



13th District Alderman

# Terry L. Witkowski

*The Garden District*

SPRING 2010

## Dear Neighbors,

In past newsletters I have questioned if we were falling behind the rest of the city, what could be done to improve this district, get our fair share of service and elevate the importance this area plays in the overall health of the city. I've questioned if crime was slipping into the area and what could be done to prevent it.

These long-range thoughts have not just been mentioned and forgotten. The health of our area affects the overall health of the city as we often have ranked just behind downtown and the East Side in total tax levy.

We have quietly paid our taxes, been a great work force, been a low crime area and placed a lower demand on the city for services. Quite unnoticed, this area is home to the longest uninterrupted commercial strip in the city, four miles of S. 27th St. The airport provides 6,000 jobs and the area of Milwaukee that surrounds it provides another 12,000 jobs. We are the transportation hub of the city with the airport, Amtrak, I-94, I-43 and I-894 and are host to truck terminals, warehouses and logistics firms. We have more hotels than downtown (but fewer rooms) and the second largest hospitality grouping in the city.

This newsletter will brief you on my efforts to keep our area healthy, keep crime out, spur on economic growth, cause renewal and champion preservation where needed.

Sincerely,

Terry Witkowski  
Alderman, 13th District



## Mark Your Calendars

### Thursday, March 18, 6:30 p.m.

*Water Tower at 6th St. and Norwich Ave.*  
Town Hall Meeting - State of city finances with Alderman Michael Murphy, chair of the finance committee, and Alderman Witkowski

### Thursday, March 25, 6:30 p.m.

*Water Tower at 6th St. and Norwich Ave.*  
Town Hall Meeting - State of the city with Common Council President Willie Hines and Alderman Witkowski

### Thursday, April 1

*Nationwide*  
Census Day - [www.milwaukee.gov/2010census](http://www.milwaukee.gov/2010census)

### Saturday, April 17, 1:30 p.m.

*Custom Grown Greenhouses, 4463 S. 6th St.*  
Vegetable Container Gardening

### Saturday, May 15, 10 a.m. - Noon

*924 W. Armour Ave.*  
Perennial Exchange

## Image, Marketing and Branding of the Area

In spring 2008, the Common Council and mayor acted on a 29-page plan to officially make this **The Garden District**. This designation gives the whole district a title and a common project to work toward – beautification of the district. Studies show that areas that look cared for have less crime. Landscaping is a relatively low cost home improvement that can also keep area home values up. The Garden Committee has run perennial exchanges, classes, coordinated planting projects and district wide garden awards and more. It plans a community garden and is working with County Supervisor Chris Larson and the UW Extension to make it happen. This year it will also attempt to work with each neighborhood association on a public planting in their area.

**The Gateway to Milwaukee** brand is taking advantage of our transportation entrances to Milwaukee and large hospitality grouping to turn the spotlight on this as an area to locate businesses.

**Historic Route US 41** is the branding of S. 27 St. This idea was suggested by the mayor of Greenfield and both he and I had our Common Councils officially declare it Historic Route US 41. State Representative Josh Zepnick is working on it on the state level. The three of us also worked to get \$1.5 million in streetscaping for four miles of 27th St. as part of the I-94 reconstruction project to recapture any business lost because of the ramp closing at I-894 and 27th St.

The streetscaping, including Historic US 41 signage, should be in place by fall and can be used for promotion of the street.



## S. 27th St. Gets Major Facelift

Alderman Witkowski joined Greenfield Mayor Michael Nietzke and BID organizers Tara Cavazos of US Bank Greenfield and Mike Kresovic of Cameo Care Campus for a news conference (left) to celebrate a \$1.5 million award from the Department of Transportation to help make valuable street enhancements and create BID projects for a stretch of S. 27th St. that runs through Milwaukee and Greenfield.

The event also launched a street sign competition matching the "Historic Route 41" theme of the renovations. Design honors were awarded to local award-winning graphic artist, Tina Klose, and the signs will appear late in 2010 as the work is finished.

## Budget, City Government and the Future

Cuts in the 2010 budget make 20 straight years we've had a reduction in the size of city government. In 1989, the number of city employees was more than 11,000. That number now stands around 8,000. A total of 85% of the annual city budget is paid to employees in wages and benefits. Fewer employees translates into less service.

