

Alliant Energy Center Campus Redevelopment Community Engagement Summary 2017-Present

Public Engagement Process

The Alliant Energy Center is located in one of the most racially and economically diverse neighborhood in Dane County. Over the past 6-7 years, the County has held community engagement events to inspire ideas for future development and understand the concerns of the community. The following is a list of public engagement events that have occurred, a summary of priority items identified during public engagement, and some example frameworks for the County to reference to be responsive to the needs identified by neighbors and the broader public. Results and summaries of all public engagement events are available on the Public Comments, Survey and Workshop Results section of project website at [this Link](#).

Ongoing Public Engagement

The Alliant Energy Center Redevelopment Committee regularly publishes a newsletter with over 500 subscribers that provides updates to neighbors, stakeholders, and other interested parties. It also maintains a website to keep the public informed of existing plans and the latest updates on progress with the project. ([Link to Website](#))

Recent South Madison Neighborhood and Nonprofit Public Engagement

The Alliant Energy Center Campus project was temporarily put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee was reactivated in 2023 and conducted two public engagement events to hear new and updated perspectives from neighborhood residents and nonprofit community leaders. The public engagement meetings included:

- **Neighborhood Open House** ([Link to Summary Documents](#))
 - Held in Penn Park Pavilion on September 14, 2023
 - Residents of Bram's Addition, Capital View Heights, Burr Oaks, and Bay Creek were encouraged to attend through multiple channels, including email, flyers, and door to door outreach.
 - Themes included:
 - Desire for programming that appeals to a more diverse audience.
 - Ideas for physical enhancements to the Alliant Energy Center Campus that would benefit the neighborhood. This included improvements to Lychberg Park, improving access to and through the Campus, and more public spaces.
 - Need to address issues related to noise, stormwater, traffic.
- **Community Organization Forum** ([Link to Summary Documents](#))
 - Held at the Urban League of Madison on South Park Street on October 12, 2023
 - A total of 53 individuals representing 43 different organizations located in South Madison and /or that serve historically underrecognized communities including racial and ethnic minorities, the elderly, people with disabilities, and members from the LGBTQ+ community.
 - Themes included:
 - Enhancing physical and social connectivity of the Alliant Energy Center Campus to underrepresented populations
 - Programming that appeals to a more diverse audience

- Setting goals and metrics and for job training, hiring, and procurement policies to benefit underrepresented populations
- Need for ongoing public engagement

First Phase Public Engagement: Destination District Vision and Alliant Energy Center Campus Plan

In 2017-2018, the Destination District Vision & Strategy and the Alliant Energy Center Campus Plan were developed to set a vision for the Campus and develop recommendations for implementing that vision. To inform these projects, a series of public input events occurred throughout 2017-18. Public Engagement during this phase included:

- Community Outreach (See **AEC Public Comments, Survey and Workshop Results** section on [Project Website](#) (Links to individual files: [Master Plan Appendix](#), [AEC Master Plan - Section 4, Community Engagement](#), [Vision Workshop Input Summary](#), [POLCO question summary](#))
 - Event Booth at Brat Fest (May 26-28 2017)
 - Polco Survey with over 300 responses (May 22 –August 8, 2017)
 - Vision Workshop at Urban League of Greater Madison (July 18, 2017)
 - Vision Workshop at Badger Rock Neighborhood Center (July 19, 2017)
 - Neighborhood Information Meeting (June 6, 2018)
 - Open House (June 19, 2018)
 - Destination District Public Event (September 12, 2018)
 - Joint Campus Plan and Destination District Public Event (October 15, 2018)
- Project presentations to several organizations, including:
 - South Metropolitan Planning Council
 - South Madison Business Association
 - Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau
 - Monona Terrace Board
 - Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce
 - Downtown Madison, Inc.
- Ad-Hoc Vision Panel: Representatives from both public and private organizations made up an Ad-Hoc Vision Panel, which provided guidance on the larger vision and components to enhance visitor and local resident experiences in the Alliant Energy Center campus and surrounding area.
- City/County Staff: Planning, economic development, transportation, parks and engineering staff from the cities of Madison, Fitchburg, and Dane County gave input and direction on technical issues.

Public Engagement Priorities

The following section summarizes the top priorities that have been identified through the public engagement events listed above.

Role of Alliant Energy Center: Overall, public engagement participants agreed that the Alliant Energy Center's most important role in the County is to support a high quality of life through a variety of entertainment and informational offerings. Additionally, participants have cited job creation, connection to South Madison, and partnering with local organizations as top priorities.

