

County Platform of Progressive Dane

Revised and Approved by the Progressive Dane Membership, November 18, 2009

Progressive Dane believes that Dane County government should do the following, and commits itself to working for full implementation of these policies.

1. Living Wages and Economic Development

- 1.a. Provide health insurance and a Living Wage adjusted for the higher cost of living in Dane County (at least 112% of the federal poverty level for a family of four) for all county-funded jobs
- 1.b. Target economic development subsidies to projects and locally-owned businesses that offer family-supporting jobs, affordable health care, respect for workers' rights, equal opportunity and environmental soundness
- 1.c. Promote and support buy local policies and initiatives
- 1.d. Work to connect low-income residents to skill-training, educational opportunities, workforce supports and family-supporting jobs
- 1.e. Develop and coordinate programs that foster small, local and start-up businesses, for example: entrepreneurial training, micro lending, business incubators, business-owned storefronts, assistance with business plans and identifying available office and manufacturing locations and other resources
- 1.f. Enact a countywide paid sick days requirement

2. Open and Democratic Government

- 2.a. Urge the state legislature to permit counties to implement their own campaign finance reforms including limits on contributions and significant public funding of all elections
- 2.b. Support state enabling legislation to allow local governments to use alternative electoral processes for local offices.
- 2.c. Strictly enforce laws governing full and timely disclosure of the sources of funds for County electoral races; require candidates to file their campaign finance reports electronically; require the County Clerk to post this information immediately on the county web site
- 2.d. Make readily accessible information about
- 2.e. the wages and other compensation paid to county funded employees, including managers and executives
- 2.f. Pursue ways to make all aspects of county government responsive and accessible to the public; and require any governing bodies with authority from the county to assure that public input is encouraged in a timely and equitable basis in all public proceeds; including improved timely posting of detailed agendas of all meetings and all related materials
- 2.g. Support efforts to enhance the ability of all residents to fully participate in county boards, committees and commissions
- 2.h. Support full public financing of elections and adoption of state enabling legislation to allow local governments to enact local public electoral financing

3. Public Safety and Protection

- 3.a. As the primary approach to dealing with nonviolent crime, provide diversion and preventive programs that address the root causes of crime and juvenile delinquency, while respecting civil rights and individual liberties
- 3.b. Provide a secure treatment facility for alcohol and other drug abusers as the primary incarceration tool used to prevent repeat offenses and reduce jail crowding
- 3.c. Adequately fund diversion programming such as the First Offender's Program, DART, TAP, and Dane County Drug Court
- 3.d. Establish a Restorative Justice Project in Dane County to reduce jail costs, facilitate needed closure for those impacted by criminal activity as well as demonstrative rehabilitative functioning for the accused
- 3.e. Provide adequate funding for Dane County Appointed Counsel and develop partnerships with the local bar association, so that those who are not eligible for public defender services continue to have access to affordable legal services
- 3.f. Oppose punitive ordinances that have the potential to target low income and minority populations in the county
- 3.g. Ensure that all individuals in the court system have ready access to legal advice in languages they understand, and information regarding consequences of a criminal conviction
- 3.h. Oppose the prosecution of simple marijuana possession
- 3.i. Support victim impact panels as a mandatory part of all OWI sentences
- 3.j. Oppose the Dane County Sheriff's department inquires about immigration status except as required by federal law
- 3.k. Oppose the Dane County Sheriff's department providing the names of individuals booked into Dane County jail to the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency except as required by federal law

4. Land Use, Transportation and Environmental Protection

- 4.a. Support farmland preservation, family farming, sustainable agricultural practices and livable communities
- 4.b. Promote clean water and reduce flooding by prioritizing county stormwater enforcement and enhancing county wetland protection efforts through additional land acquisition and tighter zoning enforcement
- 4.c. Prioritize funding for the Conservation Fund to purchase additional parks and open space

