

# THE BRADLEY CENTER

## THE PEOPLE'S BUILDING, THE PEOPLE'S ROLE

### INTRODUCTION

In 1988, the late Jane Bradley Pettit cemented her commitment to the people of Wisconsin with a generous gift – an arena, named after her father, destined to become the premier sports, concert, family entertainment and public gathering facility in the state.

Over more than two decades, icons like Paul McCartney, U2, Cher, the Rolling Stones and even Big Bird, Elmo and Hannah Montana have rocked the Bradley Center house. Home to the Milwaukee Bucks, the Milwaukee Admirals, the Marquette University Golden Eagles and the Milwaukee IRON arena football team, the Bradley Center has also hosted NCAA hockey and basketball tournament action, NBA playoffs and American Hockey League world championships. Wisconsin's most-respected companies have used the Bradley Center for corporate events, and the public has gathered there to worship, salute America's soldiers, celebrate commencements, support local charities and more.

An estimated 1.6 million people visit the Bradley Center every year, making it one of the most popular destinations in and largest economic drivers for Wisconsin's largest downtown. People from every Wisconsin county, states from coast to coast and countries across the globe have attended Bradley Center events, and the facility appears regularly on national TV, showing Wisconsin's best to the nation.

The Bradley Center is a rarity among similar public assembly facilities in the United States – it was built without tax dollars and has operated for 21 years with no public funding. Indeed, the Bradley Center has paid local government millions of dollars in fees for municipal services and generated millions more in tax revenues. That it remains immaculately maintained and vibrant is a reflection of a talented staff and volunteer community board that take seriously their fiduciary responsibility and commitment to preserving Mrs. Pettit's dream of creating a place for millions of Wisconsin residents and visitors to come together and celebrate.

But the Bradley Center's shining, dynamic image belies the fact that it faces major economic challenges that must be addressed in

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the near future to ensure Mrs. Pettit's historic gift continues to shine. The reality is that the Bradley Center is the second-oldest arena in the NBA that has not undergone a major renovation or been replaced. Without large-scale maintenance and capital replacement, major upgrades and additional development, the Bradley Center simply cannot continue to generate the revenue required to meet the dramatically changing economic realities of the sports and entertainment industries.

While some have suggested that it may be time to consider a new arena in Milwaukee, community discussion on the topic is at its very earliest stages and there is currently little consensus on the idea. Even if a decision would be made to move ahead on the issue, a new building would be seven to 10 years away, at best. The Bradley Center's needs, however, are immediate and important. Without improving the Bradley Center, Wisconsin's largest economic center will suffer, and the state will no longer be able to effectively compete for the best concerts, family shows, sports events and other opportunities to showcase Wisconsin to the world. This course also could significantly hurt Downtown Milwaukee, negatively impact the local economy and threaten some businesses and jobs.

For nearly 21 years, the Bradley Center Board and staff have worked tirelessly to maintain Mrs. Pettit's gift to Wisconsin. Every penny generated by the Bradley Center, with no taxpayer support, has been invested back into the facility, its tenants and the community. As the community wrestles with the question of whether a new arena is needed in the future, more needs to be done at the Bradley Center now.

To meet the monumental challenges it faces in today's rapidly changing sports and entertainment marketplace, the Bradley Center now asks the State of Wisconsin for help. The Bradley Center has always been the people's building. The time has come for the people of Wisconsin to make an investment in its successful future.

## **HISTORY AND BACKGROUND**

*"Jane Bradley Pettit had spent \$93 million on the Bradley Center, giving Milwaukee a state-of-the-art sports facility named after her adopted father. Milwaukee was struggling to shrug off its rust belt image and the new arena guaranteed that the city would remain in the big leagues. By any measure, it was an extraordinary gift. 'No one ever gives anything to the middle class,' one business leader remarked. But Jane did."*

*-- Milwaukee Magazine, November 2001*

In the mid 1980s, Milwaukee and Wisconsin witnessed history as philanthropist Jane Bradley Pettit stepped up to make a gift of \$93 million to fund construction of a new sports and entertainment

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arena in Downtown Milwaukee. The new arena would be named the Bradley Center in memory of Mrs. Pettit's beloved father, Harry Lynde Bradley, co-founder and chairman of the Allen-Bradley Company. It would be home to the Milwaukee Admirals hockey team, which Mrs. Pettit and her then-husband owned, and the Milwaukee Bucks NBA team, which had recently been purchased by local businessman and now U.S. Senator Herb Kohl.

