

October 2018 Newsletter Feature Article

Alliant Energy Center: Planning a Destination District

Redevelopment planning for the Alliant Energy Center's 164-acre campus has provided a perfect time for also considering additional long-term improvements to the land adjacent to the campus. Re-imagining the area surrounding the Alliant Energy Center has been the focus of a public/private ad hoc vision panel. Together, the panel is examining how to create a "Destination District" surrounding the campus.

What is a Destination District?

A Destination District is a well-thought out and designed multi-modal area of a community that knits together:

- Pedestrian-friendly residential & commercial development in a walkable area;
- Entertainment venues;
- Outdoor gathering spaces for community events and activities; and
- A critical mass of a mix of uses.

Communities across Wisconsin and around the country are developing Destination Districts as a means to enrich the experiences of local residents and attract vital visitors who help support local business through new spending. An example right in our home state is Titledown - a community development just west of Lambeau Field in Green Bay featuring a large public park with outdoor games and fitness activities along with restaurants and a brewery in the heart of the city.

In Madison, conversations about how to best realize the untapped potential of the Alliant Energy Center campus have served as a catalyst for additional discussions about the necessity of integrating the campus with the adjacent and broader community.

And so, simultaneous to the master planning process, the ad-hoc vision panel, with guidance from Vandewalle & Associates, is now working to create a vision, goals and strategy for a cohesive and recognizable district anchored by the Alliant Energy Center and lakefront. The panel is comprised of representatives of Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau, Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, City of Madison, City of Fitchburg, Dane County, Alliant Energy, Madison Gas & Electric and the state of Wisconsin. The process includes careful consideration of the many potential users of the district, including downtown and isthmus visitors and residents, south side neighborhoods, Alliant Energy Center visitors and local event participants as well as our regional community.



Key Strategies for Creating a Destination District

As part of its process, the vision panel identified six key strategies to help shape a Destination District. While these strategies certainly seem to comprise the core of a solid plan, they also will likely resonate with anyone who has occasion to travel to or through this gateway to the city:

1. Integrate a mix of uses and everyday attractions
2. Create a cohesive park and open space system
3. Connect Across John Nolan and Rimrock Road
4. Add multi-modal connections to downtown area/isthmus



5. Enhance access and connection to the surrounding area
6. Deliver an authentic regional experience

As with the Alliant Energy Center's Master Planning process, the work to develop a Destination District vision is a long-term effort that will require collaboration and participation from many. The process requires thoughtful planning and consideration, input from multiple sources, and is being mindful of current and future needs of the city, county and region. Ultimately, the goal is to maximize the many attributes of the area while providing opportunities to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life of all who live or visit the Greater Madison area.

To learn more about the Destination District Vision and Strategy, visit the Alliant Energy Center [project website](#) and/or attend the October 15 presentation from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at Expo Hall. Details [here](#).