



## Implement data-driven, place-based strategies to support economic growth.

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.

## 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.

## CHAPTER 4

# Location-Based Opportunities

### 4.1 Introduction

Throughout the development of *Growing Prosperity*, and in work group discussions, a number of overarching themes relating to development in the city were reinforced:

-  **Take a targeted approach.** The City should be more proactive in directing new development to certain parts of the city, and strategic about which sites it chooses to prioritize, because resources are limited and not all sites are viable in the short-term. The City also needs to find creative ways to improve and build on the city's older industrial districts, and repurpose many of the former manufacturing buildings located in those districts.
-  **Use a data-driven, location-based approach.** The City needs to take a data-driven, location-based approach to industrial development, attracting new businesses and growing existing businesses based on site assets and industry fit.
-  **Support industry.** The City needs to work more closely with asset industry clusters to support their retention and expansion by addressing their current needs and proactively anticipating their future growth potential.
-  **Support small business.** The City should continue to support small businesses, which create two thirds of all jobs, and have the potential to grow the economic base.

#### **Take a Targeted Approach to Development**

Among the City's many assets, developable land is near the top. In contrast to many large U.S. cities, Milwaukee has a significant inventory of large development sites, most of which are located in industrial parks or existing business improvement districts (BIDs). This land can be used for new or expanding industries. So too can the significant number of existing vacant industrial and commercial buildings, which are suitable for manufacturing retrofits, start-ups or other small businesses that may be part of an industry asset cluster.

Some manufacturers prefer unencumbered "shovel ready" sites. The City has sites of this type, and will continue to land bank and market these aggressively to meet demand. To maintain a consistent inventory, the City must remediate former manufacturing sites. The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee (RACM), with EPA funding, already engages in brownfield remediation to create new shovel-ready sites. The City also assists when private financing for a project will not cover the costs of remediation. Due to environmental contaminants associated with Milwaukee's long manufacturing history, the City continues to have opportunities to reclaim and retain industrial land in order to improve the environment and create shovel-ready development parcels.

Former manufacturing buildings can be challenging to reuse. Typically, buildings that

have sufficient floor plates, ceiling heights, column spacing, level floors, and sufficient space for industrial processes can be repurposed for different types of manufacturing. However, buildings that have already been customized for a given use, such as cold storage, can represent a substantial cost savings if employed for the same use for which they were originally constructed. Finding appropriate uses for existing buildings poses the biggest challenge to reusing them.

The Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), in partnership with local lenders, has provided financing for such retrofits. However, it is more common for industries to fund these “makeovers” on their own or with the help of an industrial real estate developer, and to finance alterations through private lenders. Other important matchmakers are the City’s industrial BIDs, such as Menomonee Valley, 30th Street Industrial Corridor, Aerotropolis, Riverworks, Granville, and Havenwoods. Most feature an inventory of available properties on their websites.

Of course, many companies prefer not to deal with older buildings. For buildings that are functionally obsolete, retrofitting may not be a cost-effective solution. Older sites are often an agglomeration of buildings and add-ons that evolved over time in response to the needs of a particular manufacturing process. Even if some of these component buildings work for a new user, others might not. The evaluation of retrofitting solutions is always case by case with the cost of alterations an important part of the equation.

Successful industrial areas offer both options—clean or remediated sites as well as retrofits and buildings that are move-in ready—in order to accommodate companies ready to expand or attract companies willing to relocate.

Business start-ups housed in subdivided post-industrial space, co-ops and incubators can be in almost any location with the right combination of adequate space, reasonable rents, and functionality. However, there are clear advantages to the co-location of firms that serve industrial users, such as box or can manufacturers, salt companies, label printers, or other industry service providers.

The City should do what it can to accommodate and locate start-ups near industry clusters. The City should also preserve industrial land and buildings to foster industry clusters. For example, the City discourages the sale of industrial zoned parcels for non-related uses because even secondary or non-prime buildings may still contribute to the cluster, such as supply chain uses, services and storage.

***Use a Data-Driven, Location-Based Approach to Developing Industry Clusters***

Milwaukee and the seven-county region remain a strong hub of advanced manufacturing, and have posted encouraging industrial real estate absorption rates since the 2008 recession.<sup>1</sup> In fact, metropolitan Milwaukee’s industrial space vacancy rate, already significantly below the national average, dropped more than three



*The newly constructed Freshwater Way has opened the former Reed Street Yards to water technology investment. (Source: Department of City Development / Planning)*



*The Global Water Center, in Walker's Point, is the center for water technology-based industries and innovation. (Source: Department of City Development / Planning)*

percentage points between the first quarter of 2008 and the first quarter of 2013. Although these trends have been weaker for the city proper, growing demand is likely to spur new industrial development as companies search to find adequate space to establish or expand within the region.<sup>2</sup> The City must work to retain its existing industrial base, support expansion, and capture a share of growth and restructuring within the region.

