

## 12: Implementation



## IMPLEMENTATION

The Northeast Side Plan Area will serve as a “Smart Growth” platform for new development, redevelopment, and restructuring of neighborhoods. Most of the tools, techniques and methods needed for implementation already exist within the city’s collective “toolbox” or existing legal and development framework. Those that are not currently in use are within reach given the political will (coalition of partners) to introduce changes to the existing legal and development framework.

What follows here is a discussion of Smart Growth planning principles and Northeast Side Plan recommended approaches to plan implementation.

### Summary of Smart Growth Planning Principles

- 1 Smart Growth Principle: Reinvest in cities. Discourage urban sprawl.
- 2 Smart Growth Principle: Promote sustainable healthy urban living.
- 3 Smart Growth Principle: Reinforce multi-modal transit options.
- 4 Smart Growth Principle: Greater density requires a higher level of public amenity.
- 5 Smart Growth Principle: Reinforce social networks and support systems.
- 6 Smart Growth Principle: Target public investment to enhance the public realm.
- 7 Smart Growth Principle: Reinvent, reinvigorate, reenergize the economic base.
- 8 Smart Growth Principle: Cities are for people. Good cities put people first.
- 9 Smart Growth Principle: Neighborhoods are the building blocks of cities.
- 10 Smart Growth Principle: Promote development that is mixed use, compact and walkable.
- 11 Smart Growth Principle: Preserve historic buildings, sites and districts.
- 12 Smart Growth Principle: Approach regional issues regionally.



#### 1 Smart Growth Principle: Reinvest in cities. Discourage urban sprawl.

Urban sprawl is an increasingly costly and wasteful pattern of land use. As centers of social and economic life grow farther and farther apart (the automobile-dominated dispersal of urban areas), this pattern of growth becomes increasingly costly to maintain from an infrastructure and services standpoint, increasingly wasteful of land and environmental resources, and increasingly weaker and more diluted as a basis for cultural, societal and economic interaction. There are arguments in favor of exurban lifestyles, but their costs are not distributed equally and far exceed any purported benefits.

Reverse urban sprawl by refocusing on assets of urban neighborhoods and reinvesting in cities. In urban neighborhoods, traditional assets may be architecture, parks, waterways, historic places, churches, schools, diverse shopping districts, major (or minor) institutions, or proximity to employers. Non-traditional assets may be developed social networks, cultural traditions, common history and economic interests, and intangibles such as loyalty to places, people and events.

Reinforce systems that support strong city centers and neighborhoods, such as rail-based transportation systems. On the federal, state, and local level, reverse the pattern of taxpayer investment in urban sprawl, e.g. large subsidies for expansion of highways that promote exurban auto-dependent development of farmland, wetlands, and rural areas.

#### Principle One Implementation

##### Build urban development strategies around reinvestment in assets.

Many neighborhoods and districts are sitting on underperforming or overlooked assets. Part of the work of the Northeast Side Plan has been to interpret broadly, revisit and reconsider those assets and determine ways of restructuring their use or approach to investment in order to capitalize and leverage them for the benefit of the region.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Redevelop, restructure, and adapt.

Cities are always undergoing transformation. Well-ordered well-designed change is essential for cities and neighborhoods to survive and remain desirable places to live. For each district and corridor, the Northeast Side Plan has determined the overriding goal (e.g., preserve, preserve with changes, or transform) and recommended strategies (including catalytic projects) and implementation methods to achieve it; or when there were competing goals, recommended various options to explore and evaluate. Catalytic projects were also described with options and in detail.

For areas undergoing a major transformation due to a change in market forces or ownership, or as a result of a collective visioning process, there should be a redevelopment plan or masterplan to guide the transformative changes that will occur. For areas whose goal is preservation with minor changes, there should be a set of standards that guides alterations, additions, reuse, etc., similar to those used for historic districts.

In partnership with the Northeast Side Plan, there is currently underway a UWM campus masterplan to achieve UWM's vision of becoming a major research university (among many other goals). There is current and ongoing, a Neighborhood Action Plan underway for the Harambee neighborhood. There are many intensive redevelopment plans underway for various Business Improvement Districts. One option out of several recommended for the Riverworks Industrial Center is to explore the benefits of pursuing a redevelopment plan that would more closely link Riverworks to Glendale Corporate Park; rezone commercial properties along Capitol Drive; improve express transit links north and south of the Riverworks district; conduct a business park "makeover" to improve image and appearance; and find ways to tie workforce development to efforts of the regional planning group, the Milwaukee 7 (M7).

