

**Elsen, Nikki**

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**Subject:** FW: La Crosse Center Expansion

**From:** Olson, Jessica  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2018 1:20 AM  
**To:** ZZ Council Members; ZZ Department Heads; Kabat, Tim; Stein, Heidi  
**Subject:** Fwd: La Crosse Center Expansion

FYI....

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Abbie Leithold-Gerzema <[abbie@leitholdmusic.com](mailto:abbie@leitholdmusic.com)>  
**Date:** June 12, 2018 at 11:21:12 PM CDT  
**To:** <[olsonje@cityoflacrosse.org](mailto:olsonje@cityoflacrosse.org)>  
**Subject:** La Crosse Center Expansion  
**Reply-To:** <[abbie@leitholdmusic.com](mailto:abbie@leitholdmusic.com)>

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Hello Jessica,

I'm writing to express my support in favor of the proposed B1 design concept for the La Crosse Center. Several community members have ignited a very emotional response against the design, but I am in favor of the \$50 million design as proposed for these reasons:

The La Crosse Center is in great need of repair.

Expansion of the La Crosse Center will bring in an estimated \$12.1 million dollars additional revenue plus dollars spent at local businesses, restaurants and hotels. These dollars spent locally will also bring in additional county sales tax revenue and hotel tax revenue.

It will bring an expected 22,000 additional visitors to the La Crosse Center, downtown, and greater La Crosse area.

There will be an expected additional 150 employees at the La Crosse Center.

The proposed expansion does not remove any land from property tax rolls.

The design creates a new entrance that showcases the beautiful Mississippi River and Riverside Park.

La Crosse Center has been popular with conventions, but there is no connection to the river and park.

In addition to being attractive to potential convention bookings, it will attract more weddings and locally hosted events that want to have spectacular views and access to the Mississippi and park.

While the expansion extends into Riverside Park, access will remain for park attendees along the river side path as well as the Front Street sidewalk.

Public access restrooms could be included in the design, a need for the south side of the park.

When there are no events scheduled, the river view terrace could be made public access so that all park attendees could enjoy the new views of the river and park.

There are millions of dollars available in state grants to help fund the expansion. (It's my understanding that the tax impact will be very little, but I could not substantiate that claim). Other proposed designs do not connect east and west sides of the Center on both the north and south sides of the building. Less ambitious designs proposed do not offer future expansion needs—this is all in one design, and a more cost effective per square foot price.

When our daughters each graduated this spring (Audrey-Logan, Camille-Western), after the ceremonies there was no exit to the park to take photos with friends and family. Hundreds of people were funneled out to the Second Street sidewalk. With Riverside Park only a block away, there was no easy exit or welcoming walkway. With the Mississippi so close, the La Crosse Center should have a public entrance/exit to the river.

Yes, this expansion design will impact the footprint of the park, but the park's footprint has already been altered by the Waterfront and LHI buildings. Proposed changes to the park evoke many emotional responses, but this proposal will be to the benefit of the La Crosse Center—owned by the city's residents, and enjoyed by locals and visitors. While there will be a small loss of park land, there will be greater benefits.

Due to an extremely busy business season (beginning band student week!), I may not be able to attend Thursday's Common Council meeting to express my support in favor of this resolution. Please take this response into consideration in your decision-making. Thank you.

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