A data-driven approach to development begins by identifying regional strengths by sector and industry cluster and the opportunities for growth within them. It also involves taking stock of the site-specific and infrastructure investments required to move developments forward. The City can recognize and support opportunities within industry clusters by working with organizations like M-WERC, FaB Wisconsin and The Water Council and partners like the Milwaukee 7.

A location-based approach to development builds upon and maximizes the potential of the advantages conferred by Milwaukee's geographic location—the Great Lakes mega-region, the center of seven counties of Southeast Wisconsin, and the home to multiple major universities and colleges. A location-based approach also

incorporates the unique character provided by the local culture and its history of innovation.

As the center of the region's transportation networks and employment base, Milwaukee is poised to capture growth from key asset industries as well as build the base of existing large employment sectors. As the nexus of the region's highway, railroad, air and shipping networks, and with a larger potential workforce than any other municipality in the state, Milwaukee has a competitive advantage over other communities in attracting and retaining industries that rely on strong physical connectivity and abundant human capital resources.

Proximity to Lake Michigan is a powerful asset. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett promotes "fresh coast" as a brand for the region, celebrating the city's proximity to Lake Michigan and ample access to fresh water. This proximity provides the City of Milwaukee with a tremendous development opportunity that, if paired with a data-driven, place-based strategy, can position the city well for future economic growth and prosperity. More than 500 acres of land are currently available throughout the city to support key asset industry clusters, with sites strategically located near General Mitchell



*Project: Community Computers hosts a happy hour at 96Square to prepare laptops for their initiative. (Source: Startup Milwaukee)*



*Currently under construction, the UW-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences is a key component of the developing water technology cluster in the city's Walker's Point neighborhood. (Source: Department of City Development / Planning)*

International Airport and the Port of Milwaukee, along active rail lines, and close to existing nodes of activity. The city will prioritize sites for industries that provide family-supporting jobs in identified asset industry clusters.

In order to take full advantage of its location-based opportunities, Milwaukee must address a number of existing challenges. Connecting the city's workforce to jobs scattered throughout the region continues to be a challenge. Large employers sometimes run van pools, and the County has express buses and park-and-ride lots. The city also has many walk-to-work neighborhoods. However, a significant number of city workers continue to struggle with transportation to work. Improved regional transit would increase access to jobs, and has the ability to reduce commute times, and mitigate the need for freeway replacement/repair and the costs of owning and maintaining automobiles for some.

### **Support Industry**

"Retention and expansion" is a standard goal in economic development, but a number of ways exist to pursue it. On the one hand, it means staying in regular contact with existing businesses, assessing their needs, and making every effort to accommodate those needs. On a more proactive level, it means anticipating the future trajectory of promising industry clusters within the region, and being prepared to address their future site and infrastructure needs.

One important and growing asset cluster in the Milwaukee region is food and beverage processing. FaB Wisconsin, the cluster organization, has a website dedicated to providing resources that support industry growth and awareness. The FaB Leadership Council includes about 100 members and with the support of M7, they focus on growing jobs in food and beverage manufacturing. FaB Wisconsin is also leveraging the region's unique location to support farm-to-table and food systems movements. With continuing partnership, the City of Milwaukee can continue to support these growing industry asset clusters.

### **Support Small Business**

Many of the most recognizable companies today started from humble beginnings. From Facebook and Apple, to Milwaukee companies like Harley-Davidson and Colectivo, small start-ups have realized big potential. Moreover, these businesses are part of a culture and a place where somebody believed in them and—given that most entrepreneurs do not start out wealthy—helped them get started.

Milwaukee has strong banks that engage in local lending to small businesses, some of it venture capital, and entrepreneurs who have built their companies from the ground up in a relatively short time frame. The Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation helps match small businesses with lending partners, identifies angel investors for start-ups, and offers technical assistance in small business formation and management.

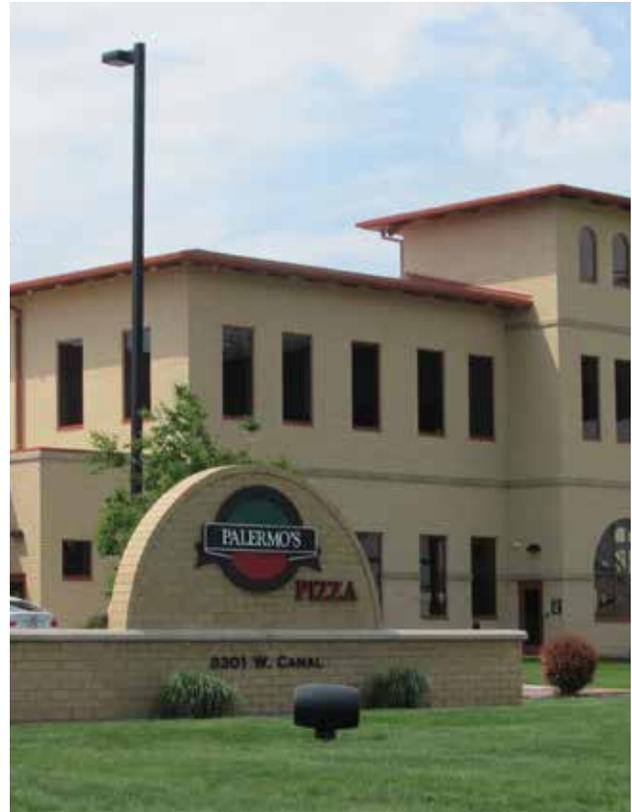
The City of Milwaukee has both significant land resources as well as physical assets to help support large and small scale business development. Many of these assets can be targeted to encourage development of the key asset industry clusters identified by the M7.