### Remediate brownfields.

There are global benefits to the redevelopment of brownfields. EPA definition of brownfields: Abandoned, idled, or under-utilized industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination, as opposed to "greenfields," which are undeveloped (except for farming) suburban and rural development sites.

Choosing a brownfield over a greenfield reduces urban sprawl, and therefore the negative impacts that urban sprawl has on air, water, and habitat quality. The City of Milwaukee is one of 16 communities selected by the EPA as a Brownfield Showcase Community, i.e., a model of brownfields redevelopment and interagency collaboration, for reclaiming brownfield sites at reasonable cost (with financial

incentives) and in a timely manner. The Northeast Side Plan recommends that under the Milwaukee Brownfields Initiative, remediation be made available for all redevelopment sites within the plan area.



### 2 Smart Growth Principle: Promote sustainable healthy urban living.

Green infrastructure makes living in the city healthful, beautiful and affordable. Preserve green space/open space and create green connections (trails, paths and linear parks) between them. Preserve environmental assets and manage as an interconnected whole. Use urban agriculture and high-intensity urban gardens as another way to support families.

#### Principle Two Implementation

#### Promote development that is mixed use, compact and walkable.

Demand for compact, walkable communities is at an all-time high due to rising fuel costs, changing demographics and lifestyles, and fiscal pressure to manage growth. Many consumers are turning away from "cookie cutter" suburbs and embracing urban lifestyles—from walkable villages to densely urban city living.

The Market Analysis for the Northeast Side Plan supports this analysis and notes this trend, which points to continued strong demand for the densely urban settings found on the Northeast Side. The Northeast Side Plan has many traditional, mixed use (on a neighborhood scale), compact, walkable neighborhoods that conserve land and are transit-oriented, which reduces automobile usage and greenhouse gases. The Northeast Side Plan recommends an aggressive approach to conserving these neighborhoods and keeping this traditional neighborhood development pattern for new additions and "infill" or replacement buildings.

Recent research published by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) shows that changing America's land development patterns

## IMPLEMENTATION

to emphasize compact, mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods could do as much to lower greenhouse gas emissions as many of the climate policies being promoted by state and national politicians. The research, contained in a book titled Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change, concludes that compact development reduces driving from 20 to 40 percent, and even more in some cases. Shifting 60 percent of new growth to compact, walkable neighborhoods would save 85 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually by 2030. Those savings equate to a 28-percent increase in vehicle fuel efficiency standards (to 32 mpg).

### Conserve irreplaceable environmental assets.

Use resources wisely, efficiently and irreplaceable resources not at all. On a regional planning scale, redevelop and re-invest in existing towns and cities (built environments) and avoid sprawl patterns of using up ever increasing amounts of exurban land.

### Promote urban agriculture.

Urban agriculture, also known as urban farming, “victory gardens” or high-yield food-producing gardens increases the amount and quality of food available to people living in cities, by allowing gardens that provide fresh vegetables, fruits, eggs, and meat products to urban consumers.

In conjunction with the Northeast Side Plan, there is now a point person in the Mayor’s Office of Green Initiatives to help locate city-owned lots for urban agriculture and coordinate management responsibilities with local groups like Groundwork and Milwaukee Urban Gardens.

### Create linear parkways

Linear parkways that follow rivers, rail corridors, shoreline and other natural or man-made topographic features, are excellent opportunities to combine conservation with public access to green space/open space. Linear parkways also conserve wildlife habitat within urban areas, and may help replace habitat that has been lost to development.

The Northeast Side Plan recommends that the Milwaukee River Primary Environmental Corridor be protected as a linear parkway; that a portion of the former Soo Line (Beer Line) rail corridor is be redesigned as a linear parkway; and that the lakefront series of parks and connecting paths become more unified as a shoreline linear parkway that benefits the entire metro area.

### Increase tree canopy.

Trees improve air quality, reduce stormwater flow and conserve energy. The Northeast Side Plan recommends increasing tree canopy from the current 16% to a target of 25%

through a number of means, including but not limited to: greening parking lots, adding street trees in BIDs, incorporating green space/open space in neighborhoods, and adding landscaping to industrial parks.