Employment and Job Training Opportunities: Future investments in the Alliant Energy Center are expected to generate a large number of new jobs. Neighbors want to ensure that those

investments translate to employment opportunities in the community. There is support for making better connections between the City of Madison, County, Madison College, MMSD, and local nonprofits to create a pipeline for underrepresented groups to train for and work in the newly created jobs at the Alliant Energy Center. Nonprofit leaders noted a need for preparing and disseminating annual employment reports to track progress on these efforts.

Procurement and Contracting: Alliant Energy Center's procurement and contracting policies are an important consideration for ensuring investments in the Campus translate to the neighboring community. Ideas for increasing partnerships and opportunities for residents, businesses, and institutions in South Madison included: identifying local vendors that can participate in formal and informal events on the campus, DBE and living wage requirements for contractors/vendors, less reliance on part-time workers, and measuring results of these efforts to demonstrate the benefits to the community.

Improved Access To and Through Campus: Existing connections to the Alliant Energy Center are subpar, and there is a need to better connect pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users to campus. However, nearby residents want to prevent excessive traffic from being routed through their neighborhood, especially during large events. The Campus Plan includes recommended strategies for making the campus a true multi-modal destination and an important connecting point for residents of South Madison to easily get to Downtown. It also recommends traffic patterns that will route traffic away from residential neighborhoods. Dane County approved funding in the 2025 budget for campus multi-modal transportation and traffic circulation planning to move these recommendations forward.

Improved Stormwater Management: Community and neighborhood stakeholders identified stormwater management as one of the key issues that the Campus Plan needed to address. Intense rain events in the region in the recent past have magnified stormwater management needs on campus. Dane County approved funding in the 2025 budget for stormwater management design and planning to help address these stormwater challenges and move these recommendations forward.

Programming: There is a strong desire for programming that appeals to a more diverse audience. This can happen by expanding the range of entertainment, education, and sports offerings available on-site. There is also a desire to make empty space available to local non-profits to provide low/no cost events targeted more toward local and diverse audiences.

Campus Noise: Noise is an ongoing issue in the neighborhood from vehicles and large events. The Campus Plan focused on placing major destination uses along the Beltline, Rimrock Road, and John Nole Drive Corridors- close to major roadway corridors- and away from the adjoining neighborhoods. However, with the growth of major events and increased usage of the Alliant Energy Center, operational and event noise will likely continue to be aggravating to some neighbors during major outdoor events. The Alliant Energy Center should continue to work with immediate neighborhoods to find ways to minimize noise impacts.

Amenities on Campus for Public Use: The need for usable "public" space on campus is desired to make the county lands more activated, optimized and welcoming to all. The Campus Master Plan recommends improved greenways, a central plaza gathering space, wayfinding, and renovated facilities that will host public and private events.

Access to Northern Portion of Quann Park: Quann Park is a city-owned park that is not part of the county owned Alliant Energy Center Campus. However, Dane County entered into a long-term use agreement with the City of Madison that gives the County the right to use the park whenever needed by the Alliant Energy Center. The northern section of Quann Park serves as a popular dog park for the neighborhood. During large events, there is sometimes limited access to use of the Park. Creating guaranteed access to northern section Quann Park during the largest of campus events is highly desired.

Community Engagement: Participants in public engagement events desire ongoing conversations and are willing to engage further on these issues. However, they want to see the ideas from these meetings put into action and that measurable results are shared with the community throughout the process.

Example Frameworks

Vandewalle & Associates have identified two similar projects that can serve as an example framework for centering racial equity throughout the design, construction and ongoing operational phases of the project:

- **Oregon Convention Center:** The Oregon Convention Center's redevelopment efforts centered on racial equity. The regional government worked closely with senior leadership of the Oregon Convention Center to create a set of goals and standards for the project. This resulted in a [Racial Equity Action Plan](#) intended to serve as a model framework for other communities undertaking similar projects. The project also created a [Project Equity Report](#) following construction to demonstrate how the Action Plan was implemented through the construction phase of the project.
- **BAIRD Center:** The Wisconsin Center District, located in Milwaukee, committed to ambitious diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) goals for the project to ensure the BAIRD convention center was a source of pride for all Milwaukeeans and that the people living in the community would economically benefit from the project. A summary of those initiatives is available on [the BAIRD Center website](#).