



Michael P. May

Aldersperson
Third District

Vice Chairperson
Advisory Committee

Member
*Administration and Finance
Committee
Safety and Development Committee*

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City of West Allis
Dan Devine, Mayor
Thomas Lajsic, Common Council President
Fellow Members, Common Council
7525 W. Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214

RE: "Development Days" Concept

Honorable Mayor, Council President, and Fellow Council Members,

A common stated concern of the Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee is that new businesses, or existing businesses seeking to improve their plans and properties, undergo bouncing between departments for coordination on zoning, permits, etc. Though the departments are helpful, the Chamber has indicated that this bouncing causes frustration for businesses, wastes valuable time, and results in miscommunication and misperceptions of the City of West Allis. I propose a concept called "Development Days" to help remedy the stated problem and improve the business-government experience,

The Development Days concept comes from experience in working with developers, communities, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). How it works is WisDOT staff involved in the development review and permit process keep their calendars clear strictly for development-related meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. Meetings can be requested by developers and communities to discuss their development projects and unique constraints. Basically, it is an opportunity to get all parties on the same page for a "plan of attack" to get developments moving in an efficient manner. All meetings occur at WisDOT, are booked in one-hour time slots, and are attended by key review and permit staff plus the developers and/or jurisdictions.

There is no monetary cost involved in the Development Days concept, and I propose we implement a similar set-up. The benefits of Development Days are multiple:

- **Marketing & Predictability** – When an elected official, business representative, or other party is out networking and meets a potential new business for the community, they can easily pin down a date to meet with our staff and can guaranty that the necessary staff will be available. It is good marketing strategy to be able to pin down exact meeting dates on your first contact.
- **Improved Communication and Access** – Having meetings on the front end, or during certain benchmarks, of a project minimizes confusion and keeps all parties "in the know." It also gives small businesses the same access as large businesses in coordination with the City.



- Faster Approvals – Time is money. Rather than the back-and-forth email and voicemail game on details, businesses and the City may utilize these meetings as a means to solve problems with all the stakeholders in the same room at the same time and to keep everyone on the same page in terms of expectations. Often times the small details can get worked out right there in the room, thus freeing up time for City staff and businesses to focus on the big issues.

Thank you for your time in considering the Development Days concept. I hope you see that this concept has no monetary cost, is a good marketing tool, improves communication, and can help us attract and retain good businesses. I also hope we can direct staff to set aside specific days and times that are the same every month specifically for this purpose.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael P. May", written over a faint circular line.

Michael P. May
Alderman, Third District