



NIK KOVAC

Budget, Development, and Infrastructure Update

FALL 2010



Dear Residents,

It has been a busy summer on our side of town. The warm weather has stretched deep into fall, allowing us to enjoy our lake beaches and river trails well into October. In July, torrential rains fell so fast that many homes and businesses suffered basement flooding for the first time, and a huge sinkhole opened up at the intersection of Oakland and North Avenues.

Traffic in all directions is open again on North Avenue, as are several new buildings. Inside this newsletter you will find a centerfold map with pictures and descriptions of those developments. Plus updates on what else might be coming soon to this important East Side thoroughfare connecting Lake Park to the River Greenway, and in between offering shopping, dining, entertainment, and housing options for everyone.

At City Hall we have recently created the Milwaukee River Greenway Overlay District, approved a comprehensive bicycle master plan, and are currently considering a budget from the Mayor which restores hours at our library and maintains core services of public safety, infrastructure, and sanitation. Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll learn more about those legislative accomplishments and other exciting developments throughout our district and city.

Thanks again for your help in making all of this possible. Let's continue building Milwaukee's future together.

Nik Kovac
3rd District Alderman



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CITY OF MILWAUKEE
COMMON COUNCIL

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Remember!

Town Hall Meetings About Proposed Developments

Nov. 11, 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.
East Library - 1910 E. North Ave.

Nov. 16, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
S.S. Peter and Paul Church
- 2490 N. Cramer St.

See inside for details...



Department of Public Works Infrastructure Update

The businesses and residents on and near North Avenue have had to put up with a lot of hassle lately. Some of it – like the Humboldt Bridge reconstruction, various sewer lining projects in the East Bank and Greenwich Village neighborhoods, and the Lake Drive and Terrace Avenue repaving projects in the Historic Water Tower neighborhood – has been scheduled infrastructure improvements. Other projects – like the sinkhole and Pizza Man cleanup efforts – have been due to unscheduled natural disasters and arson.

Your patience through all of this noise and traffic has been exceptional. The DPW and private construction workers have worked efficiently with fire and police personnel – 24 hours a day when necessary – to minimize these delays and protect our safety. Now that all the streets are smooth, all the pipes are relined, and traffic is moving normally, please make a point to patronize the businesses along North Avenue and near the Humboldt Bridge.



Cambridge Commons UWM dorm

If you want proof that a thorough and flexible public process can produce a better building, look no further than this 700 bed dormitory, which engages the North Avenue streetscape to its south while respecting and embracing the unique river valley to the west. The entire pose of the \$50 million structure was designed to be consistent with the height and setback guidelines of the Greenway Overlay. The landscaped lawn for student recreation is tended with gray water from underground cisterns which collect all of the roof rainwater. More parking spaces – and a stoplight – were gained on Cambridge, as well as a coffee shop and bookstore, both open to the public. The new traffic signal and an ADA compliant path down to the river valley and the Rotary Club Arboretum will be installed later this fall.



East Library

As a Library Board member, I am pleased to announce that the 2011 budget includes funding for 10 additional hours at 4 neighborhood libraries, including East Library. As a result, our library will no longer be closed on Fridays.

Nevertheless, the deep budget cuts of the last few years have challenged the Library Board to think creatively about how to guarantee a future for all 12 neighborhood libraries. The 2011 budget also includes capital funding to convert East Library into a mixed-use development that would include a ground floor library, built together with another proposed development above.

This mixed-use concept is currently premiering on the northwest side. Villard Square, the first mixed-use MPL branch, at N. 34th St. and W. Villard Ave. had a ground breaking ceremony in September. The new library will include the Villard branch library on the first floor, and three stories of residential apartments above. The new ground floor library will replace the existing Villard branch library at 3310 W. Villard Ave., and the apartments will include many student age residents who will utilize the new facility. Residents of apartment homes in Villard Square will be grandparents who are the primary care takers for their school-age grandchildren.

Please join me and other members of the Library Board to learn about options for our neighborhood library, as well as for the library system as a whole. The community meeting will be held at East Library on November 11 at 5:30 p.m.

Coming Soon?



East Greenwich P

You may remember this pr
nonprofit developer of wo
City owned parking lots on
Back then they were asking
through as is. Responding
original design, bringing t
54 units, creating a more p
nearby properties. The fee
a final design requires a fi
need to apply for WHEDA f

Please join me and your r
on the latest version of th
room at S.S. Peter and Pa

E. North Ave.



Recently Completed

The old Downer Avenue Garage – and new Open Pantry and Classic Slice

Many of you probably remember getting your cars fixed here by Jim Hugg. Since his death, the property has been vacant for several years until Wangard Partners bought the cream city brick structure and renovated the L-shaped building into retail openings. The Open Pantry will soon be moving one block east into half of the building, while Classic Slice, the popular Bay View pizzeria, will be opening a new location in the other half.

