

1.0 INTRODUCTION

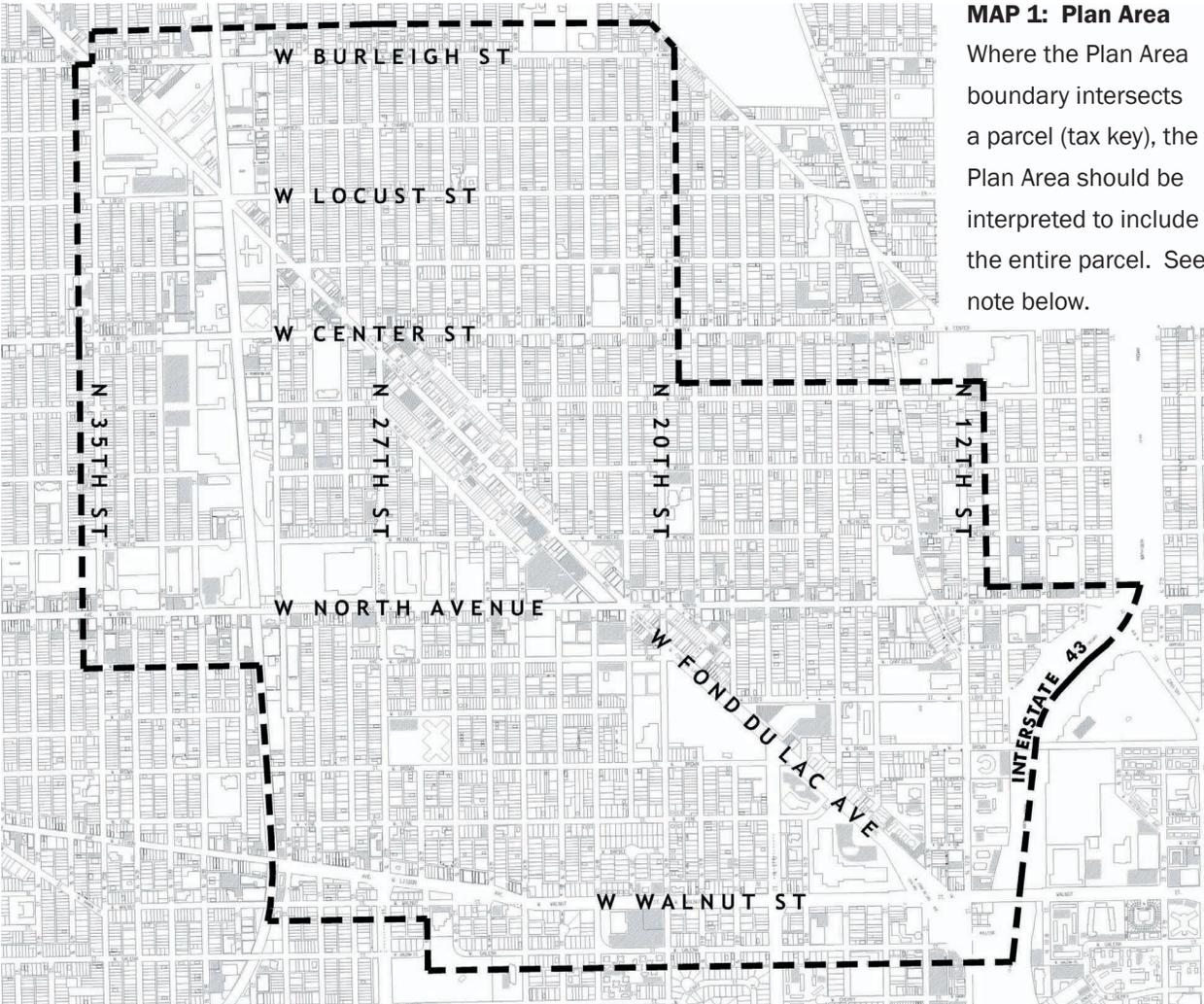
The Fond du Lac and North Neighborhood Plan is the culmination of a 3-year community-based planning effort that builds upon the momentum created by recent revitalization activities, and current neighborhood assets, including: close proximity to downtown, easy access to freeways and major bus routes, historic and architectural charm, and most importantly, dedicated and active neighborhood associations. The Plan establishes priorities for strengthening neighborhood housing, business, retail, industrial,

transportation, recreational and cultural assets. The Plan promotes investment and provides guidance for public and private development initiatives.