- 4.d. Encourage rural preservation by using Transfer of Development Rights programs in new development areas
- 4.e. Support regional transit authority that provides affordable, available and accessible multimodal public transit with subsidies for elderly, disabled, and low-income residents
- 4.f. Expand pedestrian and bicycle routes
- 4.g. Avoid major new highway construction, including construction of a North Beltline
- 4.h. Oppose major new transmission line construction, and support state legislation enabling county government oversight of power line placement in utility corridors such as existing or abandoned railroad right of way
- 4.i. Provide incentives for all county employees to use public transportation, carpool, bike or walk
- 4.j. Support county purchasing policies that favor recycled, recyclable, locally produced, environmentally friendly, sweat-free and energy efficient goods; support purchasing significant amounts of and increasing proportions of clean energy
- 4.k. Operate all county-owned or occupied buildings in a way that reduces energy use; audit all such buildings to determine ways to save energy and increase energy efficiency
- 4.l. Any vehicle owned or leased by the county should be as fuel efficient and non-polluting as practicable
- 4.m. Promote and support green and sustainable initiatives and practices by business and government both in current activities and in new projects and developments
- 4.n. Support Dane County exercising its regulatory options under the Livestock Facilities Siting law
- 4.o. Encourage local farmers to grow food for direct human consumption and for local marketing to promote countywide economic sustainability
- 4.p. Support a publicly-owned regional energy utilities
- 4.q. Support lakes and watershed restrictions on the use of toxins and pesticides, and limitation on mercury runoff from coal plants
- 4.r. Promote progressive revenue sources such as a lakefront property transfer fee to expand water quality initiatives
- 4.s. Encourage higher-density residential development in existing urban locations in concurrence with countywide comprehensive (smart growth) planning
- 4.t. Use all appropriate regulatory powers to stop urban sprawl development on farmlands, other open spaces, and in environmentally sensitive areas
- 4.u. Support state legislation that requires endorsement by County Boards of Supervisors for city or village annexation of town's lands for purposes of applying for urban service area expansions
- 4.v. Support state legislation to require the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to require additional approval criteria for urban service area expansions, including expansion impacts on arterial highway commuter traffic loads, existing local residential housing or building sites, destruction of farmlands and other open spaces

5. Affordable Housing

- 5.a. Promote development of housing stock that includes affordable options for every Dane County resident
- 5.b. Support community land trust programs, an affordable housing trust fund, single room occupancy housing, and transitional housing services to further enhance housing options throughout Dane County
- 5.c. Support community-based programs that educate renters about their legal rights and assist them in defending those rights
- 5.d. Support county laws and policies that prohibit housing discrimination and discourage economic segregation

6. Quality Human Services

- 6.a. Adequately fund human service agencies, including annual cost of living increases
- 6.b. Ensure that human services address issues such as poverty, discrimination, domestic violence, community safety, and public health
- 6.c. Ensure basic safety net services to those who are ineligible for federal Supplemental Security Income and food stamp benefits and Wisconsin's welfare (W-2) program
- 6.d. Support due process provisions in state and county social services programs for those who are wrongfully denied eligibility for these services

7. Efficient, Effective Government

- 7.a. Oppose privatization of services currently provided by County employees
- 7.b. Take measures necessary to ensure that county employees' workplaces are free of discrimination and harassment
- 7.c. Extend benefits available to married couples to all domestic partnerships
- 7.d. Require that proposals to consolidate government services contain evidence that they will result in improved delivery of services and that cost savings will not be derived solely from reduced staffing
- 7.e. Give preference in county contracts to firms paying prevailing wages or employing a unionized workforce, and to those without a history of violations of environmental, safety, labor or civil rights laws
- 7.f. Give preference in county contracts to firms with proven affirmative action records, and to those owned by minorities and women
- 7.g. Urge the state legislature to permit local jurisdictions to employ progressive sources of revenue and to eliminate spending caps on raising revenue