BUILD ACCEPTING GRANT APPLICATIONS

Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk is inviting communities to apply for BUILD planning grants. The BUILD program provides grants to Dane County municipalities for planning that lead to infill development and downtown revitalization. Grant applications must be submitted with a postmark dated not later than May 20. Grants will be awarded to planning efforts that further the objectives of the BUILD program.

Eligible applicants are local Dane County municipalities. A local match is required. The total amount of grant money available is $50,000. Application guidelines and information about the BUILD program can be obtained on BUILD web site (address above).

AROUND THE COUNTY

City of Stoughton -
Chamber Promotes “Stoughton Dollars”

Now redeemable at more than 100 Stoughton businesses, Stoughton Dollars are designed to support the local economy by keeping more money in Stoughton. Area residents can obtain Stoughton Dollars through the Stoughton Chamber of Commerce, then use them as gift certificates. Chamber Director Ed Bieno says the Stoughton Dollars initiative has really taken off in the last couple years. “We’ve sold over $25,000 worth each of the last two years. The program is made possible through a special arrangement with Evergreen State Bank.

Cambridge - Downtown Hosts “Walkabouts”

The Cambridge Clothing Stores and restaurants are teaming up to try something new. The clothing store owners would like to show off their wares in a casual walk down Main Street and through the Mill Street Inn & Pub. “It’s not a fashion show,” Jan Carpenter, owner of The Garment Shop said. “We’re going to call it a Walkabout.” Four clothing businesses will each provide two models to showcase their clothing in a walk down to the Mill Street Inn & Pub and around downtown. Walkabouts are planned for the second Thursday of each month.

“What other town has four dress shops?” Carpenter said. “I think this is a great way to showcase that. We need to promote how wonderful Cambridge is.”

(Sources: Stoughton Courier Hub 3/17/05, by Rick Hummell; Cambridge News, 2/3/05, by Amy Alder).

NATIONAL - Madison Among Nation’s Most Walkable Cities

The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) conducted a walking study as part of its 3rd annual Best Walking City Competition. This year’s competition surveyed 200 of the largest US incorporated cities based on three walking conducive categories: healthy lifestyles, modes of transportation to and from work, and involvement in fitness and sport activities.

Madison just missed the top ten, ranking as the 12th most walkable city. Arlington, VA took the #1 spot, with 23% of city workers using public transportation to get around, and 35% of residents walking for exercise. Madison scored high in the active lifestyle (such as walking for exercise or dog and stroller ownership) and work-related (walking, biking, & transit to work) categories, but, perhaps surprisingly, not so well in the fitness category (exercising weekly). For more info see www.apma.org.

RESOURCES

Turning Around Downtown: A 12-Step Program

A new report by the Brookings Institution, by Christopher B. Leinberger, outlines 12 steps to downtown revitalization. The paper “lays out the fundamentals of a downtown turnaround plan and the unique ‘private/public’ partnership required to succeed. Beginning with visioning and strategic planning to the reemergence of an office market at the end stages, these 12 steps form a template for returning ‘walkable urbanity’ downtown.” While focusing on mid- to larger cities, the lessons are applicable to large and small downtowns. (see www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20050307_12steps.htm).

10 City Design Resolutions to Make Better Places

Jeff Speck, Director of Design at the National Endowment of the Arts, shares lessons learned as Manager of the Mayor’s Institute on City Design:

1. Design Streets for People
2. Overrule the Specialists
3. Mix the Uses
4. Hide the Parking Lots
5. Small is Beautiful
6. Save that Building
7. Build Normal (Affordable) Housing
8. Build Green/Grow Green
9. Question Your Codes
10. Don’t Forget Beauty

See: www.planetizen.com/oped/itemprint.php?id=141