This year's budget cut 350 positions, assigned furlough days, cut neighborhood libraries to 35 hours but, hopefully, other cuts will not show up in lost service to you. At this time it appears that we will be \$25 to \$35 million short in 2011 and an additional \$25 to \$35 million in 2012. Costs have increased and state shared revenue, a major source of city funding, has been frozen for the last 12 years and was reduced this year.

The Public Policy Forum's report "Between a Rock and a Hard Place" confirmed City Comptroller Wally Morics' report that the city will have an ongoing imbalance. This means we will spend more than we take in. State laws regulate the sources of revenue municipalities can have and also shared revenue. Unless the state legislature makes changes in city revenue streams, we will continue to be short. Even if the economy improves, the imbalance will continue.

The state also controls bargaining laws that prevent re-opening of contracts without agreement by both sides. State mediation and arbitration laws also work against the city in controlling our biggest cost: employee's wages and benefits. Laws need to be changed to consider the city's

ability to pay and the contracts' effect on services as well as not considering city reserves that affect our bond rating. Changes also need to include dropping the comparison to neighboring municipalities. If River Hills gives a 6% raise, should we be forced to do that as well?

Our money coming in and money spent on employees is under the control of state laws. While District Council 48, the city's largest bargaining unit, and smaller unions have recognized the city's financial crisis, the police and fire unions have fought cuts and challenged furlough days. They have been to Madison and lobbied that cuts in state shared revenue not affect them. Either the state legislature needs to change the laws or unions need to stop thinking only of their pocketbooks.



## Pet Waste and Leash Laws

You shouldn't have to watch where you step in our neighborhoods but unfortunately there are people who neglect to pick up after their pets. Not only is it unsightly, pet waste left on the lawn or next to the sidewalk washes into storm drains which carries it directly into our rivers and Lake Michigan.

Please, on behalf of your neighbors, double-bag pet waste in plastic bags. Seal the bags and then put them in the green garbage cart. If you have any questions, call 286-CITY (2489).

I would also like to remind residents that city law prohibits an owner from permitting an animal to be at large. In other words, dogs must be leashed at all times except when they are confined in a fenced yard.

## Roadways and Budget

The 2010 budget again increased maintenance and new roadway funding to improve the condition of Milwaukee streets. Both were reduced by the last mayor to cut taxes which left us with a problem today. The I-94 project paid to resurface some roads in our district this past summer and should pay for resurfacing Howard Ave. from S. 6th St. to S. 13th St. in 2010. The state will also resurface S. 27th St. from College Ave. north to Howard Ave. in 2010.

As for potholes this spring, call **286-CITY(2489)** if any appear on your street or your daily route to let the city know they are there. Let them know the address to be sure they are filling the right one. The asphalt plants closed for the year and do not open until spring. Because of that, a cold patch is used to fill the pot hole until the hot patch is again available.

## Flood Management

The Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) has undertaken two studies of waterways in our district. A study of Wilson Creek, starting at the airport and running to S. 27th St. & Loomis Rd. and on to the KK River was completed at the end of 2009. A study of the Oak Creek from Copernicus Park east into Oak Creek has been included in the MMSD budget for 2010. Each will identify flooding problems and suggest solutions. The solutions will then need to be budgeted for and may require hearings to move them forward.

## Milwaukee's National Image

A recent study done by the Spirit of Milwaukee says Milwaukee does not have a bad or good image nationally – it does not have an image! I have heard for many years that people think we are Minneapolis or cannot identify us at all! How can we attract jobs, tourists or conventions when people have no image of us? Whose job is it to give Milwaukee this image? I have sponsored legislation to set up a task force with all agencies that have a role in promoting this region to put in place a group that would permanently have this responsibility.

## New Police District Lines

Police district lines have changed for our district. If you live south of the railroad tracks in the 2700-2800 blocks south, you are now served by Police District 6, located on S. 27th St. north of Oklahoma Ave. If you live north of the railroad, you are served by Police District 2 at S. 3rd St. and Lincoln Ave. For police service, however, call **911** for emergency and **933-4444** for non-emergencies.

## Hoan Bridge

I am currently leading a fight at the Common Council level to not only keep the Hoan Bridge but also the I-794 connection between the Marquette Interchange and the Hoan. An option still on the table asks the state to connect the two by a roadway at street level. This would affect travel time and add delay to the south side, the airport, the port and for residents and business as well as cause additional air pollution.