Latitude Apartments

This \$13 million, 90 unit apartment building was completed earlier this
Dermond Properties. The design of its window recesses, exterior materi
pedestrian experience along Kenilworth Place and Farwell Avenue were
scrutinized by nearby businesses and residents. If you look east from No
Kenilworth you will notice how its design and massing match up with a
UWM graduate dorm, art studio/gallery, and retail stores across Farwell
kind of urban experience - "the street as a room" - that the North Avenue
encourage through its proposed new design guidelines for the area.





Coming Soon?

Park Apartments

proposal from earlier this spring, when Mercy Housing, a national workforce housing, requested a zoning change for the US Bank and the triangle between Murray, Thomas, and Farwell Avenues. The proposal was for 9 stories and 85 units and were leaving the 6-lane drive to community feedback, Mercy Housing has since modified this building height down to 5 stories, reducing the density to a pedestrian friendly streetscape, and engaging the massing with feedback from neighbors and nearby businesses will continue until a final decision - probably in January or February when Mercy will be financing.

Neighbors for a community meeting to review and comment on the proposal on November 16, from 6-7:30 p.m. in the meeting room at St. Paul Church at 2490 N. Cramer St.



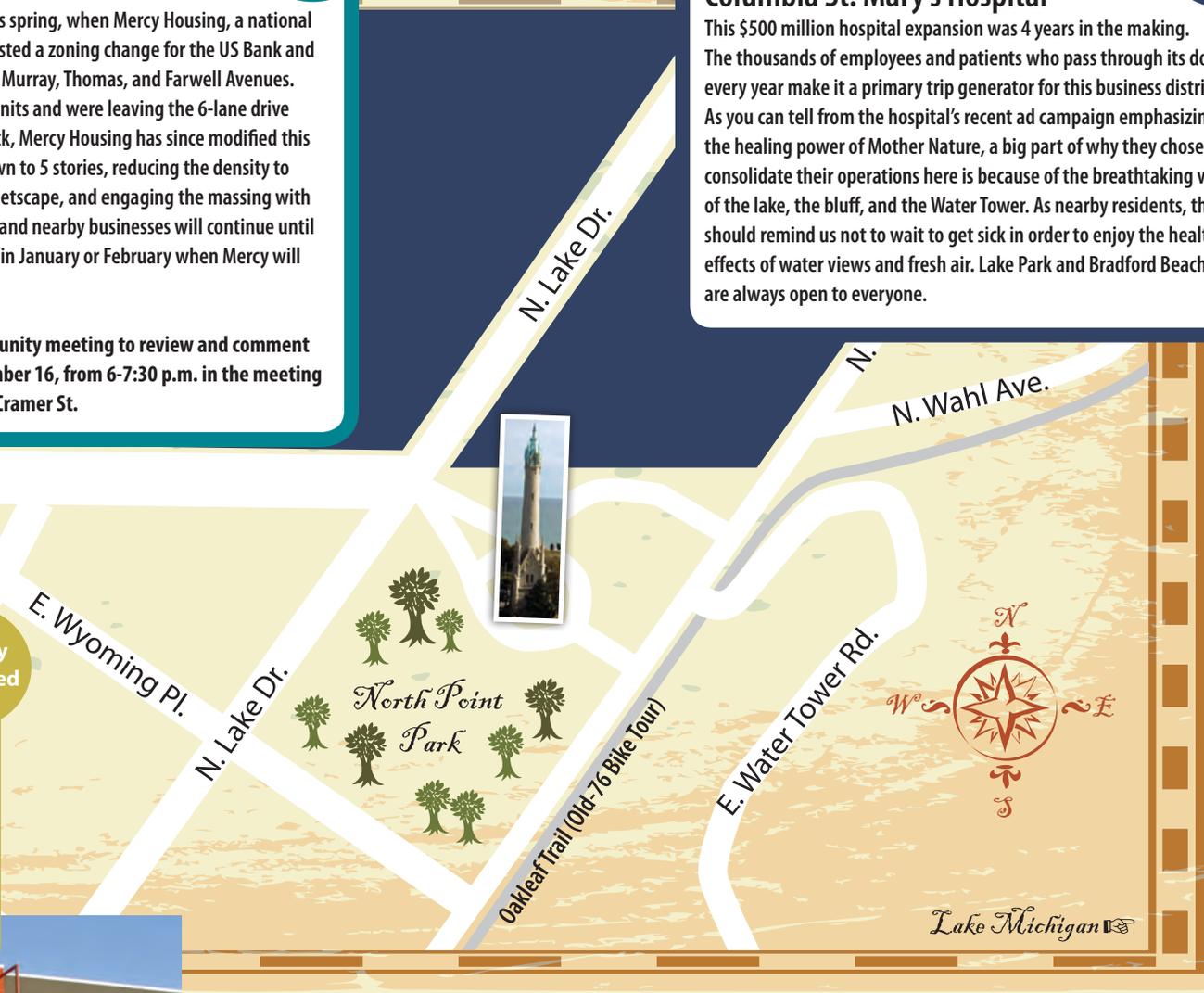
Recently Completed

Columbia St. Mary's Hospital

This \$500 million hospital expansion was 4 years in the making. The thousands of employees and patients who pass through its doors every year make it a primary trip generator for this business district. As you can tell from the hospital's recent ad campaign emphasizing the healing power of Mother Nature, a big part of why they chose to consolidate their operations here is because of the breathtaking views of the lake, the bluff, and the Water Tower. As nearby residents, this should remind us not to wait to get sick in order to enjoy the healthful effects of water views and fresh air. Lake Park and Bradford Beach are always open to everyone.

Recently Completed

year by year, and the closely North Avenue down and engage the North Avenue. It is this the BID is trying to



An Architectural Review Board (ARB) for all of East North Avenue?

As the photos on this centerfold illustrate, a lot of development has happened – and more will keep happening in the near future – on East North Avenue. As the captions near each photo also describe, the public process surrounding approvals has been thorough, but also somewhat ad hoc. The business and property owners in the North Avenue BID are hoping to codify many of the design, use, and massing principles which have emerged from the many public meetings in the last few years.

Their ideas have now been distilled into 2 proposals:

1. A zoning overlay for the BID district which would leave the current 60 foot height maximum unchanged, but would raise the minimum height to either 3 or 4 stories, depending on the width of the street.
2. An ARB for the area with design guidelines and review, similar to what currently exists in the Third Ward.

2011 City Budget

