

August 2018 Newsletter Article

## **Making the Vision a Reality**

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More and more visitors come to the Alliant Energy Center every year. For nearly 70 years, they've flocked to the Dane County Fair and for more than 50 years, people have been enjoying concerts in the Veterans Memorial Coliseum. Visitors from around the block and around the world attend events at Alliant Energy Center. And the long-range vision for the campus is to not only continue to be the go-to location for major events, but to become a year-round community destination, as well. Turning that vision into reality will stimulate economic development throughout the greater Madison area and enhance the quality of life for those who call this area home.

To make the vision a reality, members of the Alliant Energy Center Comprehensive Master Plan Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee) have been following a carefully structured planning process with the goal of transforming the campus to a fully realized destination district for south Madison. This is a multi-phase process that has been examining Alliant Energy Center's current and potential financial impact and envisioning how to create a community gem that attracts visitors and residents year-round. The planning process is examining potential upgrades to key campus facilities. But that is only part of the larger plan.

A primary goal of the Alliant Energy Center Vision adopted by the Oversight Committee in 2017 was to use the campus as an anchor for a larger "destination district" that would provide a range of complementary uses and activities (restaurants, shopping, recreation, entertainment, hotels, etc.) to create a more dynamic environment that serves the needs of residents and visitors alike. Simultaneous to the campus Master Planning process, a Destination District Vision and Strategy is being developed to better tie the Alliant Energy Center campus together with existing and future adjoining private development and park space areas.

The campus itself, however, also provides opportunities for accommodating additional private development, particularly in the current parking area in front of the Coliseum and the area north of Willow Island. Not only will the new development enliven the campus, but the sale/lease revenues can be used to help off-set the costs of the campus and facility improvements. Stay tuned for more information on opportunities for private developments to contribute to – and benefit from – a coherent, long-term master plan for the Alliant Energy Center Campus and the surrounding areas.