## Traffic Crash Locations

The first year I took office I found that we had 10 intersections on S. 27th St. that had 15 or more crashes per year. After continuous effort by four police departments and some engineering changes, only three remained in 2008: S. 27th St. & Oklahoma Ave.; S. 27th St. & Layton Blvd.; and S. 27th St. & College Ave. More engineering changes will happen as S. 27th St. is resurfaced. Only one other location in the Garden District is on the list, College Ave. & S. 13th St.

## Other Traffic Success

There has been a noticeable absence of news helicopters hovering over the Plainfield Curve. As freeway planning began, I asked for chevrons in the curve and the state responded by installing the hash marks, speed boards, and speed signs. Enforcement was also used. The curve will be changed during future construction of I-94.

## Outstanding Debt Task Force

The Task Force I ran on money owed to the city continues to achieve recommendations and save money. A change in state law now allows the city to charge others receiving money from court costs collected, so they pay their fair share of the collection agency bill. This saved the city \$150,000 during the first six months it was implemented. We are still working on the state to allow booting of vehicles with many outstanding tickets.



## The Garden District Takes Root

Alderman Witkowski joins Mayor Barrett as he signs into law the official renaming of the 13th Aldermanic District. The now "Garden District" has become a celebration of the strong neighborhood and business organizations that work collaboratively to serve as the city's beautiful gateway.



**Milwaukee's Future:  
IT'S IN OUR HANDS**

**April 1, 2010 is Census Day!**

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

Find out more at: [www.milwaukee.gov/2010census](http://www.milwaukee.gov/2010census)

## Report Fraud, Waste and Abuse of City Resources

The City of Milwaukee Comptroller hosts a hotline and information web page that allows citizens and employees to report concerns regarding fraud, waste, inefficiencies and abuses within city government operations.

The office reviews illegal acts such as theft, fraud, kickbacks, price fixing or conflicts of interest by city employees and its contractors. If you see someone misusing or abusing city property or gross misconduct by employees, report it to the hotline.

Remember to describe your concern and provide the names of all individuals involved, including any other witnesses. Also be sure to provide the dates and times the incident(s) occurred and where it happened and any other relevant supplemental information.

You do not need to provide your name to submit your concern. We would, however, like to be able to contact you. At your option, please include a phone number or address that we may be able to follow-up on your concerns and indicate whether your identity should be kept confidential.

The City of Milwaukee is proud of its workers and its efficiencies and offers the fraud and abuse hotline to help ensure that we continue to deliver quality services to our residents.

If you have knowledge of such activities, please report your concerns.

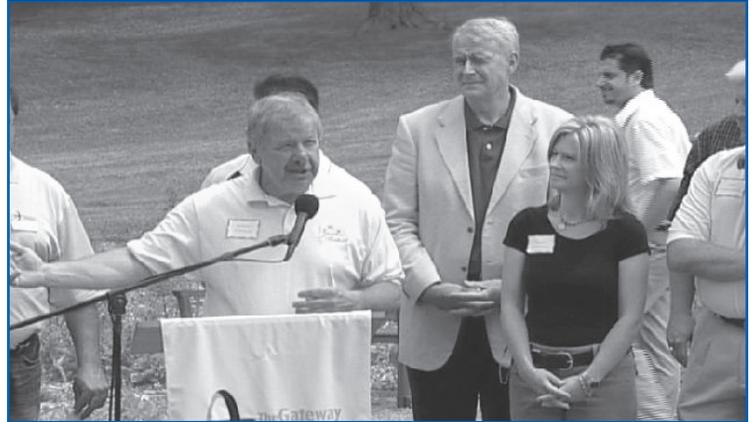
- **Email - [Hotline@milwaukee.gov](mailto:Hotline@milwaukee.gov)**
- **Phone - (414) 286-3440**
- **Mail - Office of the Comptroller  
Attention: Audit Hotline  
200 E. Wells Street, Room 404  
Milwaukee, WI 53202**



## Celebrating Milwaukee's Polish Heritage

Alderman Witkowski joined the Syrena Polish Folk Dance Ensemble in the Common Council chamber after they performed at a ceremony in City Hall welcoming Jerome Listeki as the new Archbishop of Milwaukee.

