



Department of City Development  
**News Release**

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## **MAIN STREET MILWAUKEE ADDS TWO NEW DISTRICTS Commercial Corridor Program Demonstrating Success**

Mayor Tom Barrett announced today the Main Street Milwaukee program will expand this year due to its successes in attracting new businesses, leveraging private investment and improving properties along four of Milwaukee's neighborhood main streets. Main Street Milwaukee, modeled after a national program to revitalize older commercial streets, is a collaboration between the City of Milwaukee and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC).

Since Main Street Milwaukee's launch in 2005, a total of 597 neighborhood businesses received assistance ranging from financial and economic development resources to grants for property improvements, professional consultations and more. Work by the Main Street Districts has helped attract or expand 68 businesses, netting more than 160 new jobs. Fifty-seven buildings have been updated under the program and an additional \$4.4 million in private investment was leveraged across the districts.

"I launched this program to boost small businesses and attract more investment to our neighborhood main streets," said Mayor Barrett. "This program is succeeding because it focuses not only the funding but the work of businesses and resident volunteers to turn around blight, promote a main street identity and attract additional neighborhood businesses."

Currently Milwaukee's Main Street Districts include: Silver City on 'interNational' Avenue and Lincoln Village along Lincoln Ave on the city's south side; the SOHI (South of Highland) District on N. 27<sup>th</sup> Street and Mosaic on Burleigh District on the north side. Over the past three years, work in these districts has included planning and executing revitalization projects, marketing and public safety initiatives.

Mayor Barrett said the addition of two new Main Street Districts will help promote an even greater awareness of opportunities in Milwaukee neighborhoods to locate a business, or find services close to home.

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The Main Street Milwaukee Partners Board, an oversight group of community representatives, designated the following new Main Street Milwaukee Districts:

- **The 'Gateway' District** along West North Avenue from 27<sup>th</sup> Street to Sherman Boulevard. This commercial street serves a number of local neighborhoods including Metcalfe Park, Washington Park and parts of Sherman Park. Several new developments have come online over the past few years in the Gateway District, and classic buildings provide an anchor for additional development. The North Avenue Community Development Corporation is the partnering organization.
- **Historic King Drive District** along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive from Locust to Walnut. The Main Street District falls within the Historic King Drive Business Improvement District, a two-mile commercial corridor from Locust south to McKinley Street. MLK Economic Development Corporation is the partnering organization. King Drive has retained many of its historic buildings and most of the street has been designated a historic district. Many historic gems need a facelift, which the Main Street Milwaukee program will help boost.

"A new generation of local developers with deep roots throughout the Gateway District is transforming the central city for the better," said Alderman Willie Hines Jr, representing the new Gateway Main Street Milwaukee District. "From Scoopz to Toussaint Square to Legacy Bank, this commercial corridor has generated intense interest from other businesses that are waiting in line to be part of the North Avenue movement."

The Main Street Milwaukee program uses public and private dollars and a 4-point approach to strengthen neighborhood main streets. Much of the program's success depends on the hard work of neighborhood residents and business owners. In 2007, more than 200 volunteers logged more than 15,000 volunteer hours on various events and projects among the four Main Street Milwaukee Districts.

"Main Street Milwaukee is one of the best things that has happened in our neighborhoods," said Margaret Henningsen, a member of the Main Street Milwaukee Partners Board. "I feel strongly that this program could serve as a model for Urban Main Street Programs across the country."

For more information on Main Street Milwaukee, visit [www.mkedcd.org/mainstreetmilwaukee](http://www.mkedcd.org/mainstreetmilwaukee)

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