



## **The Emerging and Converging World: Are You Ready for the Future?**

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**A**t this year's Conference, you'll learn about key factors shaping our emerging and converging world and how you can address the resulting local impact. Learn how your community can survive the debilitating effects of a plant shutdown, how Wisconsin's shifting demographics are impacting worker availability (and what you can do about it), and how any locality can take advantage of the state's emerging organic industry. You'll also hear the surprising results of the first-ever statewide analysis of the local financial impact of Tax Increment Finance Districts.

### Wednesday, February 6, 2008

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**4:00 - 6:00 p.m.      WEDA Legislative Committee Meeting**

*Louise Marston Conklin Room, Madison Club*

The WEDA Legislative Committee will be taking input from WEDA members and interested economic developers regarding 2008 legislative issues.

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**5:30 - 6:00 p.m.      Early Registration**

*Second Floor Foyer, Madison Club*

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**6:00 - 7:00 p.m.      Welcome Reception**

*Terrace Room, Madison Club*

# Agenda *(continued)*

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Thursday, February 7, 2008

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**7:30 – 5:00 p.m. Registration**  
*Hall of Ideas Foyer*

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**7:30 – 8:27 a.m. Coffee/Networking/View Exhibits**  
*Ballroom A&B*

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**8:30 – 9:10 a.m. Wisconsin's Emerging Economic Development Priorities**  
*Hall of Ideas*

*Speakers: Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton  
Jack L. Fischer, Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Commerce*

Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton and Jack Fischer, newly-appointed Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, will provide an update on the Administration's ongoing economic development efforts and will outline Governor Doyle's new business development initiatives and priorities.

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**9:10 – 10:10 a.m. Emerging and Converging Realities are Reshaping our World**

*Hall of Ideas*

*Speaker: Joel Kotkin, Author, Consultant, and Futurist*

An internationally-recognized authority on global, economic, political and social trends, Joel Kotkin will outline the pervasive realities that all economic developers must recognize and address because they are reshaping the American landscape and our world. You'll learn what you need to know now so you can prepare for the future.

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**10:10 – 10:27 a.m. Break/View Exhibits**  
*Ballroom A&B*

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**10:30 – 11:30 a.m. Wisconsin's New Leadership Role**  
*Hall of Ideas*

*Speakers: George Siemon, CEO of Organic Valley*

*Molly Jahn, Dean, UW-Madison College of Agriculture & Life Sciences*

Wisconsin ranks #3 in the country with 469 certified organic operations and that number is growing weekly. In this session, Molly Jahn, Dean of the UW-Madison College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, will provide an overview of Wisconsin's organic industry and the tremendous potential that still exists for every part of the state. George Siemon, CEO of Organic Valley in LaFarge, Wis., will outline how his organization became the largest farmer-owned cooperative in North America and one of the nation's leading organic brands.

# Agenda *(continued)*



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## Thursday, February 7, 2008 *(continued)*

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**11:30 – 12:15 p.m. WEDA Annual Meeting**  
*Hall of Ideas*  
*2008 Board of Director Candidates*

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**12:15 – 1:00 p.m. Lunch**  
*Grand Terrace*

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**1:00 – 1:27 p.m. Break/View Exhibits**  
*Ballroom A&B*

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**1:30 – 2:30 p.m. Coloring Outside the Lines**  
*Hall of Ideas*  
*Speaker: Jeff Tobe*

This fast-paced, high-energy session will be conducted by best-selling author Jeff Tobe who was recently selected as one of the top 15 speakers in North America. Tobe will unleash your innovative thinking skills and challenge you to step outside your comfort zone in order to position what your organization offers more creatively than ever before.

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**2:30 – 3:30 p.m. How Does Competition in Healthcare Impact Your Local Economy?**  
*Hall of Ideas*  
*Speakers: Steve Brenton, President, Wisconsin Hospital Association*  
*Richard Blomquist, Blomquist Consulting*  
*Lawrence D. Prybil, MA, PhD, University of Iowa*

You'll be surprised and perhaps shocked by what you'll learn in this point/counterpoint session featuring Steve Brenton, President of the Wisconsin Hospital Association, and Richard Blomquist, President of Blomquist Benefits Consulting in Milwaukee. Dr. Lawrence Prybil, professor in the Dept. of Health Management and Policy at the University of Iowa will moderate the session and provide a regional overview.

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**3:30 – 3:58 p.m. Break/View Exhibits**  
*Ballroom A&B*

# Agenda *(continued)*

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Thursday, February 7, 2008 *(continued)*

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**4:00 – 4:45 p.m.      Wisconsin's Future 2015 & Beyond**

*Hall of Ideas*

*Speaker: Todd Berry, President, Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance*

In the years ahead, Wisconsin's labor force will continue to shrink while the number of senior citizens will more than double. The challenges economic developers face from these and other dramatic demographic trends will be outlined by Todd Berry, President of the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to citizen education and public-policy research.

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**4:45 – 5:30 p.m.      2008 Senate and Assembly Leadership**

*Hall of Ideas*

*Representative Michael Huebsch, Speaker of Assembly (R-94)*

*Representative Patricia Strachota,  
Majority Caucus Vice Chairperson 2007 (R-58)*

*Senator Russ Decker, Majority Leader (D-29)*

*Senator Julie Lassa, (D-24)*

Leaders of both the State Senate and Assembly will discuss and debate economic development-related legislation that will be considered during the 2008 floor periods.

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**5:30 – 7:00 p.m.      Governor's Conference Reception**

*Ballroom A&B*

# Agenda *(continued)*



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## Friday, February 8, 2008

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### **8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Breakfast Buffet**

*Ballroom A&B*

*New WEDA Members:* Please join the 2009 WEDA Board of Directors for new member orientation

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### **9:00 – 10:00 a.m. How to Survive a Plant Closing or Downsizing**

*Hall of Ideas*

*Speakers: Karen Knox, SWTC President*

*James Schneider, Consultant*

This session provides a case study you can learn from – how Platteville handled and survived the loss of 620 jobs when the city's largest employer closed its plant 10 years ago. You'll also hear the surprising results of a just-completed survey that reveals how plant employees coped with losing their jobs and what their lives are like today. Presenters include Dr. Karen Knox, President of Southwest Tech, and James Schneider, President of Blue Chip Training and Marketing, who was Director of the Grant County Economic Development Council at the time of the Platteville plant closing.

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### **10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Tools You Can Use**

*Hall of Ideas*

*TIF Impact on Real Estate Values* – Tax Increment Financing (TIF) has been broadly used by local governments throughout Wisconsin as a mechanism to promote real estate development. How effective have they actually been at stimulating growth in real estate values? The surprising answer to that question will be provided in this session by Mark Skidmore, a Michigan State University professor who recently completed a comprehensive research project involving all Wisconsin TIF districts.

*Speaker: Mark Skidmore, Professor, Michigan State University*

*David Merriman, Professor, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois-Chicago*

*WI Economic Development Portal Overview* – This session will also include an overview of the new Wisconsin Economic Development Portal Web site.

*Speaker: John Fischer, Outreach Program Manager, UW-Extension, Continuing Education*

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### **11:00 – 11:05 a.m. Conference wrap-up**

*Hall of Ideas*

*Kristen Fish, 2008 WEDA President*