## Holler Park Rain Garden Dedication a Success



Alderman Witkowski spoke at the dedication of a new rain garden in Holler Park. Volunteers, including students from neighborhood schools, helped plant 10,000 native plants in the park. Rain barrels and a cistern were also installed as part of the project.

Alderman Terry Witkowski, along with the Airport Gateway Business Association, the Garden District Neighborhood Association and the Holler Park Neighborhood Association, hosted a rain garden dedication in Holler Park in July 2009.

Many dedicated residents, students and neighborhood leaders worked very hard on the plantings and improvements in Holler Park and the rain garden dedication marked a celebration of this community effort. The city's Garden District (the 13th Aldermanic District) began hosting some new volunteer initiatives to restore and retain the city of Milwaukee's outdoor landscape, and the project began May 9, 2009. Volunteers participated in planting 10,000 native plants around the Holler Park lodge and the work continued through May 17. Students from five neighborhood grade schools participated in the planting activities, as well.

In addition to planting, 15-20 volunteers were trained in the installation of rain barrels and one cistern at the Holler Park lodge. The rain gardens will help to improve storm water quality by catching, scrubbing and evaporating storm water from the lodge roof and Easter Seals parking lot and driveways before it enters the pond that empties into the Holmes Creek, Wilson Creek and the Kinnickinnic River watershed.

The project and training is supported with a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant through the City of Milwaukee and the Garden District. If you are interested in participating in these volunteer initiatives, please contact the plan coordinator, David Ciepluch, at **414-483-9551** or **[dciepluch@att.net](mailto:dciepluch@att.net)** for more details.



As part of the rain garden project, a memorial stone was installed to honor the hard work and dedication of the volunteers that helped to make it possible. The stone also honors the memory of Patrick J. Kuester.

## The Aerotropolis Has Taken Off

In March 2008 I conducted a meeting at the airport involving approximately 25 people including the mayors of Milwaukee, St. Francis, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, Franklin and Greenfield. State representatives and senators as well as county supervisors from those areas also took part. I proposed working together using the airport to attract economic development to the area. If a business locates on our side of the street, we get taxes, jobs, people going to our restaurants, shops, bars and hotels and if they locate in a surrounding community we still get everything but the taxes. The same is true for the suburbs. The group voted to begin working together and has been since as the Airport Area Economic Development Task Force meeting. Greendale and representatives of the U.S. Congress, VISIT Milwaukee, the World Trade Center, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce and the Greater Milwaukee Committee are now among the many groups and more than 50 people working to make this an Aerotropolis.

An Aerotropolis is a newer concept now found in the global economy mainly in Europe, China and the Far East that uses the airport as an economic engine for development. Until the late 1940s products did not move by air. Today 33% of the value of all products shipped in the world are shipped by air, although it is less than 2% of the weight. In the U.S., Dallas, Denver and Memphis are examples of Aerotropolis cities. You typically find logistics facilities, trucking, interstate highways, train stations, ports, hotels, hospitality industries, recreation and culture, factories and offices needing airport access, homes and shopping all within 15 minutes of the airport. Today, business is about access, speed and efficient movement of product. With “just-in-time” delivery, quick business response is needed.

I helped host the first meeting to look at Milwaukee’s multi-modal needs bringing together the Port of Milwaukee, airport, two railroads, container shipping and the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association. Does Milwaukee need this type of facility to become an Aerotropolis? The idea is to provide one-stop shopping for businesses wanting to move imports or exports through Milwaukee. Can moving product here be more efficient than Chicago and give us a competitive advantage? Will it attract jobs to benefit the region and the state?

The Gateway to Milwaukee will continue these meetings and is working to establish the Milwaukee Gateway Aerotropolis Corporation as legal entity to continue the work of the task force and take over the leadership role. Milwaukee passed a resolution to become a part of the Aerotropolis Corporation and assist it in pursuing this idea and the county and seven suburbs are now considering this resolution.

The bottom line is if this city is to stay healthy, we need to gain jobs and need to have people see our competitive advantages. The south side can lead the city, region and state in this effort.