1.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

A. Purpose of the Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan

The long-range purpose of the Fond du Lac and North Neighborhood Plan is to create a neighborhood where people can find desirable



Note: In instances where the Plan Area boundary intersects a parcel (a single tax ket number), the Plan Area boundary should be interpreted to include the entire parcel. For example, where the Plan Area boundary intersects a portion of the larger parcel at North Division High School, it should be understood that North Division High School is within the Plan Area.

and affordable housing, shopping and jobs close to home, inviting recreational and cultural opportunities. To reach these goals the Plan establishes priorities for strengthening and building upon existing neighborhood assets. The Plan promotes investment and provides guidance for public and private development. By creating new business opportunities, enhancing existing recreational and cultural alternatives, creating open space alternatives, creating walkable pedestrian-friendly districts and corridors and providing a range of residential opportunities that redirect urban growth back to the central city, the improvements will provide benefits to the neighborhood, city and region.

This Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan represents a guide for both the short-term and long-term redevelopment of the Fond du Lac and North neighborhood in Milwaukee. It serves to preserve the unique qualities of the neighborhood and direct new development that will improve the value and identity of the community. The Plan includes goals and objectives, an analysis of trends, redevelopment standards and policies and implementation strategies. The planning process included a comprehensive public participation process, described in Section 2.4.

B. Smart Growth Legislation (City Comprehensive Plan Structure)

The preparation of the Fond du Lac and North Neighborhood Plan has been done under the authority of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law, Wis. Stats. §66.1001, more commonly referred to as "Smart Growth" Legislation. The 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, and subsequently 1999 Assembly Bill AB 872 and 2001 Wisconsin Act 16,

revised planning legislation for all communities in the State. The Smart Growth legislation provides a framework for developing comprehensive plans, procedures for adopting such plans, and requires that any program or action of a community that affects land use must be consistent with the community's comprehensive plan. Therefore, upon adoption, all land use decisions must be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies outlined in the Milwaukee Fond du Lac and North Neighborhood Plan.

The City of Milwaukee's comprehensive planning process has been structured to recognize the need to plan for the entire City as well as its smaller geographic areas. Consequently, the City's Comprehensive Plan consists of 2 components: a citywide policy plan and multiple sub-area (neighborhood) plans. The Fond du Lac and North Neighborhood Plan is one of these sub-area plans.

The overall organization of this plan is intended to create a document that is clear, concise, and user-friendly. The Introduction and the Planning Process and Information Gathering chapters provide a succinct review and analysis of neighborhood characteristics, including the existing demographic and physical conditions and a summary of the public participation process results. The Land Use chapter identifies the types of uses and related policies and redevelopment strategies planned for the Fond du Lac and North neighborhood area as a whole. The District and Corridors chapter outlines more specifically where and how those policies and strategies should be implemented within the neighborhood and provides additional design guidelines specific to

those locations. The Catalytic Projects chapter identifies a number of specific sites within the neighborhood and recommends several alternative scenarios for the development of those sites. By structuring recommendations first for the whole neighborhood, then for specific districts and corridors, and finally for particular sites, policy recommendations can be easily referenced based on the specifics of a reinvestment proposal.

C. Mission Statement

This plan will provide a coordinated framework for neighborhood investment decisions by both public agencies and private sector developers; provide practical implementation strategies with an emphasis on community involvement, high quality design, and adding long-term value; and will serve as a model for neighborhood planning in Milwaukee. In summary:

- The plan will create excitement and enhance confidence by providing a comprehensive vision.
- The plan will identify key development opportunities and identify catalytic projects to guide private sector development.
- The plan will establish priorities for public investment in transportation, open space, recreational, institutional and cultural assets, including public art.
- The plan will support efforts of various non-profit and neighborhood-based organizations, specifically with regard to residential development, increasing owner occupancy (through new construction and rehab of existing housing) and open space planning.

