



MEMORANDUM

TO: Menasha Common Council
FROM: Kara Homan, AICP, Principal Planner *KH*
DATE: June 7, 2013
RE: **"Connect Communities" Downtown Menasha Tour & Workshop**

Earlier this year, Menasha was selected to be part of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's (WEDC) "Connect Communities" Program. I have attached a brochure to provide you with more information regarding this program.

As a result of the "Connect Communities" designation, Naletta Burr, Community Account Manager for the WEDC, will be visiting Menasha to conduct a Downtown Walking Tour/Assessment and assist us in hosting a Downtown Workshop. These events will be taking place on Wednesday, June 19, 2013. The workshop and tour are designed to identify and prioritize key issues and opportunities for downtown. This information will be used in the future to develop strategies and recommendations to help us further improve the vitality of Menasha's downtown.

As a member of the Menasha Common Council, I'm excited to invite you to participate in both the Downtown Walking Tour and the Workshop. The details on the tour and workshop are below.

- 1. Downtown Menasha Walking Tour & Assessment**
DATE: Wednesday, June 19, 2013
TIME: 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM
LOCATION: Depart from Menasha Senior Center (116 Main Street).
- 2. Downtown Menasha Workshop***
DATE: Wednesday, June 19, 2013
TIME: 5:00 PM
LOCATION: Menasha Senior Center, 116 Main St
**More details regarding the workshop can be found in the enclosed flyer.*

RSVP requested: Please contact me at khoman@ci.menasha.wi.us or 967-3652 to indicate if you will be available to attend these events.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

Downtowns and urban commercial districts play an important role in their communities and in Wisconsin's overall economy, functioning not only as prominent employment and business centers, but oftentimes standing as the historic foundation of the municipalities they serve. They are the center of local government, providing a meeting place for the community. These places where people congregate to do business, attend events, or simply enjoy contact with their neighbors add vitality to an area that improves the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Successful commercial districts don't just happen. They need to be planned and nurtured. Their prosperity requires interest and action from many stakeholders who share a vision for the community. Where do you start? Who needs to be involved? What resources will be required to succeed?

These questions and more form the basis of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's (WEDC's) Connect Communities Program.



201 West Washington Avenue
PO Box 7970
Madison, WI 53707-7970
(608) 210-6840
inwisconsin.com

CONNECT COMMUNITIES

RESOURCES FOR YOUR
DOWNTOWNS AND URBAN
COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS



SHARED GOALS

Connect Communities offers technical assistance and networking opportunities to local leaders interested in revitalizing their downtown or urban commercial districts. It also provides access to additional financial and technical assistance programs.

Because no two districts are identical, Connect Communities, like all WEDC programs, is adaptable to downtowns and urban commercial districts of all sizes. Connect Communities complements WEDC's very successful Main Street Program. In fact, successful Connect Communities may choose to apply for Wisconsin Main Street status.

Connect Communities helps local planners leverage the unique assets of their downtowns and urban districts. While the characteristics of each community may differ, Connect Communities participants share an interest in creating economic vibrancy within their districts. The goal is to reduce sprawl while spurring business and residential growth.

AVAILABLE SERVICES

Communities selected to participate in the Connect Communities Program will have immediate access to resources that will help them get started with a commercial revitalization effort. You will also benefit from interaction with WEDC's experienced staff and the leaders in the Connect Communities network. Connect Communities services include:

- A ListServ/Network Group to get new ideas from staff and other participating Connect Communities
- Participation in one Main Street Executive Director Workshop each year with a focus on a downtown revitalization topic. Past topics have included business recruitment, volunteer development and branding
- An on-site visit from one of WEDC's community development staff to assist in identifying needs and offering assistance
- An on-line open house to get your questions answered by experts
- Training for your downtown director or board president
- Roundtable discussion groups on pertinent topics held once every year
- Possible opportunities to link college/university student projects to your downtown/urban commercial district needs
- Access to WEDC's downtown development library
- Access to resources and training materials that have been developed for Wisconsin Main Street communities
- Invitation to the annual Main Street Awards Program, plus eligibility to nominate a project for a Connect Communities award
- Webinars/Regional Training

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Must have an organization that focuses on downtown/urban commercial district issues
- Signed agreement with WEDC
- Reporting (twice a year)
- Must have access to computer with required software
- Must commit to majority of training opportunities
- Annual fee: \$200

APPLICATION AND SELECTION

- Up to 20 communities selected each year
- Renewal application every two years
- Scoring based on:
 - Strength of committee/organization
 - Need for assistance
 - Clearly defined downtown/urban commercial district
 - Local resources available
 - Potential
- If your community is interested in learning more, please contact us at (608) 210-6840.
- To apply to be one of our Connect Communities visit www.inwisconsin.com/connectcommunities



Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Downtown Menasha Workshop

Downtown business owners, elected and appointed officials and members of the public are invited to attend!



Guest Presenter:

Naletta Burr

As Northeast Wisconsin's Community Account Manager for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), Naletta Burr helps connect communities to resources that can help them thrive. With over 14 years experience in community, economic, and downtown redevelopment, Naletta is an expert in finding creative solutions to community problems. Naletta previously worked as the Executive Director for On Broadway, Inc., helping to revitalize the historic Broadway District located on the west side of Green Bay's downtown.



Agenda

- Welcome & Overview
- Focus Groups Sessions
- Group Report & Issue Prioritization
- Guest Presenter: Naletta Burr, WEDC
- Next Steps

Light Snacks & Refreshments Provided!

Share your ideas, opinions, and thoughts about downtown Menasha. Your input is vital as we develop a vision to make Menasha's downtown a vibrant and thriving place.

Wednesday, June 19, 5:00 PM

Menasha Senior Center, 116 Main St.

To ensure adequate seating and refreshments, **please RSVP** to khoman@ci.menasha.wi.us or 967.3652



This workshop is being held as part of Menasha's recent designation to the WEDC's "Connect Communities" Program. For more information on this program, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/ConnectCommunities>