## Did you know that Maitland Park...

Milwaukee native, Lt. Lester Maitland, U.S. Army, was the first person to fly across the Pacific from San Francisco to Honolulu, a distance greater than Charles Lindbergh’s flight across the Atlantic? He did it one month after Lindbergh in 1927. He was greeted here as a hero and a downtown airfield was named Maitland Field. It became a Nike Missile base in the 1950s and now is home to the Summerfest grounds. Maitland Park at S. 13th St. & Ramsey Ave. now carries his name.



### Honoring LaVerne Hermann

Alderman Witkowski was joined by Alderman Murphy, Mayor Barrett and Common Council President Willie Hines in June to honor Mrs. LaVerne Hermann, a 50-year member of the Milwaukee Safety Commission. Hermann helped lead the commission through many regulatory changes as Milwaukee has grown and her dedication to safety includes a special focus on eliminating drunk driving and other vehicular accidents.



Visit me online at  
[www.milwaukee.gov/district13](http://www.milwaukee.gov/district13)

E-mail me at  
[twitko@milwaukee.gov](mailto:twitko@milwaukee.gov)



### Touching Down in Milwaukee

Alderman Terry Witkowski was joined by Tom Rave from the Gateway to Milwaukee, County Supervisor Chris Larson, and Southwest CEO Gary Kelly as they celebrated Southwest Airlines’ arrival at General Mitchell International Airport. The national airline, known for its low fares, began flying routes from Milwaukee in November 2009.

## Organizing for Clout in the 13th District

**Neighborhood Associations.** As of this writing, there are 13 neighborhood associations I have helped establish in the Garden District. None existed six years ago. These organizations have affected the city services provided, worked with officials to resolve longstanding problems and addressed crime problems and graffiti. They have gotten MPS to staff two playfields. They testified before city committees on licenses and zoning affecting their quality of life and won. They fought to keep Tippecanoe Library open and won. They have brought neighbors closer together, keeping crime out. Neighborhood groups have gotten matching funding for grants to improve the appearance of the neighborhood and for neighborhood association signs and projects.

Neighborhood associations have helped provide a feeling of community by running litter pick ups and get-togethers, holiday parties, movies in the park, night time trick or treat, summer picnics, summer children's activities and more. A map in this newsletter shows areas organized and contact persons. Call me if you want to help organize one for your area.

### **The Airport Gateway Business Association (AGBA)**

One of two business associations that I helped establish, the Airport Gateway Business Association, has also become a BID or Business Improvement District. This BID gets funding by owners paying an additional fee ranging from \$250 to \$5,000 on their taxes. The city collects the fee and issues a check to the BID for functions spelled out in an annual plan submitted to the city for approval. Businesses paying the fee administer the fund and projects. They have branded the effort "**The Gateway to Milwaukee**" and have funded the billboards you see and banners on posts in the area (see the map in this newsletter). They have funded beautification efforts

on Layton east of 13th St. and paid for additional signature flowerbeds in front of the airport on Howell Ave. They beautify additional areas each year. They have helped fund some neighborhood beautification projects in the areas they are adjacent to and are willing to do more each year. They also run a security patrol through hotel parking lots, work with the police and have a security committee.

The Gateway to Milwaukee has testified before city and county committees on issues affecting this area and region. They have worked closely with the state on the freeway project and worked with others to keep the Layton Ave. ramps, which keep traffic from going to more residential streets. They are working to keep the Hoan Bridge and its connection to I-794. They are now a major player in the aerotropolis effort and have a member serving on the VISIT Milwaukee board. Look for a GATEWAY DISCOUNT CARD to appear this year.

**The South 27th Street Business Association** has just become a BID and will begin efforts as soon as their BID board is appointed. They plan to promote the street, to support various security efforts and to work with neighborhood associations to keep the area sound. They will also be doing maintenance of the streetscaping to be added by the state in fall of 2010. I worked with the Greenfield mayor so that a BID would be formed on their side of the street, too. The 27th Street Business Association will coordinate the BID, and this may be the first BID in the nation to cross over city boundaries.

There are now many organizations working to improve this area, giving the Garden District a louder voice and more prominence in the city.

## Renewal and Development in the Garden District

The area from Foster Pontiac to the CVS and from 27th St. to the creek has been designated as a **Tax Incremental Financing District (TIF)**. Foster has been vacant for four years and Southgate Ford has been empty at least two years. A TIF is used for blighted areas and the vacant 50-year-old car dealership buildings topped the list for reasons for renewal. Renewal here can spur renewed interest in others re-developing on 27th St.

