

Mayor Dave Cieslewicz

Moving Madison Forward Together



Mayor's Campaign Kickoff: Prepared Remarks

Nov. 30, 2006

Thank you for coming this afternoon. You may be wondering why I've asked you here. The reason is that I've got something to tell you. But first, let me remind you of some things you might already know.

In the last four years we've gotten our city moving again:

- We built Madison's first municipal swimming pool, thanks to the generosity of Irwin and Bob Goodman and a thousand other generous Madisonians.
- We've added 26 new police officers, the first new ambulance in 15 years and the first new fire station in 25 years.
- We negotiated a paramedic services agreement that gets the nearest paramedic unit to the person in need regardless of the name of the city on the side of the ambulance.
- We inaugurated automated recycling and recycling is up while costs are down.
- We've built 15 new parks and added personnel to care for them.
- We're on our way to building two new library branches.
- We've tackled the tough problems of Allied Drive and we are starting to show signs of progress.
- We've increased by almost 50% a city program to help low income families pay for quality child care.
- We worked with housing advocates and developers to write one of the most innovative affordable housing ordinances in the nation.
- We ended a decade-long debate by combining city and county health departments.
- We strengthened the cause of diversity by creating a new Department of Civil Rights.

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- We've added new after school programs to keep young people out of trouble and in school.
- We've created a new apprenticeship program to give people who may never have had a job a way out of poverty and a way to build a legacy of self-respect.
- We passed one of the strongest anti-smoking laws in the nation and defended it against two attempts to repeal it as well as an attempt to repeal *me* through a recall drive. And as long as I am Mayor, we will never go back.
- And we've done all that while keeping the average annual increase in city property taxes to the second lowest of any administration in over three decades.

There's more we've accomplished together, but the question is: *why stop now?* I can't think of a single reason. So, today, I'm announcing officially that I'm a candidate for re-election as your Mayor.

It's cold and I won't keep you long, but I want to briefly outline why we want another four years. In short, we can't stop now because there's more to do.

Our greatest challenge in the next four years is the challenge we have been meeting for the last four: how to manage the success that is resulting in growth and change. Our challenge is to maintain and even improve the quality of life that brings people here in the first place. In that regard, here are some of the issues we face:

- We have added more than two dozen police officers, but fighting crime is the whole community's responsibility. So, we need to add police, but we also need to get at the root causes of crime through innovative programs like the Madison Apprenticeship Program, which provides job skills and training to low-income people. All American cities are facing an increase in certain kinds of crime, but we aim to address the problem more comprehensively and more effectively than any community in America.

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- We have the lowest sustained unemployment rate of virtually any city in America, but the only way to stay that way is to plan for the future. I've proposed an economic development plan that has united left and right and I want to see it through. Of course we need to be a place that is good for high tech industries, but we also need to be a community where anyone who wants to work hard and learn can find a family-supporting job. In Madison, we can prove that a city can be both progressive and pro-business.
- Automated recycling has helped the environment and saved money, and we need to bring the same spirit of innovation to our battles against pollution of our lakes and our air and to our fight against global warming. I want to see through the creation of our new division of Building Management and Sustainability and to implement the Green Capitol City plan that I commissioned in my first term.
- We've built one successful pool, but we need more and the next one should be at Warner Park.
- We've invested \$4.3 million to buy 20% of the housing on Allied Drive and the grass-roots generated plans for its future are exciting. I want to make those dreams happen and to help Allied Drive build up, not out.
- We've increased city support for Madison Metro by 35% over the last four years, but we need to make our transportation system truly regional and we need to fully explore other technologies that make mass transit attractive and exciting. We need to continue our ambitious program to build more bike paths and make Madison the best city in the nation for biking. And we need to bring high speed rail to Madison.
- We ended the decades long discussion over the future of the Equal Opportunities Commission and we created the Department of Civil Rights. Now, it's time we got on with the

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serious work of making Madison a welcoming place for everyone who wants to contribute to our community.

- We've rejoined the Dane County Cities & Villages Association and we are a full partner in the Collaboration Council. Now, we need to continue building strong, cooperative working relationships like that with all the communities in our region.
- We've used innovation to save money through my TRIM program but there are more efficiencies to be found in city government and through the Natural Step and Madison Measures, two programs started in my first term, we will find and implement them.

I want to make one quick comment about the campaign itself. The fall elections are over and not a moment too soon. We need to put the acrimony, the cheap shots, the "gotcha politics", the outright lies and the intellectual dishonesty behind us. We have a chance in the spring elections to demonstrate that politics can be about ideas and the future of our community; politics can be engaging and exciting and even fun. So, we aim to make this election a vigorous and interesting and positive debate about the future of Madison and we aim to make it fun.

But if I do get to take the oath of office in April, I will take it under protest to a state constitution that now explicitly discriminates against my fellow Wisconsinites who happen to be gay or lesbian. The marriage amendment is just wrong and we will vigorously defend Madison's domestic partner benefits and our registry program against any legal challenge. The one small consolation for me and for all Madisonians is that we live in a city that said no to this discrimination by a greater margin than the rest of the state said yes. I pledge to do everything I can as your Mayor to turn this terrible mistake back as quickly as we can.

I have been lucky and honored to be your Mayor during the celebration of our 150th year as a city. If we've done nothing else in the last 44 months I hope we've tapped the deep vein of optimism that I believe defines our city. We are a community that believes that problems can be

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solved and, if anything, the contentious debates we sometimes have are just an indication that we are impatient to solve them.

I hope to have another 48 months to continue to encourage that sense of optimism and hope and to bring us together to solve our common challenges. So that when I do pass along this job to the next person, I can give them a city worthy of the name “home”.