The Mayor's proposed City budget for fiscal year 2011 includes **no major service cuts and no increase in the property tax levy**. Nevertheless, the overall trend over the past decade has been declines in shared revenue from the State which has led to reductions in City services.

The term "shared revenue" is perhaps misleading. It refers to the income and sales taxes that all of us pay, but that goes to Madison before being distributed to local governments. So we give it to Madison before they then "share" it back with us and other cities, towns, and villages.

Since 2000 the City's share of this tax money has been reduced by over \$59 million in inflation adjusted dollars. That translates to **about 10% of our annual general city operating budget**. It is no coincidence that in those same years the workforce which provides City services has also been reduced by more than 11%. That means we have fewer firefighters, fewer police officers, fewer sanitation workers, fewer public health nurses, and fewer librarians.

Last year, this ongoing fiscal deficit was acutely exacerbated by the stock market crash of 2008, which left our pension system underfunded for the first time in over two decades. We were forced to make a payment of \$47 million to cover that gap, on top of our **ongoing structural deficit** caused primarily by the **loss of shared revenue**. Our best current projections indicate that, even without a future stock crash, the **growing cost** of pension obligations will force similarly sized payments throughout the next decade.

The City is not simply reacting to these grim external realities of funding cuts and cost increases. Internally, we are implementing **austerity measures and long-term plans to create a fiscal future** with stable taxes, fees, and services. It is those measures and plans - many of which were initiated in this year's budget - which are allowing next year's budget to be so stable.

These cuts and adjustments included:

1. Management pay freezes - including all elected officials - in fiscal years 2009-11.
2. Four furlough days for all non-emergency personnel in 2010 and 2011.
3. A new smoothing formula for pension payments - which saved us over \$40 million in 2010.

In addition, 2010 was also the beginning of several long-term plans for important city services:

- In response to the **recent flooding and sewage overflows**, we are preparing a pilot program which will allow public funding of private lateral connections to underground pipes, which could save us money in the long run, **prevent basement back ups**, and help clean our lake.
- We have a **5-year sanitation plan** which will gradually transition all of us onto a "Pay as You Throw" garbage fee, with unlimited recycling and compost pickup. This will save us money and reduce our landfill waste.
- In order to **prevent libraries from closing**, we are looking at creating a new generation of mixed-use libraries, which will have more hours of service and better technology access.
- The City already has **53 miles of bike lanes**, and with our new plan we could have **nearly 150 more miles by 2020**. By folding these decisions into our overall street budget, we are saving money while reducing traffic and improving public health.