In a TIF, the city floats bonds to assist a developer in financing their project. The bonds are paid off by the increase in taxes from the new project versus the taxes on the vacant, run down building, which is

making the area appear run down. In the first project here, Foster Pontiac will be demolished and replaced with two buildings and new landscaping. A Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant will occupy one of the new buildings. Construction should be underway this spring.

### **New Hotels**

A Hilton Garden Inn hotel is under construction on Howell Ave. at the former site of St. Stephen's school. A second hotel may also go up at this site. The Courtyard by Marriott, to be built at S. 5th St. and Layton Blvd., is working on financing. It is expected that restaurants will buy the two lots in front of it when it is built.

At S. 13th St. and College Ave., extensive remodeling and investment went into the former Ramada which is now a Crowne Plaza Hotel. It has a full service restaurant. The airport area continues to grow!

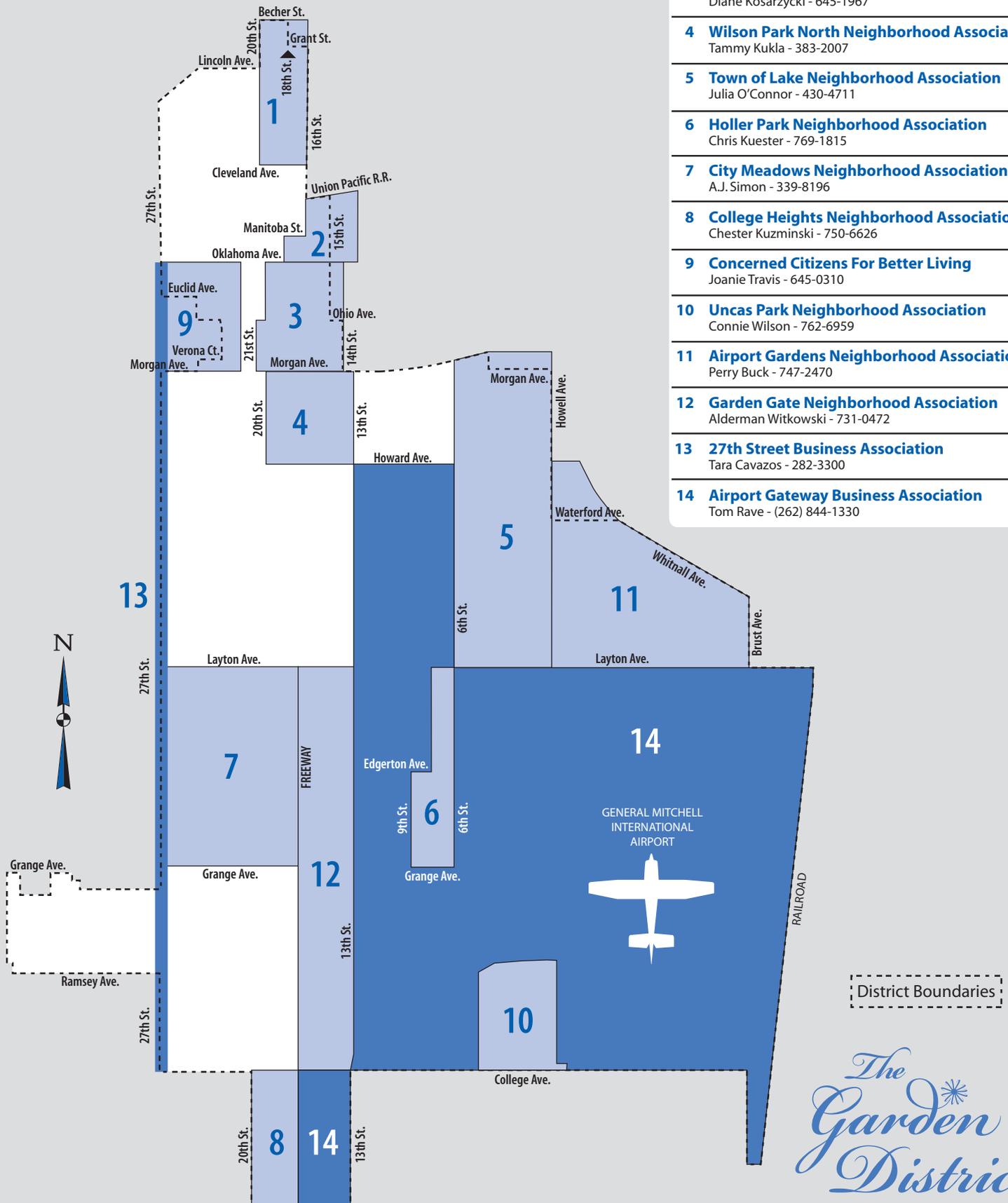
### **City Plan**

The new city plan for this area is now adopted and identifies an area south of S. 5th St. and Layton Blvd. as a site for a town center. The former Bay Shore shopping center is now a town center. I will be working with the city and Gateway to Milwaukee in the future to explore development of this concept. Gateway to Milwaukee provided partial funding for the city to do the plan for this area.

# Neighborhood & Business Associations in the 13th Aldermanic District by Area

**Garden District Neighborhood Association**  
(District-Wide) Michael Murphy - 364-8762

- 1 Lincoln Heights Neighbors In Action**  
Linda Zinke - 384-4043
- 2 Oklahoma Gardens Neighborhood Association**  
Jose Vasquez - 672-6758
- 3 Holt Park Neighborhood Association**  
Diane Kosarzycki - 645-1967
- 4 Wilson Park North Neighborhood Association**  
Tammy Kukla - 383-2007
- 5 Town of Lake Neighborhood Association**  
Julia O'Connor - 430-4711
- 6 Holler Park Neighborhood Association**  
Chris Kuester - 769-1815
- 7 City Meadows Neighborhood Association**  
A.J. Simon - 339-8196
- 8 College Heights Neighborhood Association**  
Chester Kuzminski - 750-6626
- 9 Concerned Citizens For Better Living**  
Joanie Travis - 645-0310
- 10 Uncas Park Neighborhood Association**  
Connie Wilson - 762-6959
- 11 Airport Gardens Neighborhood Association**  
Perry Buck - 747-2470
- 12 Garden Gate Neighborhood Association**  
Alderman Witkowski - 731-0472
- 13 27th Street Business Association**  
Tara Cavazos - 282-3300
