



Vision, Goals & Principles

3.1 Introduction

The City of Milwaukee occupies a unique position in the regional economy. As the region's business and cultural center and most populous city, Milwaukee provides a diverse, dynamic urban environment for residents, students, tourists and businesses alike. The city is home to major manufacturers and family businesses, colleges and universities, world-class museums, professional sports teams, and other cultural and entertainment amenities that are attractive and beneficial for all residents. Quality of life is an important consideration when choosing where to live, and Milwaukee offers a combination of livability, affordability and cultural amenities unparalleled anywhere else in Wisconsin. In fact, the city was recently named one of the 10 most exciting cities in America by the Online blog, Movoto.¹

While the Milwaukee region accounts for only 5% of the state's total land area, it contains 36% of the state's population and 37% of its total tangible (property) wealth.² The city itself makes up 29% of the M7 region's population (nearly 40% of the smaller Metropolitan Statistical Area) and grew by nearly one percent from 2010 to 2012.³ Milwaukee is also strategically located: Chicago to the south provides enhanced access to global markets and transportation; Lake Michigan to the east provides access to abundant fresh water and international shipping opportunities; and to the west lie some of the nation's most fertile agricultural lands.⁴

The City of Milwaukee is home to 10 *Fortune* 1000 companies, five of which are also among the *Fortune* 500: Harley-Davidson, Manpower,

Johnson Controls, Northwestern Mutual, and Rockwell Automation are all located within the city limits. These companies employ more than 233,000 workers globally (more than 15,000 in the Milwaukee region), earn more than \$98 billion in annual revenue, and contribute substantially to Milwaukee's quality of life.⁵ Many have made significant investments in the city: Harley-Davidson built an award-winning new museum in the Menomonee Valley; Manpower constructed its headquarters in the Park East corridor on the Milwaukee River; and in mid-2014, Northwestern Mutual broke ground on a new landmark tower on its downtown campus near Lake Michigan. The broad, seven-county region is home to 14 *Fortune* 1000 companies, including Roundy's, Kohl's, and Briggs & Stratton, among others.

Adding to its already strong location, the city is the center of the region's transportation and shipping networks, which include major freeways, rail lines, an international airport, and an active port on Lake Michigan. The City has identified more than 500 acres of developable industrial land, including many sites with strategic locations near or along these infrastructure assets.

With a labor force of more than 298,000 people, Milwaukee has the largest employment base of any community in the state.⁶ Many of these workers have strong skills in the applied trades and manufacturing, skills that make Milwaukee an attractive place to expand as manufacturing rebounds in the U.S. The city's immigrant communities possess skills and educational credentials

from their native countries that represent a significant array of potentially untapped workforce assets.⁷

The city is home to a diverse population, with the largest African American and Latino populations in the state, a growing Hmong population, and a high proportion of foreign-born residents relative to other Wisconsin cities.⁸ These residents are essential to the city's future prosperity. Connecting them to the labor force and economy through skills training, financial literacy, and opportunity for wealth formation will reduce inequality in our community.⁹



Lakeshore State Park and the Henry Maier Festival Grounds.
(Source: Department of City Development / Planning)



The Milwaukee Public Library is a great quality of life amenity.
(Source: Department of City Development / Planning)



VISION STATEMENT

City of Milwaukee government will reduce unemployment and poverty within the city and grow prosperity for its residents by partnering strategically with and leveraging the resources of community organizations, key asset industry leaders and private sector partners.

3.2 Vision, Goals & Alignment

Through meetings and conversations with City leadership, local stakeholders, business leaders and community organizations, the City has developed a vision and goals to drive the strategies and action items contained within *Growing Prosperity*.

Growing Prosperity reflects a vision for Milwaukee's future: that collective action will serve as the foundation for greater prosperity for all Milwaukee residents. All segments of our community—employers, institutions, educators, non-profit organizations, and residents—require alignment to make this vision a reality.

This Action Agenda identifies three overarching goals related to the achievement of this vision:

1. Align investment in ways that drive future development to City of Milwaukee locations, particularly growth and development linked to the asset industry clusters identified in the *M7 Framework for Regional Economic Growth*.
2. Increase access for City of Milwaukee residents to learning and employment opportunities that result in sustainable employment at living wages.
3. Build upon quality of life assets that support economic development of the city and region, and support the efforts of city residents to prosper both personally and professionally.

Growing Prosperity was written to provide opportunities for broad, deep, and lasting partnerships to achieve these goals. The agenda was formulated to align with regional economic

growth strategies identified in the Milwaukee 7 Framework, address city-specific assets and challenges, incorporate the perspectives of local stakeholders and thought leaders, and incorporate research and best practices from other cities.

