

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

## COMMUNITY FORUM on

## NORTHSIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Monday, November 10, 6:30 – 8:30 pm at Warner Park Community Recreation Center

### Forum Background & Format

The Northside Planning Council and Northside Business Association held a community forum on Northside Economic Development on November 10, 2008. The purpose of the forum was to provide an opportunity to gather business and community input on Northside economic development issues, with particular focus on issues related to improving the Northside business climate.

Matt Mikolajewski (City of Madison, Office of Business Resources) presented a summary of the results of the recent Northside Market Study and gave a brief description of economic development tools available through the City of Madison. The Northside Planning Council produced an unofficial summary of key Northside Market Study points. The final version of the Northside Market Study is not published yet, however, a PowerPoint presentation is available at: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/neighborhoods/northsideplan/otherstudies.cfm>

A panel of Northside business owners, developers, and economic development specialists helped open a discussion of the Northside business climate. The panel included: Marty Rifken, realtor/developer of Lakewood Plaza & Corben Business Campus; Jeff Maurer, president/general manager of Pierce's Supermarkets; Mike Pratzel, co-owner of Manna Café, and Sue Gleason, regional assets director at Thrive, member of City of Madison Economic Development Commission and longtime Northside resident. Due to a last minute conflict, Steve Nelson, owner of Duwayne's Salon, was unable to participate in person on the panel.

A broad mix of approximately about 30 Northside residents and business owners attended this interactive forum. After hearing from the panel, participants took part in small groups with 5 to 8 people in each, for a total of two rounds of 3 to 4 facilitated groups. In the first round, each group identified what's working and not working for Northside business climate. In the second round, each group identified the top 2 to 3 tools & strategies to improve the Northside business climate.

Below is a summary of the priority strengths/opportunities, threats/barriers and solutions/strategies identified by multiple small groups, followed by issues identified by only one group.

This summary of information does not represent the official position of the Northside Planning Council or the Northside Business Association.

If you have questions, please contact:

**Tim Carlisle**  
Northside Planning Council Lead Organizer  
608-661-0060, Ext. 2  
[tim@northsideplanningcouncil.org](mailto:tim@northsideplanningcouncil.org)

**Rylee Wedekind**  
Northside Business Association President  
608-512-1003  
[rwedekind@5ninesdata.com](mailto:rwedekind@5ninesdata.com)

## **Summary of Results - Tallied**

### **Top Northside Business Climate Strengths/Opportunities/Threats**

*Identified as priority by multiple groups; (#) = frequency of item mentioned by any group*

#### **STRENGTHS/OPPORTUNITIES:**

##### **Strong sense of community - support, security, identity, neighborhood involvement (5)**

- Community involvement, sense of community
- Strong sense of place w/ niche businesses that reflect that
- Sense of community- support, security, identity
- Safety/security
- Well established neighborhoods

##### **Location/proximity to airport, downtown, MATC, interstates and availability of affordable space (2)**

- Location- proximity to airport, distance to downtown, MATC, commute to Milwaukee
- Availability of space (lower rent retail compared to rest of city)

#### **THREATS/BARRIERS:**

##### ***Dated perception of high-crime combined with run-down appearance of some businesses creates a Northside marketing problem (5)***

- Perceptions of the Northside and within the Northside
- Perception of NS, “tired” appearance, aesthetics are important
- Appearances of businesses/Perception
- Old perception of crime isn’t accurate
- Don’t know how to market the Northside

### **Top Northside Business Climate Solutions/Strategies**

*Identified as priority by multiple groups; (#) = frequency of item mentioned by any group*

#### **SOLUTIONS/STRATEGY:**

##### ***Form a Northside Economic Alliance to access the tools available from the City (e.g. BID, TIF, Façade Improvement, etc.) and conduct targeted business support (8)***

- Form a Northside Economic Alliance to get noticed by the City (BID, TIF, Façade Improvement)
- Utilize “Alliance” to target specific businesses with opportunities, location assistance, etc.
- Need create a respected and clearly identified voice for Northside
- Coordinate the elements (conflicts & loose ends)
- Organize a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district
- City financial support
- Engage more of the NS business community in problem solving
- Promote a focus on NS businesses through NSN, neighborhood newsletters, mailings, etc.

##### ***Develop a Northside brand/theme and a coordinated agent/effort to market the Northside (3)***

- Brand the Northside; Develop a theme and agent to market Northside identity, e.g. “Green Industry”
- Market Northside to the rest of the city
- Market to smaller towns nearby (reduce leakage)

### **Northside strengths and opportunities identified by only one group**

- Sense that we can and know how to do business on NS
- Lots of economic opportunities (diversity, education, helping neighbors)
- Basic needs are met
- Ability to draw people in for special events (e.g. Mallards, Rhythm & Booms)

### **Northside threats and barriers identified by only one group**

- Retention efforts (knowledge of available City/State resources)
- Lack of local loyalty
- Need more jobs, income levels need a boost
- Landlocked for growth and funding
- Ability to draw others to the Northside on a regular basis
- No City support
- No mid-level housing (e.g., housing for seniors moving out is low-income or luxury)\*

### **Northside solutions and strategies identified by only one group**

#### **Small Groups**

- Pressure Roundy's to buy out their [former Kohl's store] lease [at NS TownCenter]
- Attract MATC to business district

#### **Panel**

- Inventory of land and space
- Retain traffic volume
- Restoration/renovation
- Draw primary sector businesses with jobs to Northside
- Focus on unique, local, community oriented businesses
- Larger project around Hwy 113