Construction of the Bradley Center began in October 1986 and the facility opened in October 1988. To this day, the Bradley Center remains the only major public assembly facility in North America with construction underwritten through the philanthropy of a single family. Its construction and continuing operation represent a gift to all the people of the State of Wisconsin and a legacy of civic spirit and benevolence.

*Public Ownership, Community Leadership, Responsible Governance*

The Bradley Center is, through Chapter 232 of Wisconsin State Statute, an instrumentality of the State of Wisconsin. The facility is operated by the Bradley Center Sports & Entertainment Corporation (BCSEC), a public nonprofit corporation created by the Legislature in 1985 through Wisconsin Act 26 to receive the donation of the Bradley Center and operate it for the economic and recreational benefit of the citizens of Wisconsin.

State law requires BCSEC to, among other things, "own and operate the Bradley Center for the benefit of the citizens of this state." The corporation is also required to "adequately provide for the long-term maintenance of the Bradley Center."

A nine-member Board of Directors – a volunteer, nonpartisan and diverse panel – leads the BCSEC. State statute requires that the board include six nominees of Wisconsin's Governor, all of whom must be state residents representing "the diverse interests of the people of this state" and at least three of whom must have executive and managerial business experience; and three nominees of the Bradley family foundation. All Board members are appointed by the Governor and serve staggered, seven-year terms. State law prohibits Board members from accepting compensation for their service, and no member may hold elective public office.

Current Bradley Center Board members include:

- Ulice Payne, Jr. (chairman)
- Virgis W. Colbert
- Doug Kiel
- Gail A. Lione
- Ned W. Bechthold
- Michael F. Hart
- Marc Marotta
- Gary "Joe" Sweeney

- Rolen J. Womack, Jr.

### Bradley Center Funding

***While charged by the State with operating and maintaining the Bradley Center for the enjoyment of Wisconsin citizens, BCSEC receives no public money to do so.***

While charged by the State with operating and maintaining the Bradley Center for the enjoyment of Wisconsin citizens, BCSEC receives no public money to do so. The Bradley Center has earned its own way since opening its doors in 1988, operating entirely with funds generated through sponsorships; ticket sales; food, beverage and merchandise sales; suite rentals; parking; and tenant leases.

The Bradley Center does not pay property taxes. However, the Bradley Center has paid millions of dollars in lieu of taxes to the City of Milwaukee, pays for its own police and EMT service, and generates significant tax revenues for the City, Milwaukee County and the State of Wisconsin.

With the guidance of an experienced Board and a talented management team, the Bradley Center is a financially sound organization that typically breaks even on a cash basis at the end of a fiscal year. Nonetheless, there is no additional budget capacity and, under its current funding structure, the Bradley Center does not have the fiscal wherewithal to meet the needs of an aging building and the rapidly changing economics of today's sports and entertainment industries.

The Bradley Center's annual, audited financial reports are public records and these financials are available for public review at [www.bradleycenter.com/future](http://www.bradleycenter.com/future).

### **WISCONSIN'S SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND PUBLIC GATHERING CENTERPIECE**

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The Bradley Center is Wisconsin's premier public gathering spot, a place where people regularly come together to celebrate and share experiences. More than 33 million people have enjoyed over 3,500 events at the Bradley Center over the past 21 years. During the 2007-2008 season alone, more than 1.5 million people passed through the Bradley Center's doors.

Whether it's a basketball or hockey game, Sesame Street Live!, Celine Dion, World Wrestling Entertainment, the Trans-Siberian Orchestra, the Milwaukee Urban League's Black and White Ball, Elton John, Northwestern Mutual's legendary annual meeting or another exciting event, visitors to the Bradley Center experience the best sports, entertainment and hospitality in Wisconsin.

