

City Council Statement
February 10, 2025

Scott Rogers, Vice President Governmental Affairs
Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce

As the Council considers a resolution related to Business Improvement Districts, it's important to reiterate the value BIDs bring to *downtown in particular* and to our *local economy as a whole*.

We've been fortunate here in Eau Claire to have benefitted from an increasingly-vibrant downtown that provides value not only to residents of our area, but as one of the drivers of Eau Claire's growing success as a tourism and business destination. The voluntary taxation and hard work by BID property owners and volunteers have been key in making that happen.

A further attribute of Eau Claire and the Chippewa Valley has been our reputation as a place where collaboration is a community value... where cooperation, good will, and an emphasis on the greater good have characterized the community's response to challenges and opportunities.

The January 14 Council work session about Business Improvement Districts highlighted some significant tensions between the leadership of the BIDs and the City. We applaud the intention of the authors of the resolution to recognize the value of the BIDs and to seek to clarify and set a policy framework for a better relationship.

Whatever the outcome of the specific provisions of the resolution, as representatives of the broader business community we hope this process can lead to a stronger, more positive relationship that will be valuable for everyone.