## **4.2 Current Conditions**

### **Vacant Land**

Each of the sites that comprise the 500 acres described in this chapter is either under direct City control or can be leveraged by the City to spur future development. Each site has unique attributes, requires different investments to make it developable, and may be more appropriate for one type of industry or activity over others. Appendix B describes the currently available sites for industrial development.

Figure 4.1 shows development sites that are top priority for the City right now. These are sites that the city considers pivotal for the future development of their specific locations, and catalytic and rich in spin-off potential for the city's economic growth overall.



*Palermo's facility in the Menomonee Valley is a successful example of food & beverage cluster development.  
(Source: Department of City Development / Planning)*



*Lakefront Brewery, Inc., a highly successful local small business.  
(Source: Department of City Development / Planning)*

### **Vacant Structures**

The city has more than 650 vacant and underutilized structures that are classified as commercial or industrial.<sup>3</sup> Though underperforming today, these buildings still offer a distinct opportunity for industrial retrofits, entrepreneurs, start-ups, and small businesses looking for space on a budget. Often times, start-ups cannot afford to build their own facility or lease prime commercial or industrial space. In these instances, existing vacant or underutilized commercial and industrial structures may provide an affordable solution.

Cutting-edge start-ups and entrepreneurs often prefer the character of an older manufacturing building over new construction. Such structures offer high ceilings, large open spaces, rich materials, and historic character that work for offices, loft apartments and live/work studios. Manufacturing buildings with character can

have broad appeal. Milwaukee's Third and Fifth Wards, both former walk-to-work manufacturing districts that have transitioned to beautiful mixed use districts, have reaped the benefits of these building conversions.

Identifying opportunities to convert or leverage vacant and underutilized buildings could help emerging businesses thrive and could also support the goals of *ReFresh Milwaukee*, which advocates for adaptive reuse and recommends green solutions to revitalize and invigorate buildings and commercial corridors, and improve quality of life and place in previously disinvested neighborhoods.

### **Live / Work / Sell**

Live/work/sell refers to the combination of residential and commercial uses that allows people to live and work in the same space with some special or limited use restrictions for parking, signage, hours, and activity. It can mean combining a residence with a studio, gallery, work or production space, or an office or shop that receives customers. In Detroit, 71 Garfield, previously a burned out shell in the city's Sugar Hill Arts District, was renovated to include 20 live/work artist studios with artist work and gallery space on the ground floor, and also incorporated green elements like solar power, geothermal heating and rooftop water collection.<sup>4</sup>

Milwaukee has several examples of mixed-use neighborhoods that support a live/work/sell style of home based business. Park East Enterprise Lofts just north of downtown is new construction conducive to home based businesses. Currently, the units are 100% occupied; however, none are occupied by entrepreneurs who are actually using their street entry for professional or commercial use. There are 12 live/work units at Hide House in Bay View, home to artists, musicians and creative agencies. Hide House has units that are particularly popular, because the "work" space is designed to function as a studio, office space or a third bedroom.

The Riverworks Center has a number of business and arts accelerator buildings that are industrial-compatible. Some simply provide space for