- The plan will provide guidance for balancing residential, commercial and industrial investment.
- The plan will emphasize high quality design in physical planning.
- The plan will be part of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

1.2 PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives are intended to be a broad guide for the implementation of the community's vision based on the underlying philosophy of the neighborhood plan.

Overall Goal

- Preserve the overall neighborhood character as a compact, interconnected and walkable area.
- Build upon the traditional development patterns and existing assets of the neighborhood.

Residential Goals

- Strengthen and improve the existing neighborhood fabric.
- Increase owner-occupancy throughout the Fond du Lac and North neighborhood.
- Create a diversity of housing choices for residents of the neighborhood.

Commercial Goals

- Create successful retail destinations that utilize existing commercial land and infrastructure.
- Enhance the marketability of commercial districts to promote economic stability and growth.

- Create revitalized neighborhood shopping streets and commercial corridors using the “Main Street” approach to redevelopment: organization, preservation, economic restructuring, marketing and promotion, and streetscape design.

Industrial Goals

- Create an industrial corridor district that is competitive with other industrial land in the metro area, provides a Walk-to-Work environment as well as a mix of uses compatible with and supportive of its predominant manufacturing focus.
- Create an industrial corridor district with marketable features and a welcoming “campus” identity.

Recreational and Open Space Goals

- Increase the sense of security throughout the Fond du Lac and North area.
- Enhance public destinations and gathering places for residents and visitors.
- Determine how the amount of open space amenities can be increased.

Civic and Institutional Goals

- Encourage public spaces within a comfortable walking distance of every residence and business.
- Create or redevelop civic and institutional uses that are welcoming places for people to gather and serve as visual/symbolic landmarks for the community.



Legacy Bank: Fond du Lac Avenue and North Avenue

Transportation and Infrastructure Goals

- Create a hierarchy within the public right-of-way that successfully accommodates mass transit, automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- Recreate historic neighborhood traffic patterns to maximize route alternatives.
- Improve the viability of transportation alternatives.
- Make walking safe, attractive, easy and convenient.

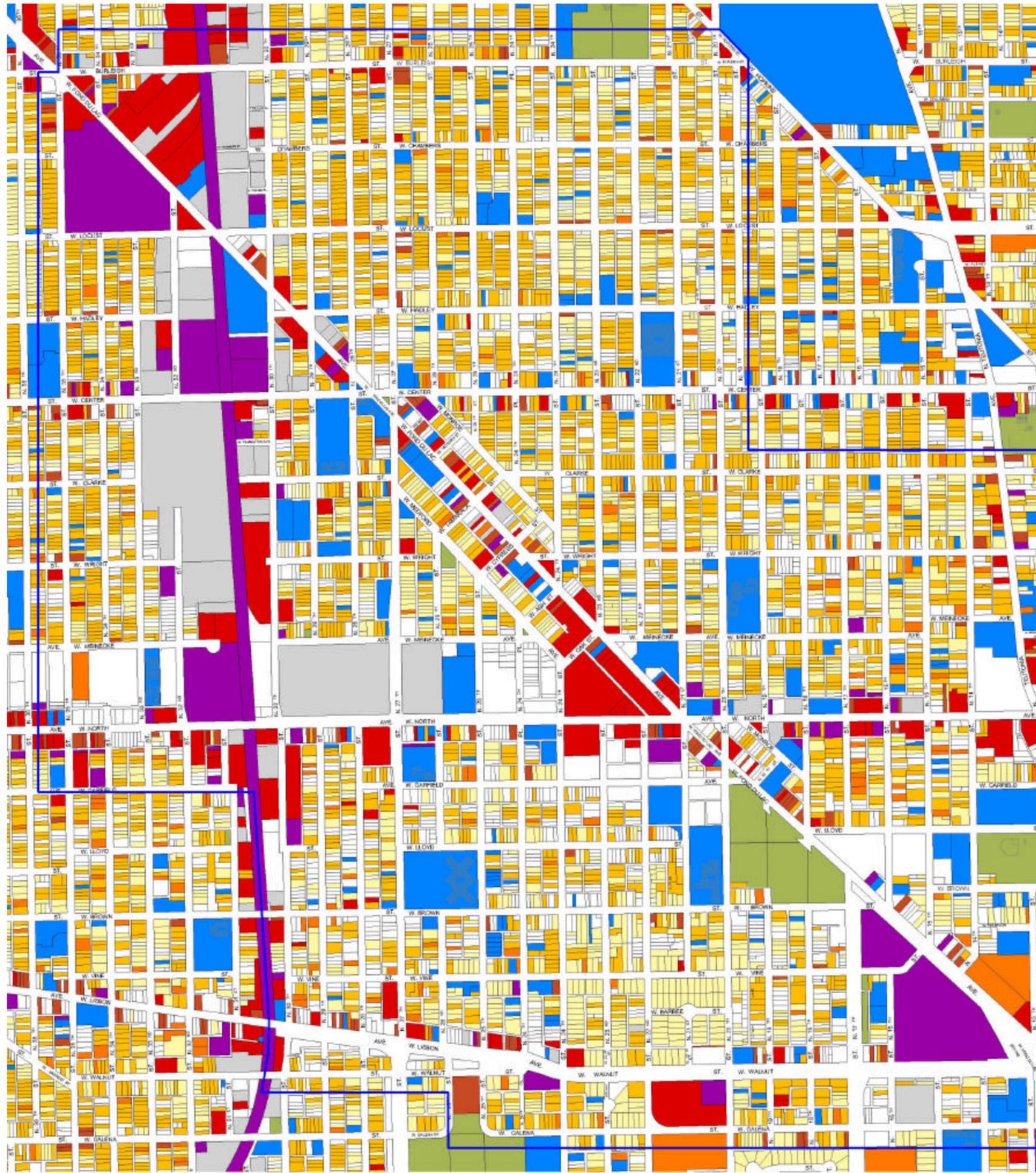
1.3 NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