3.3 Principles to Guide Actions

Growing Prosperity is centered within the context of the M7 Framework; at the same time, it needs to take account of the city's unique economic attributes. Therefore, this plan is tailored to specific conditions within the city and values held by its residents and business leaders. In 2013 and early 2014, a large group of community stakeholders came together to discuss elements of *Growing Prosperity*. They formulated a series of principles that guide strategies and actions in this document:

Implement Data-Driven, Place-Based Strategies for Development

The City will use a data-driven place-based strategy for growth, providing support for growth and investment in both the central business district and neighborhoods throughout the city. Opportunities for investment will be defined based on the best fit between business needs for location, property, parking, and transportation access. The City will pursue large and small-scale opportunities wherever the fit is appropriate. Assistance may include financial partnership or in-kind support. As always, before investing in a project, the City will consider return on investment, financial ability to perform, and history of the development group.

Develop a Workforce Prepared and Poised for Success

Economic growth is fully dependent on a capable, skilled workforce, and improving Milwaukee's system of developing, retaining and deploying skilled workers is essential to economic growth. The State and City's education and workforce training systems and local employers must continue to be partners in proactively assisting current workers and those who are not in the workforce learn the skills required for productivity and personal success.

Promote Existing Businesses with Growth Potential

Economic development often focuses on attracting new businesses to the neglect of retaining and growing existing ones. The City's approach must be balanced, and give particular attention to supporting businesses that are connected to asset clusters.

Foster Public-Private Partnerships to Leverage Resources, Knowledge & Innovation

Public and private leadership needs to foster partnerships and collaboration that maximize the effectiveness of limited economic development resources.

Ease the Path to Development

All levels of government must simplify and expedite their processes, programs and regulations in order to ease the path to investment and employment.

Declare a Positive Vision for the City

Public and private leadership needs to constantly articulate a positive vision and spirit of optimism about what Milwaukee is becoming, building from assets and promoting the city as a desirable place to live and work.

Build Upon the City's Quality of Life and Place-Based Assets

Quality of life matters to economic growth. Place matters even more. Public and private leaders and neighborhood leaders must be aligned in nurturing Milwaukee's cultural and civic life and making the city's neighborhoods safe and livable for a broad range of current and prospective residents and businesses.

Attract and Nurture Ecologically Friendly Businesses

The economic development strategy will aim to green the city in general and in specific, retaining, growing and attracting businesses that are friendly to the environment and supportive of Milwaukee's evolving culture of sustainability.



Milwaukee has a number of dense, walkable neighborhoods. (Source: Department of City Development / Planning)



Density and lively street activity on Jefferson Street downtown. (Source: Department of City Development / Planning)

Adopt a Customer- Oriented Approach
Just as businesses must attract and communicate with customers, City government must view current and future businesses and residents as customers, understanding that the city is in competition with other municipalities and regions.

Take a Balanced and Equitable Approach to Business Support
Strategies must not be limited to any one sector of the economy, but must build from local capacity wherever it is found: in large corporations, small and medium-sized companies, start-ups, traditional and creative entrepreneurs and, because of the hurdles they face, businesses owned by people of color, women, immigrants, and people with disabilities.

The following chapters provide greater detail about challenges and opportunities affecting the City of Milwaukee’s economic future. As the community moves forward, the principles embodied in this document are one rubric against which our collective actions will be tested.

Endnotes for Chapter 3

1. Cross, David. “The 10 Most Exciting Cities in America.” Movoto, May 2, 2013.
2. Tangible wealth as measured by state equalized value, which is the method by which the state determines property taxes: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. “Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2012.”
3. U.S. Census Bureau QuickFact Sheet; 2012 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimate.
4. Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.
5. Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce. “Metro Milwaukee Major Companies.” December 9, 2011.
6. US Census Bureau, Selected Economic Characteristics, 2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
7. Sirkin, Harold, Michael Zinser and Douglas Hohner. “Made in American, Again: Why Manufacturing Will Return to the U.S.” The Boston Consulting Group, August 2011.
8. Singer, Audrey. “Investing in the Human Capital of Immigrants, Strengthening Regional Economies. Brookings Institution, September 2012.
9. US Census Bureau, Selected Economic Characteristics, 2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
10. Pastor, Manuel and Chris Benner. “Been Down So Long: Weak Market Cities and Regional Equity.” White Paper, 2012.



A view of downtown Milwaukee and the Marquette Interchange.
(Source: Department of City Development)

Connection Points

Throughout the following chapters, you will see symbols that indicate areas of alignment between different action items within *Growing Prosperity* itself, between the *Milwaukee 7 Framework for Economic Growth* and *Growing Prosperity*, and with other City-based initiatives, such as those detailed in Milwaukee's sustainability plan, *Refresh Milwaukee*.



Indicates an action item that cuts across two or more focus areas within the plan; for example, an action item aimed at creative ways to reuse vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial buildings is relevant not only to location-based development, but also supports entrepreneurship and quality of life. The complementary action item will be indicated next to the leaf.



Indicates a strategy that aligns with or complements a strategy contained within *Refresh Milwaukee*, the City's official sustainability plan.



Indicates a *Growing Prosperity* strategy that closely aligns with a regional strategy found in the *M7 Framework for Economic Growth*; for example, advocating for a regional transportation strategy not only benefits city residents by improving access to jobs, but also helps make for a more competitive region. The number next to the logo indicates which of the M7's nine strategies is aligned with the City's.