From sports to A-list concerts, from family shows to community events, the Bradley Center works hard and is proud to have a quality lineup of tenants. Because strong tenants make a strong building, the Bradley Center strives to be affordable for all of its

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### Sports

The Bradley Center is home to four sports teams – the Milwaukee Bucks of the National Basketball Association, the Milwaukee Admirals of the American Hockey League, the Marquette University Golden Eagles men’s basketball team of the Big East Conference and the Milwaukee IRON of the arenafootball2 league, which played its inaugural game at the Bradley Center in March 2009.

Besides exciting regular season action on the ice, on the floor and on the field, the Bradley Center regularly hosts major NCAA basketball and hockey tournament events; NBA and AHL playoff games, Marquette tournaments and more.

Many of the sports events held at the Bradley Center are televised, and the increasing international focus on the NBA has gained global attention for the community and the State of Wisconsin, as well. In 2007-08, when the Bucks roster included Chinese sensation Yi Jianlian, dozens of Milwaukee NBA games were broadcast in China.

In addition to its unique position as a privately funded arena, the Bradley Center is one of the only facilities in the NBA that is not controlled by its NBA team. In Detroit, the Pistons run the Palace. The Houston Rockets run the Toyota Center, and the Indiana Pacers operate Conseco Fieldhouse. But in Milwaukee, the Bradley Center is run by a volunteer, community-focused, nonpartisan Board committed to maintaining Mrs. Pettit’s gift for the people of Wisconsin.

The Bradley Center, its staff and Board, take pride in having ongoing, positive working relationships with all four of its teams and are honored to have them as tenants. The Bradley Center continues to provide significant financial support and resources to keep Wisconsin a major player in the sports and entertainment industry, and its hard-working staff makes sure the facility is in tip-top shape for every event.

### Entertainment

With strong leadership, a talented booking team, 550,000 square feet of indoor space, the capacity to seat 20,000 fans and the ability to hang 60 tons of sound equipment, lighting gear, staging and set pieces, the Bradley Center is in a solid position to compete for the country’s best concerts and touring family shows.

***Eight 2007-2008 Bradley Center concerts were sellouts, including Bon Jovi, Bruce Springsteen & the E-Street Band and Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, the season's most sought-after national touring show.***

***The Bradley Center hosts numerous community activities, including high school and college commencement ceremonies, corporate events and charity benefits.***

The *Business Journal* of Milwaukee highlighted the Bradley Center's impressive upcoming concert lineup in a December 2007 article, pointing out that the 2007-2008 season would be even better than 2005, when the Bradley Center appeared on Pollstar's "A-list" of indoor concert venues and was one of only four U.S. locations to land the season's Triple Crown of shows – the Rolling Stones, U2 and Paul McCartney tours.

"They really are on a hot run right now," Jason Wright, vice president of booking for national promoter Live Nation, told the *Business Journal* about the Bradley Center. "It seemed like every week over the last few months they have announced a triple-A act."

More than 170,000 fans crowded the Bradley Center for concerts in 2007-2008, taking in shows by Billy Joel, Van Halen, Keith Urban, Carrie Underwood, Josh Groban and other top-name acts. Eight Bradley Center concerts were sellouts, including Bon Jovi, Bruce Springsteen & the E-Street Band and Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus, the season's most sought-after national touring show.

The Bradley Center is also a favorite Wisconsin stop for family shows, including Sesame Street Live!, WALKING WITH DINOSAURS – The Live Experience, the 2008 Tour of Gymnastics Superstars, Smuckers Stars on Ice, beach volleyball and more. The Harlem Globetrotters, a New Year's Eve family fixture, began at the Bradley Center in 1988, its inaugural season.

#### Community Gathering Place

The Bradley Center is the people's building, a community gathering place where neighbors come to celebrate, graduate and congregate. Along with sports events, concerts and family shows, the Bradley Center hosts numerous community activities, including high school and college commencement ceremonies, corporate events and charity benefits.

For many years, the Bradley Center has served as the backdrop for the Milwaukee Urban League's annual Black and White Ball. Additionally, the Bradley Center has hosted numerous community and charitable events, including MACC Fund (Midwest Athletes Against Childhood Cancer) activities, blood drives, Make-A-Wish Foundation events and hundreds of corporate programs for companies like Robert W. Baird, Northwestern Mutual, M&I Bank and MillerCoors.