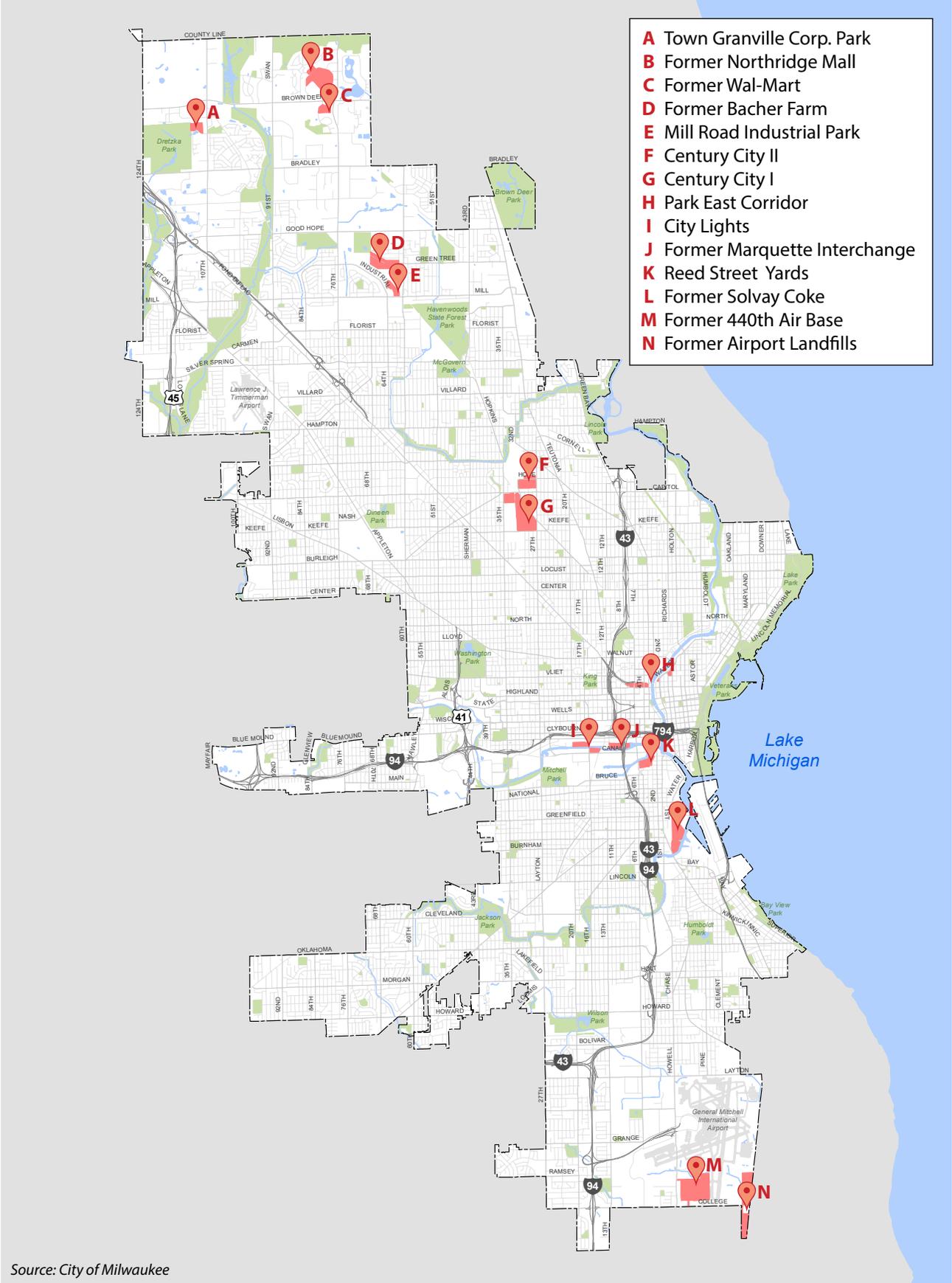


### **Replacing the Bradley Center**

Since 1988, the BMO Harris Bradley Center has provided a signature advantage for downtown Milwaukee and the entire Milwaukee 7 region. As the home of professional basketball and hockey, Division 1 college athletic competition, and special events, the facility has generated hundreds of thousands of visits to Milwaukee, millions of dollars in hospitality spending, and publicity on a national scale.

The NBA has mandated that, in order to stay in Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Bucks must have a new arena by 2017. The Bucks' new owners and former owner have together committed \$200 million of the estimated \$500 million price tag to replace the Bradley Center. A 48-member Cultural and Entertainment Capital Needs Task Force convened by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce is studying ways to preserve and enhance key cultural and entertainment facilities in the four-county metro Milwaukee area, with intensive focus on public and private funding options for a new downtown arena. City government will be looking closely at such options as they are proposed. Recommendations are expected in late 2014.

Figure 4.1: Primary Development Sites



Source: City of Milwaukee

users who need a step up from the garage or basement. Some give small businesses just enough production space to operate at a reasonable cost. One has a newsletter printer, photographer, antique dealer, T-shirt maker, and enough artists to host an annual open house. Another has offices for small service companies, such as a computer repair operation, a landscape contractor, a drywall contractor, and so on. The manufacturers in the district have been willing to accept low-traffic commercial uses.

Artists and entrepreneurs most often benefit from the kind of large, affordable spaces found in older industrial buildings. Many small businesses often progress through different workspaces, beginning in spaces as modest as a spare room at home or a garage. In fact, the live/work/sell progression from home-based side project to small company is a common story in America.<sup>5</sup> The often overlooked cycle that takes a student, artist or inventor from bold idea to first product should be nurtured in Milwaukee.



*Enterprise Lofts is a prime example of both the redevelopment of underutilized city land and the provision of housing geared toward live/work/sell endeavors. (Source: Department of City Development / Planning)*

Home-based businesses are encouraged at other developments, such as the Beerline Apartments that provides a conference room and business center. Loft-style conversions allow for flexibility of space layout such as Hi-Fi Lofts in Riverwest, a hip conversion of an old lighting manufacturing plant where several professionals currently run home-based businesses. Overall, there are more than 200 units available for live/work/sell and home-based businesses in Milwaukee; the City should continue to promote the conversion of underutilized commercial and industrial buildings into well-designed spaces that cater to entrepreneurs and allow residents to live where they work.

