and distinct from their role as Board members.

BID Advocacy Process and Evaluation Criteria:

1. The BID Board and staff identify advocacy issues in a variety of ways:

- Via Board members, whose seats represent different areas and constituents within the District
- Communications from BID property and business owners
- Surveys of and outreach to BID property and business owners
- BID Annual Meeting, held to solicit input from constituents
- Public comment at BID Board meetings
- BID Board and staff engagement with partner organizations and committees

2. If a Board member or BID property or business owner thinks there is a new issue that BID should get involved with (or that BID should revisit old issues or step up ongoing advocacy), that person should bring the issue to the attention of the Executive Director. The Executive Director may also identify potential advocacy issues.

3. The Executive Director will evaluate the request based on criteria below, and will consult with the Board Chair and/or Executive Committee as needed. The Executive Director may proceed with advocacy, decline, or offer limited assistance as appropriate.

a. Does the issue affect or fit within the BID:

- Mission, strategic plan, and scope of activities (as outlined in the Operating Plan)?
- Past and current advocacy positions?
- Geographic district?
- Current goals and priorities (as outlined annually)?

b. Does it reflect the needs and interests of the District as a whole, or a significant constituency?

c. Does it involve acting as liaison to the city or resource for the business (BID role), or does it involve advocacy on behalf of an individual business or property owner (not the BID role).

d. What are the time considerations for the issue and needed action?

Time considerations may affect how the Executive Director proceeds and the level of Board consultation. The Executive Director may move forward in her or his best judgment if action is needed right away, and it is not feasible to consult the Board Chair or Executive Committee.

3. If the issue is new, major, complicated, or otherwise needs further consideration, the Executive Director will bring the issue to the Board Chair and Executive Committee.
4. The Executive Committee will evaluate the issue based on above and below criteria. The Executive Committee may give direction on an advocacy position and inform the Board at a subsequent meeting, or the Executive Committee may decide the issue needs to be brought to the full Board and possibly be worked on by a Board Subcommittee appointed by the Chair.

Time considerations may affect how the Executive Committee chooses to proceed (e.g., the BID may need to respond to an issue before the next Board meeting).

5. If the issue is new, or a significant departure, the Board should consider:
 - a. Would a position reflect the needs and interests of the District as a whole, or at least a significant affected constituency? (rather than a single constituent or vocal minority).
 - b. Can we determine consensus among a majority of affected members of the district?
 - c. Who are we talking to? (Our own members, policy makers, the public, etc.?)
 - d. Can we make a difference? (If we take a position, can BID realistically have an impact on the outcome, and if so, what?)
 - e. Should we use our political capital on this? (Will taking a position here strengthen or weaken our overall effectiveness and relationships with our partners?)
 - f. Do we have the resources (staff time)?
 - g. Is another organization better positioned to advocate on this issue? Does BID need to take the lead, or can BID support or amplify the position of another organization?
 - h. Do we need more information before proceeding?
 - g. What kind of process will be needed to determine a position? Depending on the issue, this may involve:
 - One or more Board meetings and/or public meetings;
 - Appropriate communication with Board and membership;
 - Formation of new Board subcommittee or work by existing BID subcommittee.
6. After an appropriate process is determined and executed, the Board will vote on an advocacy position to provide guidance for staff and Board work.
7. After a position is determined, BID staff will proceed with advocacy, and will update the Board and members as needed. Staff may seek Board Chair, Executive Committee, and/or full Board approval for significant changes or developments in the Board position.

BID Advocacy – Other Existing Policies:

1. BID Operating Plan

- **Plan Activities:** The four strategic directions that will be pursued by Madison's Central BID are to Maximize Marketing and Promotion of Downtown, provide a Welcoming Environment, develop Community Relations, and Advocate for the district.

Advocate for the District

To advocate for the needs and interests of the district as a whole, working closely with city staff, elected officials, and partner organizations and stakeholders, on areas including:

- Construction
- Proposed Policies for the central downtown business district
- Mall Maintenance services
- City of Madison Downtown Plan, Development Process Review, Economic Development Plan implementation, and other similar initiatives;
- Halloween
- Downtown Safety
- Business Recruitment & Retention

The BID will conduct other activities similar to those above, to carry out the objectives identified above.

2. BID policy (approved in 2008):

As stated in the BID Operating Plan, BID actions include marketing the district as a whole and advocating for the needs and interests of the district. While the BID can assist individual business or property owners as a liaison with city staff, committees and elected officials, the BID does not lobby for or against individual businesses or property owners regarding licenses, permits, development projects, etc.

3. City Code of Ethics (applies to BID Board, a committee appointed by the Mayor)

Applicable barred actions for individual committee members (summary)

- Use or attempt to use office or position to gain anything of value for self, family, or associated organization.
- Receipt of anything of value if it could influence action or be seen as a reward; offering anything of value to an official is also a violation.
- Take any official action or use office in a way to benefit self, family, or associated organization.
- Logrolling

And, specific to BID, per City Attorney opinion

- State statute explicitly authorizes BID Board to determine the method and amount of the BID special assessments.
- BID Board should not make recommendations to the Common Council on Mall Maintenance special charges (NB: Does not apply to Mall Maintenance services).

4. City and Wisconsin Open Meetings Laws

Per the BID Operating Plan:

- Open Meetings Law—All meetings of the Board shall be governed by the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law if and as legally required.
- Record Keeping—Files and records of the Board’s affairs shall be kept pursuant to the Wisconsin Public Records Law.

NOTE: Board members should familiarize themselves with the City Ethics Code and Open Meetings information provided to them by the City upon their confirmation as a BID Board member, and available at:

<http://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/myCommit/trainingSupport/index.cfm>