### Promote green infrastructure.

The Northeast Side Plan recommends “green infrastructure” for all parts of the plan area. Green infrastructure makes living in the city healthful, beautiful and affordable. Where infrastructure refers to any support system that works as an interconnected whole, “green infrastructure” is a landscape architecture term for an urban support system of gardens, parks, playgrounds, natural areas, environmental corridors, green space, open space, waterways, hike & bike trails and greenways that works as an interconnected whole. (Note: “Green space” is any natural area, landscaped area, yard, garden or park. “Open space” in urban areas, is any public space not dedicated to streets or parking.)



### Make green connections.

Disperse green space/open space (gathering spaces, commons, gardens, plazas, etc.) throughout neighborhoods, and use landscaped paths to make connections between them. Also make green connections to larger parks, commercial districts, institutions, and workplaces. Public sidewalks should be enhanced with street trees, planters, etc. and made part of the network.

### Green primary transportation corridors.

Green streets, transit corridors, commercial corridors and freeways create not just more attractive thoroughfares, but healthier ones because trees help mitigate carbon emissions.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Reduce stormwater run-off.

Use porous pavement and permeable surfaces instead of impermeable surfaces for parking lots and other paved areas to the extent possible. Assist homeowners in taking other measures to reduce run-off that pollutes river and lake water, e.g. “disconnect-redirect” etc. The Northeast Side Plan supports the City’s target of 20-25% permeable surfaces.

### Use renewable energy.

Meet energy needs with on-site renewable energy facilities. Power produced from solar panels, wind turbines and biomass helps stabilize energy costs, improves reliability of energy supplies, and lowers greenhouse gas emissions while contributing to stronger local economies.



### 3 Smart Growth Principle: Reinforce multi-modal transit options.

Many modes of transit (tram, bus, car, bike, foot) form the basis for movement within the city. These various modes of transit should be well-designed, context-sensitive, integrated as a whole, and reinforced with supporting and sympathetic land use. (Note: sympathetic in this context means showing agreement with or lending support to.)

Good cities give people choices or options for modes of travel. Of all the options available, the most critical is that of mass transit because it serves the broadest segment of the population. It is often the only option for the old and infirm, those who do not own a car or cannot afford one, high school and college students commuting to school, and workers who need an option other than the automobile to commute to their place of employment. (See Chapter 4 for a discussion of Northeast Side Plan transit options).

### Principle Three Implementation

#### Use transit to connect people to jobs.

Northeast Side Plan Transit Corridors are coordinated with the joint City-County approach to linking employees to

major employers, and neighborhoods to downtown (see Chapter 4 Transit) which is also the basis for federal grant money earmarked for Milwaukee transit (Locally Preferred Alternative).

The Northeast Side Plan identifies major transit corridors consistent with this approach. The two predominant corridors identified are (1) Downtown, Grand Avenue, Park East, MATC, Manpower, Schlitz Park, Historic King Drive, Bronzeville, Harambee to Riverworks and Glendale Industrial Centers, Port Washington Blvd. and Bayshore Towne Center; and (2) Milwaukee County Grounds to Marquette, Downtown, Park East, the Lower East Side, Upper East Side and UWM, to Shorewood, Whitefish Bay and Bayshore Towne Center. Both routes follow portions of historic street-car routes and already have dense built-up transit-oriented land use.

#### Use complete street design.

Well-designed streets that can accommodate mass transit, cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians allow people to safely use different modes of transportation. This is a plan recommendation for all major corridors within the Northeast Side.

Milwaukee County Transit System provides adequate bus service to County residents. Improvements should be targeted to improving service (number of buses and headways) on heavily traveled routes.

Bicycles work as a regular mode of travel for a segment of the population and should be given better options (e.g. more continuous bike lanes, buffered bike lanes on major arterials, bike storage facilities at major destinations, bike racks on buses, expansion of bike-sharing programs such as UWM’s, etc.) to increase ridership. The Northeast Side Plan recommends that there be bike lanes on all major arterials to increase bicycle usage as alternative mode of transportation throughout the area.