A. Neighborhood Profile and Demographics

The Fond Du Lac and North Avenue Neighborhood study area is centrally located. It is adjacent to Milwaukee’s downtown, 8.7 miles from General Mitchell International Airport, 2.5 miles from the downtown Amtrak station, has a major rail line for industrial uses and is near two major interstates for easy access to the neighborhood.

The study area includes approximately 1,042 acres of developed land with a mix of uses. The

MAP 2
FOND DU LAC AND NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
Existing Land Use
year 2000



RESIDENTIAL

- Single Family
- Duplex
- Multi-Family

- Mixed-Use
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Transportation
- Institutional
- Parking
- Parks, Open Space
- Vacant Land

Study Area



Land Use map shows the 2002 uses for the study area.

The neighborhood can be described as an area containing some of the oldest housing stock in the City of Milwaukee, as well as the most affordable. Residential land is approximately 44% of the study area. Commercial, industrial and transportation uses comprise about 29% of the study area; over 22% of the study area is occupied by public and quasi-public uses. The study area includes 21 community organizations, 81 churches and 145 senior housing units. There are a few architecturally significant buildings that may form the basis of a dynamic urban neighborhood.

The City of Milwaukee owns approximately 14% of land in the study area, which includes vacant lots, quasi-public and open spaces, institutional and transportation uses. Johnsons Park, on Fond du Lac Avenue, and Lloyd Park are the only significant open spaces in the area.

The majority of commercial/retail land is located along North and Fond du Lac Avenue. Commercial, service, industrial and transportation uses form a corridor along the Canadian Pacific Railroad. The study area includes 49 industrial businesses. This corridor continues north and south of the study area.

The study area experienced a 26.2% decline in population between 1990 and 2000. The 2000 population of the neighborhood, based on census tract data, was 50,558. Other areas of Milwaukee County also experienced a decline during this same time period, although not as

significant. The study area is approximately 82% African American, 12% White and 4% Hispanic. The study area is relatively young with approximately 30% of residents between the ages of 5 and 17 years, and 26% of residents between the ages of 25 and 44 years.