#### **ECONOMIC ENGINE**

As the centerpiece of Milwaukee's Downtown entertainment district, The Bradley Center is an economic driver in Wisconsin,

***The Bradley Center, along with its partners Levy Restaurants, merchandising company EMI and parking expert CPS, create jobs for approximately 1,200 people, with 75 full-time employees and seasonal employment equivalent to an additional 125 full-time positions.***

***Minorities comprise approximately 46 percent of the Bradley Center workforce and 24 percent of its management team.***

***At the time the Bradley Center opened, an economic impact study by Milwaukee's Department of City Development showed that property values in the area more than doubled, more jobs were created at neighboring businesses and many new businesses opened.***

creating jobs; generating sales tax revenue; increasing business for nearby restaurants, bars and hotels; and more.

### Employment and Job Creation

The Bradley Center's day-to-day operations are accomplished through the dedication and hard work of a top-rated team of professionals who have a commitment to making everyone's visit fun, exciting and comfortable. The Bradley Center, along with its partners Levy Restaurants, merchandising company EMI and parking expert CPS, create jobs for approximately 1,200 people, with 75 full-time employees and seasonal employment equivalent to an additional 125 full-time positions.

The Bradley Center's management team, led by Bradley Center President Steve Costello, is among the most experienced and respected in the industry. The management team has a strong dedication to the facility and Mrs. Pettit's community gift; in fact, many Bradley Center managers have worked at the Center since it opened in 1988.

In addition to Costello, the Bradley Center's executive management team includes:

- Gerrit Ostermick, VP and Chief Administrative Officer
- Dan Cardona, VP and General Manager
- Kara Vandre-Hebar, VP of Finance & Administration and Treasurer
- Paul Jansen, VP of Sales, Marketing and Business Development

The Bradley Center's employees are a true reflection of our state's diverse community. Minorities comprise approximately 46 percent of the Bradley Center workforce and 24 percent of its management team. Additionally, women hold more than one-third of the management positions at the Bradley Center.

### Economic Spillover

The Bradley Center is the No. 1 Downtown entertainment venue in Milwaukee and one of the top destinations in the entire State of Wisconsin. At the time it opened – at what was once the site of an old social service agency and some dilapidated taverns – an economic impact study by Milwaukee's Department of City Development showed that property values in the area more than doubled, more jobs were created at neighboring businesses and many new businesses opened.

Today, the area west of the Milwaukee River near the Bradley Center is a key development zone for condominiums, hotels and office buildings. While the real estate and credit markets work through the current economic issues, this particular area of Milwaukee continues to attract significant development attention.

***Besides driving new development and a thriving Downtown, the Bradley Center's presence creates additional economic benefits for Milwaukee, Southeast Wisconsin and the state as a whole.***

***In total, over the past 20 years, the Bradley Center and its tenants generated an estimated \$100 million in state tax revenues and spent an estimated \$50 million with Wisconsin businesses.***

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New restaurants, shops and bars have opened, and the former Pabst brewery is returning to grandeur as The Brewery retail, residential and office development. All of these developments were attracted to – and will add to – the activity and excitement the Bradley Center generates.

Besides driving new development and a thriving Downtown, the Bradley Center's presence creates additional economic benefits for Milwaukee, Southeast Wisconsin and the state. For example:

- The Bradley Center and its tenants generated approximately \$3.5 million in sales tax in 2007.
- The Bradley Center's total payroll for 2007 was more than \$4.3 million.
- The Bradley Center and its tenants generated about \$5 million in state income tax in 2007.
- In 2007, the Bradley Center and its contractors spent almost \$5 million with Wisconsin businesses for such items as restaurant supplies, maintenance, custodial services and more.
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#### Financial Support for Nonprofits

Each year, the Bradley Center gives Southeast Wisconsin nonprofit groups the opportunity to raise money by operating concession stands at Bradley Center events. Since the Bradley Center initiated this unique program when it opened in 1988, more than 150 Southeast Wisconsin nonprofit groups have earned approximately \$9.4 million through the program – making it good business for the Bradley Center and the nonprofits who participate. Nonprofits involved in the Bradley Center concession program include St. Mary's of Menomonee Falls, the Oconomowoc Lions Club, the Leukemia Society, Hope in Tanzania, UW-Parkside Baseball, Racine Shoreland Lutheran High School and many others.