Beerline Bike Path

This newly paved bike trail runs downhill from Gordon Park to the Humboldt Bridge. To download a complete bike map, go to: www.MilwaukeeByBike.org



Find out more about the City's long term plans for bicycles, sewers, libraries, and garbage at: www.milwaukee.gov/district3

A New Trail to a New Park

3rd District Alderman

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Nov. 16, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. S.S. Peter and Paul - 2490 N. Cramer St.

City Hall, Room 205
200 E. Wells St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

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The Riverwest Bike Connection

If you turn east off the new Humboldt Bridge, and then follow the curve along the river's west bank, you can now roll onto **Milwaukee County's newest bicycle trail** – a riverside path all the way to Gordon Park at Locust Street. Then you can ride by Alterra on Humboldt and Bliffert Hardware on Chambers until you arrive at the **City's newest bicycle trail** - Linear Park - which starts at Café Corazon on Bremen north of Burleigh and slaloms around Fratney Street School all the way to Keefe and Richards.

The picture above shows the site of the forested trail head from the pedestrian bridge which connects it to Caesar's Park and the river's east bank. Where Melanec's Wheelhouse used to be will become, next year, the **City's newest park**, courtesy of the River Revitalization Foundation. Along the west bank of the river from Reservoir Park to Kern Park, this new park will help connect a **green string of recreational trails and native habitats**.

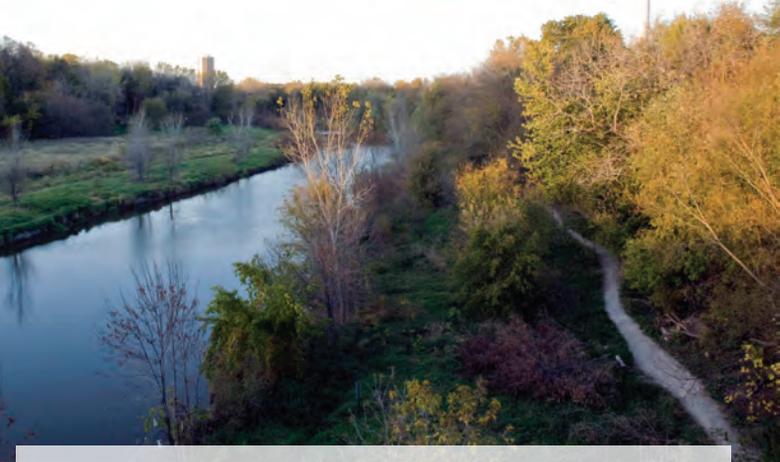
Milwaukee River Greenway

In the heart of the 3rd District and just two miles north of downtown Milwaukee are 800 acres of forest bluffs, meadow plateaus, and flowing waters, all crisscrossed by 13 miles of hiking and biking trail loops. The protection, maintenance, and planning of this recreational oasis – the best urban river valley in the world – has been a team effort.

70% of those riverfront acres are owned by the County Parks. Their continued stewardship of Lincoln, Estabrook, Kern, Gordon, Hubbard and Caesar's Parks – as well as the paved bike trails on both banks - has been and will be critical. The **Urban Ecology Center** – in partnership with Riverside High School – has turned the east bank trails and Riverside Park into an educational and research habitat. The **River Revitalization Foundation** has acquired the land to build the new bike trail and park on the west bank. The **Milwaukee Riverkeepers** perform regular testing to ensure and advocate for fishable, swimmable (and someday even drinkable) water quality.

Together, those three nonprofit groups partnered with your neighborhood groups along both sides of the river to form the **Milwaukee River Work Group**, which can now boast of two major legislative and planning accomplishments:

1. The Milwaukee River Greenway Overlay Zoning and Stormwater Ordinance, cosponsored by Alderman Kovac, Alderwoman Coggs, and Alderman Hamilton was passed unanimously by the Common Council and signed by the Mayor this summer. It created permanent zoning and design guidelines which encourage developments near the greenway that are setback from the valley bluffs, that do not turn their backs to the river, and that retain and filter stormwater on site.



Explore the River Greenway

Learn more at: www.ProtectMilwaukeeRiver.org

2. The Milwaukee River Greenway Master Plan, also completed this summer, provides a long-term vision for how the river greenway will attract even more recreational visitors, while still protecting and restoring the unique and native ecological habitats along it, and ensuring that mountain bikers, dog walkers, and birdwatchers can crisscross the valley without bumping into each other.

The accomplishments have also helped attract a major private investment. The **Rotary Club of Milwaukee** is creating an arboretum in honor of its centennial, which will stretch from North Avenue to Riverside Park on the east bank of the river.