



May 2017

## President's message:



Tom Schumacher  
2017 BACC President

### Vision and Unity

*If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself – Henry Ford*

Three separate, but parallel events unfolded during the past few weeks. *Chief Executive* magazine published its annual “Best & Worst States for Business” rankings. Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach’s made his State of the County address, and the Greater Green Bay Chamber rolled out its strategic economic plan.

*Chief Executive* magazine serves a small but important group of readers. It’s a good source for of what’s on the minds of those who make decisions that impact us as individuals, communities, states and country. Once a year CEO’s are polled on the best and worst states to do business.

Through 2010 Wisconsin consistently ranked near the bottom because CEO’s found our tax and regulatory environment more difficult than other states. Workforce and quality of life have consistently ranked more favorably, but not enough to raise our ranking out of the bottom 10.

Since 2010 something pretty remarkable has occurred. Our tax ranking improved as other states added taxes while we reduced them and better approaches to regulations and friendliness toward business boosted our overall ranking from 41 in 2010 to 24, 20, 17, 14, 12 and 11 by 2015. This year, for the first time, Wisconsin cracked the top 10 best states to do business. Indiana still outranks us (5) and Ohio (11) and Iowa (14) put in strong showings. The rest of our Midwest neighbors were in the bottom third, including Michigan (36) overtaking Minnesota (38), while Illinois continues to rank near the bottom (48). Top 10 lists are often more entertainment than substance, but Wisconsin’s improved standing in the eyes of those who choose where to do business is significant.

“State of . . .” addresses occur with some regularity. Most have a flavor of political grandstanding, pointing to wonderful accomplishments and why the speaker should be elected to another term. That makes this year’s “State of Brown County” address remarkable. Its focal point was a broad vision of how to meet a number of infrastructure needs without borrowing to do it.

County Executive Streckenbach addressed our May BACC board meeting, describing the plan and answering our questions. After he left we talked about his proposed use of a county sales tax for a limited time to pay down debt, tend to infrastructure maintenance, advance STEM collaboration with UW-Green Bay, and cover a small funding gap in redoing the county expo facilities. Our discussion was spirited and informed by an FAQ paper we published before the Stadium tax expired in 2015. One insight we had was that while most (64 of 72) counties in Wisconsin impose the half percent tax, the most successful are those where the funds are directed to specific tangible purposes. The County Executive’s plan fits that profile and our board unanimously voted to endorse it. This is one place where vision has the potential to overcome division for the betterment of Brown County and Greater Green Bay.

The third notable event was the rollout of the Greater Green Bay Chamber’s Economic Development Strategic Plan. The May 10 event was well attended with a distinguished panel of speakers. The 11 initiatives set forth line up very well with the Economic

Development Agenda included in BACC's "Journey to a Greater Green Bay" report to the community, published last year. Both documents call for building on current economic strengths, attracting and retaining high quality jobs and talent, capitalizing on the reputation of Greater Green Bay and addressing socioeconomic needs.

The Chamber plan has several added dimensions. It compares Greater Green Bay to a group of 10 benchmark metro areas to provide perspective on how we compare and how we might improve. The plan also provides an in depth implementation matrix, listing potential partners and suggested timeframes for all the strategies and action items included in each of the 11 initiatives. One of the 14 calls to action contained in the BACC "Journey to a Greater Green Bay" report is to "Develop and promote a comprehensive, strategic economic development vision through an independently facilitated initiative with participation of government, business, education, workforce, economic development and other stakeholders." We applaud the Chamber on providing a strategic plan which fits that description and look forward to our community rallying to translate it into reality.

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## **Neville exhibit opens**

A new exhibit examining the history and contributions of Latinos to our area, *Estamos Aqui* ("We are here"), opened earlier this month at the Neville Public Museum of Brown County in Green Bay.