#### **INVESTMENTS IN THE BRADLEY CENTER**

Without the use of public funding and while providing significant economic support to its teams, the Bradley Center's Board and management have operated the facility responsibly for the past 21 years. The Board has invested millions of dollars in maintaining and preserving Mrs. Pettit's generous gift to the people of Wisconsin. Additionally, the Bradley Center leadership team continues to innovate, interact with its peers across the country, partner with good companies, implement best business practices and modify its operating model to continue to be as strong and competitive as possible.

***Operating under an extremely tight budget, the Board and staff have maximized resources over the past 20 years, reinvesting about \$35 million in facility maintenance and improvements and investing \$10 million to acquire adjoining property to provide critical parking resources and revenues.***

In recent years, the Board has remodeled parts of the building, installed a new sound system, formed new partnerships to improve food and souvenir operations, added new and/or expanded clubs and restaurants for season ticketholders, gone smoke-free and made other improvements to enhance the fan experience and extend the life of the building.

#### *Enhancing and Improving Food & Beverage, Souvenir Operations*

In 2005, after 17 years of managing its own food and beverage service, the Bradley Center partnered with a national leader, the well-regarded Levy Restaurants. The partnership with Levy has taken food and beverage at the Bradley Center to the next level, with new, updated menus, new restaurants and lounges and sharply remodeled concession stands to serve fans.

The Bradley Center has also brought on a national powerhouse, Event Merchandising Inc. (EMI), to oversee merchandise sales for all Bradley Center sporting events, family programs and concerts. Under EMI's leadership, the Bradley Center's team stores have been upgraded; new Bucks, Admirals and Marquette gear has been developed; and Bradley Center merchandise is also available online at [www.bradleycentersports.com](http://www.bradleycentersports.com).

The decision to bring in Levy Restaurants and EMI has proven to be a good business move that is helping strengthen the Bradley Center, increase revenue and provide a better experience for guests.

#### *Investments in the Facility*

As communities around the country build new, state-of-the-art arenas and public gathering spaces to attract the same kind of tenants the Bradley Center enjoys, the Bradley Center is operating in an extremely competitive, high-stakes industry. Operating under an extremely tight budget, the Board and staff have maximized resources over the past 20 years, reinvesting about \$35 million in facility maintenance and improvements and investing \$10 million to acquire adjoining property to provide critical parking resources and revenues.

In the last several years the Center has invested about \$6 million in upgrades to the building. These improvements have helped to generate revenue, enhance the fan experience and strengthen the Bradley Center as a business.

Recent improvements include:

- Enhanced **video and audio systems**, including a **360-degree LED display, 100 LCD flat panel television screens** throughout the center so no action is missed, and an **upgraded arena sound system**;

- **Themed areas** that feature wall panels, corner displays and **new concession stands** that reflect Milwaukee’s brewing history, Wisconsin’s waterways, sports and musical images;
- **“Club Cambria,”** offering a game ticket, dinner and dessert buffets, beverages and private concierge in a club setting;
- An expanded **Courtside Club** restaurant to serve more than 800 fans that features a nightly dinner buffet, dessert cart, two bars, half-time and post-game lounge area; and more;
- A **BACARDI bar** on the 200 level;
- **Time Warner Cable Business Class Club** on the 200 level;
- **Miller Lite Home Court Club** on the suite level;
- A 400-level lounge called **“Numbers 400,”** one of only a few lounges of its kind in the NBA that features unique food and cocktails in a semi-private setting for season ticketholders in the upper level;
- **Expanded premium and club seating** areas that allow businesses to entertain clients and fans to experience the game close to the action while generating additional revenue for the tenants and the Bradley Center;
- **Valet parking;** and
- **Significant scoreboard repairs** to maintain its sponsorship appeal and viability.

In February 2008, the Board also began an effort to explore potential naming rights opportunities that would have generated additional non-tax revenue for the Bradley Center. However, in deference to the nature of this gift from Mrs. Pettit as a memorial to her father, the Board halted the effort when Mrs. Pettit’s family raised concerns about the plan.