- 14 Airport Gateway Business Association**  
Tom Rave - (262) 844-1330



*The  
Garden  
District*



13th District Alderman

# Terry L. Witkowski

*The Garden District*

SPRING 2010



City Hall, Room 205  
200 East Wells Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

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## Hero Firefighters Honored

Brothers John and Joel Rechlitz (pictured here with their wives, MPD Lt. Mark Wroblewski, and Alderman Witkowski) were off-duty when they responded to an SUV fire in a nearby neighborhood, bravely and selflessly entering the vehicle to save a mom and her two children. The firefighters, who received minor burns and cuts during the rescue, received national attention for their quick action and training.

## Garden District Players?

Why not? There are all kinds of talented people in the Garden District and with our community of 38,000 residents, we may want to try it. If you are interested in any part of community theater, I will host a meeting to explore interest and talk about possibilities. Please attend if you want to be part of it. The meeting is planned for Wednesday, March 24 at the Water Tower at S. 6th St. and Norwich Ave. with a follow up meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 7. Both meetings will be at 6:30 p.m. Bring any friends and talk up the meetings if you are interested.

## Milwaukee's Future – It's In Our Hands!

2010 is a census year in the United States and in Milwaukee, the count couldn't be more important. Each person represented in our census count helps the city gain federal funding for roads, schools, social programs and more. This year's census is easier than ever – just 10 questions that take only 10 minutes to complete! Watch for forms to appear in the mail after March 15 and return them by April 1. Stand up and be counted!



## New Garden District Sign

In November 2009, a new sign was installed in the median of Chase Ave. near Morgan Ave., at the point where Aldermanic District 14 meets our Garden District. The road work on Chase Ave. and Howell Ave. was part of a state highway improvement contract, which included funding for landscaping. The north face of the sign welcomes people to the Garden District while the south face welcomes people to neighboring Bay View.

IMPACT   
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211 to get  
help with life.

Cell phone:  
Dial 414-773-0211

Pay phone:  
Dial 1-866-211-3380

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United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Milwaukee County