### **Transportation & Infrastructure**

Transportation that is efficient and reliable is important to supporting Milwaukee's continued economic growth. Milwaukee has a diversity of transportation options available for moving people and goods: an international airport, a charter airport, a shipping port on the Great Lakes, cross-lake ferry service to Michigan, freight and passenger rail, a comprehensive street and freeway system, an award-winning boulevard and parkway system, local and regional bus service, and miles of bicycle lanes. However, work remains to efficiently connect people to jobs. This is especially problematic for the one in five working-age city residents who do not have a vehicle in the household.<sup>6</sup>

In comparison to other cities, commute times in Milwaukee are low. At 22.6 minutes, the Milwaukee metro area has the third shortest average commute time of the 50 largest cities in the U.S.,<sup>7</sup> and in 2010, the Milwaukee region was ranked the 4th best city for commuters by Forbes.<sup>8</sup> However, local streets have major maintenance needs. As streets are reconstructed, the city is designing them for multimodal travel to accommodate the travel needs of all users of the public way, a mobility goal in *ReFresh Milwaukee*. The City needs to ensure that these options are available to serve employees and employers, and explore future opportunities for advancing regional transportation.

Despite the funding cuts that the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) has faced, resulting reduction of service and frequency on bus routes, as well as the elimination of routes, the City and Milwaukee County still have the most robust transit system in the state. Recently, limited bus routes have been added, such as those that connect residents on the south side to jobs in the Menomonee Valley, as well as the addition of three express bus routes in 2012. However, these additions fail to serve many people who live far from their place of employment. This is a particular concern for Milwaukeeans who work in suburban industrial parks. For those residents, their commute can begin hours before their work start time, and require multiple bus transfers. This becomes especially difficult for those residents who have children who start school later; for them, their commute may begin at 5 or 6 a.m. in order to get children to school by 8 a.m. and make it to work on-time.

According to the Brookings Institution, fewer than 50% of jobs in the Milwaukee region are accessible in 90 minutes via public transit.<sup>9</sup> Maintaining, at the very least, the current level of service is critical to ensuring that those workers whose jobs are accessible only by public transportation will be able to keep them, and employers will be able to retain those workers.

Historically, transit initiatives in the Milwaukee region have met with challenges and opposition. In 2011 a new streetcar system was approved, with an initial 2.5-mile route downtown connecting to the intermodal station, large employers, entertainment and cultural facilities, using \$54.9 million in Federal transit funds for developing a locally preferred alternative. Future anticipated expansion routes will connect the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and other central neighborhoods. The system will connect over 25,000 residents to 80,000 jobs along the route. Fixed route public transit, which in other cities has proven to be more successful than non-fixed, can still serve as a framework and catalyst for future economic development. In 2009 the State proposed a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) intended to improve bus and rail service in Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee counties, but it was dissolved in 2011 due to lack of support and



*The proposed Milwaukee Streetcar could provide much-needed transportation alternatives to city residents. (Source: City of Milwaukee)*

funding. Though the RTA no longer operates, its goals for regional transit remain critical for our city and region to be competitive.

Milwaukee has been successful at re-envisioning its infrastructure to support rather than discourage development. Most recently a multi-jurisdictional downtown lakefront gateway project began that will realign freeway off-ramps to provide better access to the lakefront and free up previously encumbered land to create valuable future development sites downtown.

### 4.3 Building on Strengths

Historically, the City has focused primarily on neighborhood-based land use planning through the creation of 13 area plans, a citywide policy plan, a growing number of action plans, and an ongoing series of redevelopment plans. The area plans, in addition to making land use recommendations, identify each area's economic development opportunities and catalytic



*Milwaukee County Transit System provides essential transportation services to Milwaukee residents. (Source: City of Milwaukee)*

projects. The policy plan is big picture long-range visioning. Redevelopment and action plans drill down to the next level of what needs to be done.

Where they overlap, city planners endeavor to ensure these various plans are integrated and consistent. For example, all area plans recognize the importance of preserving industrial land to support manufacturing uses. They also all support sustainability goals and the reuse of vacant and underutilized parcels. Going forward, the City must incorporate in plans a higher level of coordination with key asset cluster organizations to ensure that future plans and plan updates are sensitive to their needs for land and infrastructure.

The Menomonee Valley is a prime example of City-led redevelopment that is responsive to manufacturers' needs. Prior to redevelopment, it was a heavily polluted industrial zone located just south of Downtown. Today it is Milwaukee's largest, most attractive and exciting corporate business park, located a stone's throw from the Port and right off of I-94. The 60-acre Menomonee Valley Industrial Center (MVIC) includes local, national and international manufacturers. Together, MVIC and nearby developments have brought over 4,500 new jobs to the area. Overall, \$38.5 million of public investment in



*The City of Milwaukee is committed to providing a wide menu of alternative transportation options to its residents. (Source: City of Milwaukee)*

roads, environmental clean-up and amenities has leveraged close to \$240 million of private investment to redevelop the Valley.