#### Exploring Redevelopment Opportunities

As another means of generating revenue to support its tenants, strengthen its operations and preserve Mrs. Pettit’s gift, the Bradley Center is exploring redevelopment opportunities for nearby land. Over the past decade, Bradley Center has spent approximately \$5 million to purchase land north of the facility for development, and has also had discussions with state and county officials about another parcel on the old Park East freeway property and its potential importance to a Downtown redevelopment project.

BCSEC has partnered with Lauth, one of the largest and most-respected real estate development and construction companies in the country, to identify retail/entertainment development possibilities that will enhance the Bradley Center as a top destination and major economic driver for Downtown Milwaukee.

#### **CHALLENGES AHEAD**

The Bradley Center is a beautiful building, with gleaming glass atriums, immaculate concourses, carefully tended restrooms,

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sparkling lighted signage, nicely furnished guest areas and impressive granite exterior. Its beauty is a testament to quality design and materials, solid workmanship and a dedicated Board and staff committed to exercising their fiduciary responsibility and preserving Mrs. Pettit's community gift.

But the Bradley Center's beauty also belies its many challenges. The challenges are major, and have spurred the Bradley Center to look to the State for help.

Twenty-one years after construction, and at an age when similar U.S. facilities are replaced or completely overhauled, the Bradley Center has reached the point where new, major investment is required to ensure it remains a viable community and public entertainment and sports venue, an effective economic driver and a continued asset to the citizens Mrs. Pettit so generously sought to touch. The Bradley Center faces significant struggles, due to both its age and the skyrocketing economics of the sports and entertainment marketplace in which it competes.

#### Building Challenges

At 21 years old, the Bradley Center has serious physical challenges that must be addressed. These include:

- Seriously outdated mechanical and HVAC systems requiring major upgrades;
- An aging roof and exterior façade that requires ongoing maintenance;
- A severely outdated scoreboard that will need to be replaced to ensure the Bradley Center can continue to produce sports and special events while sustaining vital sponsorship revenue;
- Significant and increasing elevator and escalator maintenance;
- An obsolete hockey rink system that must be replaced;
- Parking Structure repairs and structural maintenance;
- Substantial exterior grounds repair and maintenance;
- Outdated event production technology required to produce live sports and special events;
- Aging and energy inefficient lighting, and worn out electrical and electronics components;
- Infrastructure of various types including an aging plumbing system;
- Replacement or refurbishing a substantial portion of 18,000 Bradley Center seats that require reupholstering;
- Security and life safety systems; and more.

In addition, the Bradley Center currently has no formal team store or fan zone, no sit-down restaurant for the public and no family interactive area, all of which would be important revenue-generators for the facility. At Milwaukee's Miller Park, the year-

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round team store and Friday’s Front Row restaurant have been highly successful, as has the ballpark’s popular kids zone.

### Market Challenges

Technology, amenities and the ability to generate revenue are key factors to attracting and keeping national acts and sports teams at a venue like the Bradley Center. And while the Bradley Center Board and staff have worked hard to maximize resources and invest in the facility, the changes in the sports and entertainment fields have greatly outpaced the Bradley Center’s ability to generate new revenue. Exploring new revenue options is imperative to keeping Wisconsin as a favorite location for the best family shows and concert tours and one of only 23 states with an NBA franchise.

The Bradley Center is the second-oldest arena in the NBA that has not had a major renovation. And while few people dispute sports’ changing economics, the Bradley Center’s economic struggles are about more than supporting its sports tenants.

As more communities without pro teams build indoor venues, the competition for concerts and family shows is heavier than ever before. While the Bradley Center used to compete with about 30 U.S. markets to book shows, it now competes with about 60. One example is in Ontario, Calif., which opened the City-owned Citizens Business Bank Arena in October 2008. The new, state-of-the-art facility has already booked shows by Carrie Underwood and Metallica, both of whom are also performing at the Bradley Center. In Connecticut, the Mohegan Sun Arena will host Neil Diamond, Michael Bubl  and Keith Urban, all of whom have played the Bradley Center in recent months.