Good cities are pedestrian-friendly. The Northeast Side is already well-designed for pedestrians. The principal need is for traffic calming where there is direct conflict between land use and speed of travel. Prime examples are Farwell Avenue from Ogden to North Avenue, the Locust Street business district, Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District, the “West End” of the East Side BID, the Oakland Avenue (University Square) BID and surrounding “detour” streets, and Holton Street north of Center.

#### Use context-sensitive street design.

Well-designed streets should respect and reinforce the surrounding land use context, and contribute to a sense of place. This is a plan recommendation for all streets within the Northeast Side. Streets that are specifically mentioned as good candidates for traffic calming (following re-evalua-

## IMPLEMENTATION

tion of traffic volume and speed relative to use and activity), are Holton Street, Locust Street, and Farwell Avenue. Sections of North Avenue (Bronzeville, East Side BID “West End”) are recommended for re-evaluation.



### 4 Smart Growth Principle: Greater density requires a higher level of urban design.

The more densely developed the urban neighborhood, the more important it is to provide a high level of public amenity, a careful and responsive design of the “public realm” (streets, sidewalks, public places, etc., and a high level of architectural design (well-built, well-designed, context sensitive).

#### Principle Four Implementation

Do good urban design. For all new developments in densely developed urban neighborhoods, i.e., all neighborhoods, districts and corridors within the Northeast Side Plan, every effort should be made to:

- (1) maximize or “max out” the comfort, attractiveness, and desirability of the public realm;
- (2) design and layer “connectivity” or the ways that buildings, streets, transit, greenspace/open space, and neighborhoods overlap and connect;
- and (3) optimize building design to meet overlapping standards of private use and public realm (good buildings serve many different constituencies from environmentalists to investors, neighbors to property taxpayers).

#### Create affordable housing in all neighborhoods.

In order for urban areas to accommodate diverse groups of people (at the heart of urban vitality), there must be an diverse range of housing options for varying family types, siz-

es and incomes. Affordable housing should be “seamlessly inserted” into neighborhoods, not isolated, segregated, or clearly standing apart from other housing. For highrise buildings or large mixed use projects, affordable housing should be a component of the overall project.

#### Increase public safety.

Some of the desirable features of urban areas (density of buildings, intensity of uses, diversity of population) require a greater measure of control and policing in the good sense of community policing, visible police presence, surveillance, prevention of and attention to the early warning signs of neighborhood disruption, active block watches, neighborhood patrols, and design of buildings and parking lots to avoid dead ends, hidden pockets, blank walls, vegetation that allows hiding or “jump outs” and other features that may increase the opportunity for crime to occur.



### 5 Smart Growth Principle: Reinforce social networks and support systems.

Next to employment, social networks and support systems are the single most important reason why people choose to locate in a region, city and area or “side of town.” After that most important location decision, there are specific trade-offs in regard to school districts, parishes, neighborhoods, market value for homes (investment return on equity), length and cost of commutes for household members.

#### Principle Five Implementation

#### Neighborhoods should maximize opportunities for social networks to flourish.

Maximize opportunities for public and semi-public gathering spaces and design these to fit the character of districts and corridors, parks and other green space/open space. For

## IMPLEMENTATION

example, commercial districts benefit from outdoor cafes, pocket parks, streetscape, etc. Residential areas benefit from commons, community gardens, play areas for children, small neighborhood-oriented parks, etc. Parks benefit from basketball and tennis courts, baseball and soccer fields, as well as park pavilions for open air concerts, etc. Allow opportunities for private vendors to complement these spaces—a grill at the ball park, street vendors in heavily trafficked commercial areas, hot dog or lemonade stands at the beach.

The Northeast Side Plan makes similar recommendations for all neighborhoods, districts and corridors, with different emphasis depending on the market, demographics and physical characteristics of each area.

### Use community building strategies.

Community revitalization efforts are focused on many different intersecting elements—housing, business development, employment, etc. The impact of Community Development Corporations can be dramatic when taking a comprehensive approach to change rather than focusing either sequentially or separately on community development issues. The following strategies are among those being currently used by the Harambee Great Neighborhood Initiative (HGNI) in conjunction with the Northeast Side Plan:

Focus on human capital development (job training/retraining, skills development, filling education gaps and requirements, networking, employment search, etc.) in addition to physical development.

Recognize that neighborhoods are complex entities. No one thing can be considered in isolation or problem can be fixed/resolved/improved in isolation. All aspects intersect and affect each other.