Reed Street Yards, a 17-acre former rail yard site in Walker's Point along the Menomonee Canal and adjacent to the Global Water Center, is poised for significant water technology investment. The City has partnered with the property owner and developer to repurpose the site into a research and technology park with a focus on water technology. The City is investing \$6.2 million for infrastructure, environmental remediation and a riverwalk at the site, including many sustainable features that will make the project a showcase for water technology and storm water management. Upon full build-out the site is projected to have up to one million square feet of office and research space for up to 1,000 new jobs. Innovation districts like Reed Street Yards, combining office space, research facilities, residential buildings and mixed-use retail are being developed in many cities and becoming important in reviving local economies.

On the city's near north side, Century City Business Park, the 60-acre former A. O. Smith and Tower Automotive site, is being transformed into a modern industrial center and economic hub. In May 2014, the Milwaukee 7 region was one of 12

nationally to be designated as a manufacturing community through the federal Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP). The IMCP designation will provide regional projects an edge when applying for federal funds. RACM, in partnership with M7, applied for the designation, which was successful in part due to the City's plans to develop an advanced manufacturing training center at the Century City site.

The City can also take advantage of other natural synergies. For example, Penzey's proposed relocation of its spice production facilities to the former Northridge Mall site would rehabilitate and reuse a former underutilized site in a challenged area, and also poise the city's far northwest side as a potential hub for food and beverage production. With Penzey's Northridge location so close to Will Allen's nationally acclaimed Growing Power farm near 60th and Silver Spring, plus available greenfield sites at the former Bacher Farms, Towne Corporate Park of Granville and Mill Road, there is real potential for a concentration of food and beverage facilities that will allow for efficiencies in inter-industry collaboration and infrastructure support.<sup>10</sup>

The City can capitalize on Southeast Wisconsin's standing as the state's most connected region, and on developments like the recent Tier III data center—the region's largest—that opened on the city's Near West side in the Concordia Historic District. The nonprofit Milwaukee Institute offers low-cost, secure computing resources to qualified, state-based start-ups. Recently, they provided storage resources and high performance computing to tenants of the Global Water Center. Cloud computing allows greater access and flexibility for start-ups and small businesses to share and store data reliably, with nominal investment.

Location decisions often hinge on the availability of physical infrastructure, and many of the sites identified in this chapter require some infrastructure investment. However, as industry needs change, so will these requirements. Freight rail, highway and shipping access remain important, but increasingly both physical and digital infrastructure, e.g., high-speed

broadband Internet, draws industry to certain locations. Milwaukee could well become a cloud hub to further promote start-up businesses and entrepreneurs.

#### 4.4 Strategies & Actions

Future growth will be spurred largely by the private sector. However, City government has a role to play in enabling and shaping this growth. The City has a number of tools and incentives it can use to encourage industry growth, and to support infrastructure development in different areas of the city. These tools include:

- **Tax incremental financing districts (TIDs)** leverage private development funds, address gaps in the market, and provide support for the public amenity portions of projects that may not otherwise be funded.
- **Fixed rate financing** and other forms of financial support through the MEDC for building construction and improvements.
- **Tax exempt revenue bonds and land sales** through RACM.
- **Brownfield redevelopment financial incentives**, including revolving loan funds, federal tax incentives and state grants for industrial and commercial redevelopment of brownfield properties.
- **Foreign Trade Zone #41**, for which the Port of Milwaukee became a grantee, helps companies to manage the cost and assessment duties on materials and products passing through the Port of Milwaukee.
- **Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. (WEDC) programs** including tax credits for job creation, capital investment, employee training, and corporate headquarters.
- **Historic Preservation state income tax credits** offset the costs of restoring historic structures. The Qualified Rehabilitated Buildings Tax Credit allows non-historic commercial buildings to be eligible as well.

**New Markets Tax Credits** to provide business loans to businesses in distressed Census tracts.

Other City initiatives, such as business improvement districts, targeted investment neighborhoods, neighborhood improvement districts, development incentive zones, neighborhood strategic planning areas, retail in-

vestment funds, façade improvement grants, and energy efficiency grants (Me2), help to foster partnerships and deliver resources that strengthen Milwaukee’s business environment.

Careful analysis of development needs and costs is essential for the City to make informed decisions about where and how to invest resources into site development. The existing sites listed in Appendix B are all at different stages of development readiness and while some are appropriate for targeting in the short-term, others require significant investment before they will be suitable for development. Current market conditions make some sites more viable than others. All these factors must be taken into account when deciding which sites to pursue and which to “mothball” until such time when they are more marketable.