Amid a growing pool of competitors, the Bradley Center and Wisconsin must do more to maintain its status as a “must-stop” destination. If an act can’t find what it needs here, it will go to Kansas City, Columbus or Indianapolis instead. The Bradley Center would forfeit an A-list show, the State of Wisconsin would forfeit the revenue such a show would generate, area restaurants would forfeit concert-day business and fans would have fewer choices. Moreover, the local quality of life would be negatively impacted – everyone would notice the difference.

### **THE POSITIVE IMPACTS OF PUBLIC FUNDING AT OTHER WISCONSIN VENUES**

Public support has made a big and positive difference at other Wisconsin venues. While the funding debate over Miller Park was contentious, a study by the Institute for Survey and Policy Research at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee found that in the three years after moving into the new ballpark, the Milwaukee Brewers

made a yearly economic impact of \$327.3 million on the five-county area taxed to build the new stadium.

Buoyed by revenue from the state-of-the-art ballpark, the Milwaukee Brewers made it to the playoffs for the first time in 26 years last season, breaking records for season single ticket sales, sellouts and more. Last season, attendance topped 3 million fans and the team generated a great deal of revenue, excitement and community involvement.

Publicly funded upgrades at Lambeau Field in Green Bay ushered in a whole new era of championship football in Titletown. Tax-funded upgrades to Camp Randall Stadium have kept the Wisconsin Badgers Bowl-bound, and all of it adds to the positive quality of life we enjoy in Wisconsin.

### **A NEW PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE**

It has been estimated that Jane Bradley Pettit gave more than \$250 million to the Milwaukee and Wisconsin community during her lifetime; the \$93 million gift to build the Bradley Center was the single largest. Over the past 21 years, that gift has brought tremendous benefits to the people of Wisconsin. It is the proverbial gift that keeps on giving.

As tough as it might be, especially with the current economy, investment by the people in the Bradley Center is sound policy.

Business leaders, community leaders and citizens appreciate the major economic impact and international cachet associated with being an NBA city and an NBA state. Having the Bucks, Admirals, Marquette University Golden Eagles, A-list concerts and family shows and a major public gathering space puts Wisconsin's largest city among some of the country's most vibrant urban areas. The Bradley Center also provides distinct community and business advantages in terms of recruiting, economic development and tourism, not to mention national and international media exposure.

For more than two decades, the non-political, business-focused and volunteer Bradley Center Board has taken seriously its statutory mandate to "own and operate the Bradley Center for the benefit of the citizens of this state." With no public dollars, the Bradley Center Board, management team and staff have worked tirelessly to maximize private resources, maintain the facility and make improvements to enhance the fan experience and extend the life of the building.

The Bradley Center has never received public money, though it has paid millions for City of Milwaukee services, pays for its own police and EMT coverage and, along with its tenants, has generated an estimated \$100 million in state tax revenues over the past 20 years. As a result of responsible budgeting, careful oversight and a

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strong sense of fiduciary accountability, the Bradley Center Board and staff typically emerge from a fiscal year in a “break-even” position, on a cash basis.

But the need for increased revenue for capital repairs and building system replacements has outpaced the Bradley Center’s ability to generate it. Today, despite its impeccable appearance and impressive lineup of sports, entertainment and community events, the Bradley Center needs to change its model to meet current and future challenges. While the public and its elected representatives begin to discuss the future of a possible new arena facility, the Bradley Center’s challenges are on the agenda now.

The aging structure presents physical challenges that must be resolved to ensure the people of Wisconsin can continue to experience all Mrs. Pettit’s gift has to offer. The changing dynamics of the sports and entertainment industry presents business and economic challenges that must be overcome for the Bradley Center to remain viable and for Wisconsin to remain one of the country’s top sports and entertainment destinations.

Twenty-one years after opening its doors, the Bradley Center is at a crossroads. The community may decide to build a new arena, but that won’t happen quickly. The Bradley Center needs attention – and help – now to succeed, thrive and continue to benefit the people of Wisconsin. Public money is a vital part of that approach.

There will never be another Jane Bradley Pettit, and it is likely that the Wisconsin community will never see another gift like the Bradley Center. It is now time for the public to take a more active role in ensuring this one-of-a-kind gift continues to touch the Wisconsinites she sought to benefit.

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