Members of the BACC's Board of Directors heard a preview of the exhibit at their April meeting when Kevin Cullen, Deputy Director, Neville Public Museum of Brown County, and Sister Melanie Maczka, Director Casa Alba, addressed the board. More than two years of research and planning were devoted to the exhibit. Sister Melanie said the exhibit opens at a time when the role of Latinos ranging from economic impact, culture and immigration all being discussed locally and across the nation. BACC board member David Littig said that \$4,000 from Connecting Our Community, a project fostered by the BACC, will be donated to the museum to fund a scholarship program for children from low income families to attend the exhibit and participate in related activities.

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## **Connections for Mental Wellness program outlined**

"Connections for Mental Wellness" is a community initiative with a mission to transform mental health of the community through collaboration, education and enhanced systems of care, BACC board members learned at their April board meeting.

Martha Ahrendt, executive director of the program, said "Connections for Mental Wellness" was originally sponsored by the American Foundation of Counseling Services. She described the effort as seeking system changes, not just introducing new services.

Arendt outlined a two-step approach, with one being a school-based mental health initiative and the second focused on adult mental health and mental wellness. In outlining the school-based approach, she discussed efforts to close the gap between the onset of illness and treatment and the lack of service providers for children. She said the organization is developing a set of guidelines for treatment and MOUs for providing services and practices.

The adult-based program is attempting to change the way we have the conversation in our community about mental health. She said a collective impact approach is being used and also said the community lacks data about adult mental health and wellness. One measure taken by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is a self-identified Poor Mental Health Day (PMHD). The group hopes to reduce the number of PMHDs in Brown County by 7.5%, thus saving 1.7 million work days over a five-year period. Current estimates are that there is a need for 215 more mental health care providers in the area and one hurdle in reducing that number is the need for those who do get training to receive enough experience to earn their licenses. She said the program's web site is [www.connectionsmlw.org](http://www.connectionsmlw.org).

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## **Extension office moves**

The Brown County UW-Extension office has moved to the Neville Public Museum, 210 Museum Place, Green Bay. Business hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. With the Museum being closed on Mondays, please look for signage to access UW-Extension staff through the northwest door marked with a UW-Extension sign. Tuesday through Friday please use the main

entrance to the Museum.

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## Recommended Reading:

Two different -- but not necessarily conflicting -- perspectives on age and community are offered here for your review.

**Taking over:** "I look forward to the day millennials take over Green Bay," columnist Jeff Bollier told Green Bay Press-Gazette readers in an April 28 column. "The average Green Bay resident may not see it, but there's a younger generation tired of the status quo and eager to reshape this region. I'm eager to see what they can do based on the ideas, discussions and interactions that surfaced this week," he said as Young Professionals week wrapped up in Green Bay.

Millennials, Bollier said, "... want to support more locally-owned businesses downtown. They consider things like spending on parks and bike lanes essential. They need mentors. They want to see collaboration more than competition. They want to stay here, to turn Green Bay into a vibrant community that can attract people for generations to come. And they want to be involved in doing this." Read more at: <http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/story/money/2017/04/28/bollier-043017/100838638/>

**Follow the money:** Millennials often are described as the generation to create innovation and economic development in communities. A recent Brookings Report offers a different look through a different generation -- Older Adults. In 2015, they (people over 50) were responsible for nearly \$5.6 trillion of the nation's \$10.4 trillion in consumer spending—a number that will only increase as the demographic expands. Moreover, recent research by the Kauffman Foundation found that entrepreneurialism is actually on the rise among 55- to 64-year-olds, while declining among those 20 to 34. In addition to launching businesses themselves, older adults often support startup firms as mentors and investors. Read more at: [https://www.brookings.edu/research/beyond-millennials-valuing-older-adults-participation-in-innovation-districts/?utm\\_campaign=Brookings%20Brief&utm\\_source=hs\\_email&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=49087148](https://www.brookings.edu/research/beyond-millennials-valuing-older-adults-participation-in-innovation-districts/?utm_campaign=Brookings%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=49087148)

Recommended by BACC board member John Dye

**The BACC newsletter is edited by John Dye, a BACC board member and the organization's executive assistant.**

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