Other cities have established location-based “triage” strategies to decide how best to allocate scarce resources for competing development opportunities. Some cities channel funds to the strongest projects and those that will produce the desired “ripple effect” or growth multiplier effect. The City of Detroit has developed a place-based strategy for growth by directing driver industries into established “core investment corridors.”<sup>12</sup> Through a number of efforts including their Corridors of Opportunity and Sustainable Communities programs, the Minneapolis-St. Paul region is aligning infrastructure improvements and redevelopment efforts into identified corridors to support key sector growth, address development equity issues and ensure that future growth and investment are meeting industry and community needs.<sup>13</sup>

Recognizing that the City has limited resources to devote to land development and redevelopment, this chapter offers strategies aimed at prioritizing sites based on an evaluation of their various assets, needs and marketability, and whether they have been targeted by an existing industry or cluster or have already received significant investment.



### *Local Success* **Milwaukee Spice City**

While Milwaukee may be best known for its breweries, motorcycles and manufacturing, the city and region have a robust spice, seasonings and flavor manufacturing industry as well. A history of meat and sausage processing, and more than 250 food manufacturers have demanded a steady supply of spices and seasonings. While meat processing has declined, the region’s spice and flavoring companies continue to thrive, providing goods to large national food producers. Companies like Milwaukee Spice Mills and Foran Spice Company have expanded, merged with national chains, and thrived in the region, as others like Campbell’s have moved in.

The Milwaukee region has a competitive advantage in food processing and in particular spice manufacturing. According to a Campbell’s spokesperson, “we chose the location because historically, the upper Midwest of the U.S. was a supply hub for many food ingredients and manufacturers, and it offers proximity to distribution hubs as well.” Sensient Technologies, Inc., founded in 1882 as Meadow Springs Distilling Company, is a global color, flavor and fragrance producer headquartered in Milwaukee and brings in more than \$1.4 billion in revenue annually.

Recently, Penzey’s Spices announced a commitment to rehabilitating the former Northridge Mall site into a distribution center and office for their rapidly growing business, moving their operations from the suburbs to the city and helping to stabilize and reinvest a struggling corridor on the city’s Northwest side. The company has purchased a portion of the mall property.<sup>11</sup>



## Strategy 4.1: Implement a Data-Driven, Location-Based Approach

No.	Action Item	Time Frame	Lead Actor	Supporting Partners
4.1.1	Develop, maintain and publish a comprehensive list of available sites in the City	Short	CITY	DCD; RACM

The City will continue to direct resources and priority toward sites with the highest market potential, with the understanding that other sites need additional investment or different market conditions to make them viable. Instead of spreading scarce resources too thinly, the City will evaluate sites based on their viability and marketability given current demand and key asset cluster needs and decide which to invest in now, which to begin to prepare for future development, and which to “mothball” until such a time when market conditions are favorable or a company expresses interest.

4.1.2	Maintain an inventory of 100 acres of “shovel ready” industrial land for development	Medium	CITY	DCD; RACM
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The City should always have shovel ready land available for industrial development. Considering the needs of each site to make it shovel ready and taking account of the future needs of the key asset clusters, the City will strive to ensure that at least 100 acres of developable industrial land is available within the city limits each year.

4.1.3	Return 500 acres of brownfield land to active, industrial use in 10 years	Long	CITY	DCD; RACM
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The City will make it a goal to return all 500 acres of currently available industrial vacant land to active use within 10 years. In the short term, this will require identifying which of these sites are poised for redevelopment now, and moving diligently to market them and put them back into use. In the longer term, the City will prioritize what each site needs to be attractive for redevelopment and work to align investment and marketing with key asset clusters to prepare sites for future development.



*The Park East Corridor contains more than 12 acres of land suitable for mixed-use development near downtown. (Source: Department of City Development / Planning)*



## Strategy 4.2: Anticipate Future Industry Needs

No.	Action Item	Time Frame	Lead Actor	Supporting Partners
4.2.1	Regularly communicate with M7 and key asset industries and industry organizations to learn more about their location needs, and keep suitable Milwaukee development sites on their radars	Short	CITY	M7; FaB Wisconsin; M-WERC; Water Council; MAWIB; other cluster orgs.
<p>The city will meet with M7 and cluster organizations to identify suitable sites within the city for asset industry clusters with the goal of capturing the city's share of new industrial development.</p>				
4.2.2	Create a food innovation district or corridor in the City of Milwaukee	Medium	FaB Wisconsin	M7; City of Milwaukee; MATC; MAWIB
<p>Food and beverage processing is a critical industry cluster in the M7 region, with a particular concentration of employment in Milwaukee. Urban agriculture initiatives are also taking hold in Milwaukee, as evidenced by the growth of community gardens, farmer's markets and small-scale food manufacturing. A food innovation district could designate an area within the city of Milwaukee that is zoned, branded and designed to connect and catalyze these initiatives.</p>				
4.2.3	Update analysis of industrial-zoned land within Milwaukee, to ensure zoning regulations fit needs of key asset clusters	Short	CITY	
<p>In 2004, S.B. Friedman analyzed current and future industrial land demand in the Milwaukee region and offered a strategy for the City to preserve key industrial areas. Several key corridors were identified, as well as guidelines to evaluate requests to rezone industrial land. The report should be updated to determine which corridors are still viable for industrial clusters and guidelines reviewed and revised to better address rezoning requests. Some of the current industrial zoning categories are associated with heavy industrial uses that are not consistent with advanced manufacturing of today, and industry may benefit from strengthened language within the zoning code to protect industrial land from special and non-industrial uses and transition zones adjacent to industrial districts. The City will review its zoning code with an eye to support industry in general, and asset clusters in particular, and pursue changes that preserve and promote industrial development within the city.</p>				
4.2.4	Advocate for policy changes that promote investment in public transportation options	Long	CITY	Milwaukee County; MetroGO!; MMAC; MAWIB
<p>The City has the most expansive bus routes within the Milwaukee County service area and this level of service must continue and be improved to connect people to jobs. The City will advocate for increased funding and improvements for MCTS, and will work with other agencies to support alternative modes of transit such as streetcar, ridesharing, passenger and high speed rail, bike share and the bike network.</p>				
4.2.5	Invest in infrastructure to promote efficient intermodal networks	Long	CITY	State of Wisconsin; Federal Government
<p>The City will work with County, M7 and State interests to identify, promote and pursue future infrastructure investments for freight, rail, air and waterway, and policy changes that make industrial and cluster development in the city more attractive. For example, upgrading the railroad infrastructure along the 30th Street Industrial Corridor would help not only the Century City sites now, but would position the entire corridor for future development and investment.</p>				

