

# Milwaukee Ald. Donovan: Mayor Barrett: 14 years in office and not a plan in sight

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*Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan*

I always approach the media with a measure of skepticism, so I look forward to Mayor Tom Barrett clarifying, explaining, or denying the remarks attributed to him in yesterday's Journal Sentinel:

"What I've always said about all of the economic development is, 'You've got to have a strong heart,'" Barrett said in an interview with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. "We've strengthened the heart of Milwaukee, and now that permits us to do more in the rest of the city."

Did the Mayor truly say this?

Does the Mayor who has presided over 14 years of decay in our neighborhoods - decay that members of the Common Council have asked him to arrest for years - now ask us to believe that this was part of some long-term plan?

Does he ask us to believe that his cutting of front-line police officers and fire-fighters, his underfunding of infrastructure maintenance and his neglect of Main Street storefronts was necessary to permit the downtown to flourish?

Conversely, does he ask us to believe that the decay, crime, fear, and disorder experienced by so many was a blood price for the new arena and other downtown developments?

And what would it say about him if it were true?

But we know this is not true. Mayor Barrett has not had a plan for the development of downtown – a streetcar is not development – any more than he now has a plan to assist our neighborhoods, save using TIF districts to subsidize some residential developments.

This City was not built on government largesse. It was built by people choosing to live in a community with clean, safe streets; good schools; and jobs that promised them a future.

I look forward to the Mayor's plan to create these things. Then we'd really have something.