

**Lodi and Lake Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce
Proposal for Funding Executive Director**

Submitted to: City of Lodi

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Prepared by:

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Program Abstract:

The Lodi and Lake Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce (“Chamber”) serves the business community of the City of Lodi and surrounding areas, including Lake Wisconsin. In order to meet the needs of the growing Chamber membership and continue to build Chamber offerings, the workload far exceeds that of the current part-time Executive Director role. A full-time position is necessary to attract and retain a candidate that will build lasting relationships with Chamber members and partners.

Statement of Need:

The Lodi and Lake Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce has 157 active members, including 6 courtesy organization members serving the City of Lodi and Lake Wisconsin region. The Chamber currently has a part-time Interim Executive Director that is responsible for managing membership, coordinating community events, handling operational finances, managing all internal, external and media communications, and day-to-day organizational operations. This role has duties that far exceed the limits of a part-time position and the organization would greatly benefit from a full-time candidate to meet the needs of the organization.

This year had many challenges for the Chamber. In June, the Chamber President, Melissa Card, wrote a letter to the City Common Council for electrical work along Spring Street. In the letter, Melissa shared our Board’s vision to reinvigorate Susie the Duck Day and Brew-B-Que, drawing additional people to downtown Lodi. We delivered. In four months (August-November) we had incredible events that brought record crowds to Lodi despite a pandemic (Susie the Duck Day, Brew-B-Que, Business Trick or Treat, Sip & Shop, and Small Business Saturday). In July, we lost our previous Executive Director unexpectedly right before our busy event season. The Chamber Board worked tirelessly to continue Chamber and Lodi tradition, volunteering well-beyond the standard Board requirements to deliver these events to our membership, our community, and to make progress on the Chamber Vision.

In September 2021, Heidi LeHew, agreed to step down from her Board position to fill the Executive Director role in the interim. Since July, Heidi has impressively increased our social media presence for local business, the Chamber and events. This exposure not only benefits the Chamber membership, but also impacts the City of Lodi, drawing in consumers, small businesses and those wanting to move to the area and discover our small town charm.

Main Street is also filling up! Since Heidi took the Interim Executive Director role, she has written eight letters on behalf of the Chamber for Main Street Bounceback Grants, bringing \$80k to Lodi.

The Chamber holds a pivotal role in driving local business. We take pride in our City and feel a vibrant Chamber will help our city flourish. The Chamber Board feels the next essential step to continue our progress is to hire a Full-Time Executive Director.

Chamber Mission Statement:

To support the economic and cultural welfare of our members, advocate for our business community, and encourage economic growth and community presence.

Program Description:

The Chamber plans to hire a full-time Executive Director with a \$45,000 salary and a potential quarterly bonus based on measurable performance metrics to be no greater than \$6,000 annually and

2-weeks Paid Time Off. Executive Director roles in the region are highly competitive and given the scope of work and knowledge required for this role, the Board feels this is a competitive starting salary with potential bonus and Paid Time Off. The Chamber currently has an Interim Executive Director that will remain in office until the position is filled and an adequate transition period is reached (see Timeline below).

The transition to a full-time position is required to meet the minimum needs of the organization. The Chamber offers member programming, such as Lunch and Learns and Networking Opportunities, with plans to include increasing frequency and quality of these offerings in support of member retention and recruiting. The Board also intends to increase time-spent with current members; advocating for the needs of our member base that will grow our business economy, as well as play a vital role in bringing business to Lodi. The intention is to shift focus from events to member benefits and economic development.

The Board also has plans to diversify income so the Chamber can support a full-time position for years past 2022. The plan to diversify includes: change in dues structure from a single-fee-for-all system to a tiered dues structure based on company size, Chamber sponsorship for increased benefits instead of only event-sponsorship, concise event management to optimize profits and time spent by Executive Director, and lastly grants.

As the Chamber transitions to the new income plan, the Chamber Board is seeking funding to subsidize this transition so the Board can focus on implementation, find the optimal Executive Director candidate and continue to serve our membership.

Goals & Objectives

The overall goal of this proposal is to increase the Executive Director role from part-time to full-time. This type of position is highly competitive, thus the Board would like to offer a \$45,000 annual salary with up to \$6,000 in bonuses and 2 weeks Paid Time Off. The 2021 budget for the role was \$22,000, for an hourly employee of up to 25 hours per week excluding Paid Time Off and bonus for event budget surplus. The new role will have performance metrics based on member retention, recruitment and engagement, budget adherence, event management, and implementation of member benefit programming.

Timeline

September 2021	⇒	Hired Interim Executive Director
December 2021	⇒	Implement new Dues Structure, begin Diverse Income Plan
January 2022	⇒	Begin recruiting process for new Director
May 2022	⇒	Hire new Director and begin training process
May - June 2022	⇒	Transition training of Interim Director for new Director
July 2022	⇒	New Executive Director fully trained, begin goal setting and implementation, begin Event Season, address member retention

Budget

	Time Frame	ARPA Contribution	Chamber Contribution
Salary: Interim ED during search	January - April 2022 (4 months)	\$7,875	\$3,375
Salary: Interim ED during transition	May - June (60 days)	\$5,250	\$2,250
Salary: Full-time Exec. Director	May 2022 - May 2023	\$31,500	\$13,500
Total:		\$44,625	\$19,125

Staff and Board of Directors

Heidi LeHew
Interim Executive Director
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