About 42% of the neighborhood households have an income of less than \$15,000 and 30% have



an income between \$15,000 and \$35,000. 70% of the household dwelling units in the area are rental. Despite these numbers the area has a higher income per square mile, and density, than other areas of Milwaukee County and surrounding suburbs. The strong concentration of buying power within the neighborhood presents an opportunity which is just beginning to be recognized by national retailers. For more detail on the market conditions see Section 2.2 and Appendix C: Market Analysis.

Traffic and transit have significant impacts on the neighborhood due to the large numbers of vehicles and buses passing through the neighborhood each day. Due to relatively low auto ownership, transit use is high in the neighborhood. The following summarizes the major traffic and bus transfer counts.

Daily Traffic Counts:

- Fond du Lac Avenue: 18,000 to over 27,000
- North Avenue: 18,000 to 20,000
- 27th Street: 14,000 to 19,000
- Walnut Avenue: 14,000 to almost 23,000

Daily Bus Transfers:

- FDL/Center/27th: 1,759
- FDL/Burleigh/35th: 1,891
- FDL/North: 908
- North/27th: 866

B. Physical and Cultural History

Although the Fond du Lac Plank Road was opened by 1850, growth of the northwest side of the city occurred largely as a result of the

extension of street car rail service. Most parts of Milwaukee had streetcar service by 1892; in 1897, the Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Company established Route 18. Originating at N. 27th Street & W. Fond du Lac Avenue, this route provided service to National Avenue and the old Soldier's Home Depot. Further development of outlying areas occurred, stemming from the city's circa 1880 shift in emphasis away from general commerce to industrial activities. During this period, many industries were situated on large, open parcels rather than within the confines of downtown.

A store of local legends and stories tell the significance of this neighborhood as a stop on the Underground Railroad during the turbulent period leading up to and during the Civil War. There is little documentation surrounding the events or the locations where they may have taken place, but further research may uncover a poignant local history.

Transfer points of the street car rail system located along W. Fond du Lac Avenue, and an increase in the locale's largely German and Polish population, helped the planning area prosper from the turn-of-the-century to at least the late 1940s. The later period marked the beginning of a significant demographic shift in the neighborhood.

Although the suburbanization of Milwaukee began in the 1920s, a decided exodus of the German and Polish population took place between the 1950s and 1970s. The ethnic composition of the neighborhood changed to predominantly African-American and with it came a lack of equal

opportunity in jobs, education and housing.

The W. Fond du Lac Avenue corridor experienced economic decline beginning around the 1960s. The economic disparity between this and other neighborhoods eventually led major retailer Sears, Roebuck & Co. to vacate its large department store at the intersection of N. 21st Street and W. North and Fond du Lac Avenues.

Today, over thirty years later, the area still consists largely of African-Americans, and the planning area's economic situation still lags behind the more prosperous areas of the city. However, a renewed sense of community is being realized with the opening of the African-American operated Legacy Bank, Columbia Savings and Loan, recent successful housing and jobs initiatives, neighborhood school projects, and a recent Main Street Initiative spearheaded by the City, the North Avenue Community Development Corporation and the Fondy Task Force. Much, however, remains to be done to help this area regain market momentum, economic health and prosperity.

C. Recent Significant Developments

During the past 10 years significant investment in housing and commercial development have impacted the value and identity of the neighborhood.

- City Homes Phases I and II - new single-family cluster housing
- Lindsay Heights - new single-family housing
- Habitat for Humanity - new single-family housing
- YMCA - new facility and charter school at Teutonia and North Avenues
- Fondy Food Center - upgrade of traditional outdoor farmers market, now indoor all season market with a planned incubator kitchen
- Fond du Lac Avenue reconstruction - street was narrowed and repaved
- Main Street Initiative for Fond du Lac and North Avenues
- Fond du Lac Economic Development Fund - grants for business improvements
- Fond du Lac streetscape enhancements
- Columbia Square - rehab and renovation project
- Capital Stamping - new manufacturing facility
- Metplex - new institutional facility
- Todd Wehr Metcalfe Park Community Center - Boys and Girls Club and Milwaukee Public School
- Josey Subdivision - planned single-family subdivision
- Walnut Way Pilot Demonstration Project for Stormwater Management
- Assets Mapping Initiative
- UWM Employment and Training Institute Labor Force Analysis (included in Appendix G)