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Strategy 1  
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Strategy 3

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Strategy 8

5.2.4



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Strategy 8

## Strategy 4.3: Develop and Promote Neighborhood Business Opportunities

No.	Action Item	Time Frame	Lead Actor	Supporting Partners
4.3.1	Identify existing vacant building inventory and promote for alternative uses	Short	CITY	DCD; RACM; Business Improvement Districts
<p>The city has more than 650 vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial buildings<sup>3</sup>, approximately 100 of which are City owned. Many of these are vacant storefronts in neighborhood commercial corridors. While they may no longer be suitable for their original use, these buildings may be appropriate for alternative uses like start-ups, shared workspaces, live/work/sell, or new neighborhood services. The City will take steps to identify and inventory these buildings, assess their suitability for new uses, and develop incentives to get these spaces reoccupied and productive again.</p>				
4.3.2	Explore and advance opportunities for home-based businesses in neighborhoods	Long	CITY	DCD; RACM; WWBIC
<p>Home-based businesses are an opportunity for some individuals to be successful and grow a business without the costs of finding and renting workspace. The City will explore appropriate measures aimed at supporting the ability of individuals to grow businesses at home, including but not limited to: changes to local ordinances and added flexibility in building and zoning codes.</p>				
4.3.3	Explore and advance opportunities for live/work/sell space to support artists & entrepreneurs alike	Long	CITY	DCD; RACM; Milwaukee Artists Resource Network
<p>Artists and entrepreneurs often cannot afford more expensive workspace in order to grow their trade, and additionally, many start-ups and young professionals prefer older workspaces with character. The City will work with local organizations that support artists, entrepreneurs and creative workers to identify their workspace needs and develop strategies for reusing City owned vacant commercial and industrial buildings for this purpose.</p>				

### Endnotes for Chapter 4

- Cassidy-Turley U.S. Industrial Trends Report, 1st Quarter 2013; Industrial Market Snapshot, 4th Quarter 2012.
- The average vacancy rate for industrial real estate was 8.5% nationally in Q1 2013; the rate for the Milwaukee region was 6.4% during the same period. See: Weiland, Andrew. "Will strong industrial market spur more development?" Milwaukee BizTimes, April 29 – May 12, 2013, pp. 18-19.
- While this number includes commercial and industrial structures, it also may include some multi-family, religious and quasi-public buildings, due to how DNS codes these records.
- <http://detroit.curbed.com/archives/2013/10/sugar-hill-arts-district-has-some-room-at-71-garfield.php>
- Dolan, Thomas. "The Ten Truths of Live-Work Planning Policy" <<http://live-work.com/live-work/the-ten-truths-of-live-work-planning-policy/>> Accessed on 29 May 2013.
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates; Pawasarat, John. "The Driver License Status of the Voting
- Age Population in Wisconsin." Employment and Training Institute, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, June 2005.
- 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- Based on a measurement of travel delay, "green" commuters, and travel time, see: Levy, Francesca. "Daily Grind: Best and Worst Cities for Commuters." Forbes.com, February 16, 2010.
- Tomer, Adie, Elizabeth Kneebone, Robert Puentes, and Alan Berube. "Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America." Brookings Institution, May 2011.
- In work group conversations during the planning process, representatives of food and beverage indicated that companies in this cluster prioritize previously undeveloped sites when looking for places to locate new facilities.
- Dill, Molly. "Spice City: Milwaukee Is a Hotbed of Seasoning and Flavor Manufacturers." BizTimes, April 15, 2013.
- "Detroit Future City" the City of Detroit's strategic framework plan, December 2012.
- "Minneapolis-Saint Paul Regional Business Plan Update," April 2011.