Neighborhood economic development (community commerce development) should focus on the development of export-producing goods and services that will bring revenue into the neighborhood rather than bringing in business that takes revenue out of the neighborhood to reinvest elsewhere.

Neighborhoods need a vision (with buy-in from residents and stakeholders) to drive neighborhood planning and mobilize resources.

Comprehensive community change initiatives must shift away from the “old model” of one organization acting as a single driving force commanding all resources, to a collaborative model of multiple partners working cooperatively on shared goals using a broad range of resources. That said, it is vital and necessary to have an effective lead agency (local intermediary) to bring organizations together, give them support, and make all parties work together harmoniously, e.g., Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is the lead

agency for the HGNI and has that overall coordinating role.

Identify traditional and non-traditional neighborhood assets that can serve as the basis for catalytic change. For example, networking through local religious institutions can be a valuable source of support for job seekers, homebuyers, etc. Recently, the Historic King Drive BID used the traditional Martin Luther King Day celebration as a forum for community analysis, visioning and planning—with some of the best minds in the area gathered around the table. Riverwest gathers some of its most creative thinkers at the Riverwest Coop over Saturday morning pancakes, to brainstorm community investment and development ideas—people shop there once a week for groceries, why not make it count? There are untapped resources that often go overlooked because they are not conventional sources of wisdom or usual ways of working. Half of capacity-building is the sharing of ideas.

Survey the community and engage residents to bring about positive and sustainable neighborhood change. The benefits from neighborhood planning need to be visible to those in the community.



### 6 Smart Growth Principle: Target public investment to enhance the public realm.

Limited public resources must be targeted to leverage investment from a range of other sources; must have a substantial “catalytic” impact over a large area (district or corridor) and over an extended period of time. Generally, public resources are used to fill gaps between the value of public benefits and the level of investment that private project dollars will support.

All the above criteria vary with the particulars of market forces and the dynamics of geographic areas. All decisions regarding investment of public funds must be made holistically with regard to the city’s (and other taxing authority’s)

## IMPLEMENTATION

financial standing, ability to support and return on investment, i.e., a careful evaluation of need and value (how well the project/investment advances city planning goals).

For example, transit (particularly fixed route, embedded rail transit) has a demonstrated ability to produce a catalytic change in economic activity and enormous return on investment for municipalities that have implemented it. Based on this public value and return on investment, rail transit is worthy of public financing.

The Northeast Side Plan recommends transit routes that take a workers-to-jobs approach to transit development, and connect neighborhoods (over time the whole M7 seven-county region) to downtown as a “Milwaukee Connector.” The Northeast Side Plan also strongly recommends a Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) transit line (extension of Chicago area METRA north to Milwaukee) to build and more closely ally the Milwaukee metro region to the economic powerhouse immediately to our south.

### ● Principle Six Implementation

Target investment for maximum impact- Tax Increment Financing

The City of Milwaukee uses Tax Increment District Financing (TIF or TID) to bridge the gap between costs of public improvements or benefits and project costs that can realistically be born by developers.

For example, tax increment financing (TIF) for riverwalks can be justified because; (1) capital costs are rarely within the scope of project budgets for new construction; (2) the long-term public benefit well exceeds the cost; and (3) riverwalks do have a catalytic effect on economic activity and value of the area adjacent to the river corridor that will increase tax base and “pay back” the TIF investment. By contrast, river trails and accessible pathway connections (recommended by the Northeast Side Plan for the length of the Milwaukee River Primary Environmental Corridor) while valuable as a public benefit, are less costly to “construct” and might also not meet need “pay back” criteria for TIF public financing.

In recent years, the city has explored doing neighborhood improvement TIFs with remarkable success. Though none are currently recommended for expansion within the Northeast Side Plan, there is the possibility that Walk-to-Work neighborhoods like Harambee (in proximity to Riverworks Industrial Center) might want to pursue a neighborhood development oriented TIF. As a model, the Beer Line ‘B’ TIF is a mixed-use neighborhood TIF that has successfully managed riverwalk and redevelopment investment in conjunc-

tion with the transformation of this former manufacturing area along the Milwaukee River. The Northeast Side Plan area has a number of successful TIFs currently underway (see Chapter 2, Figure 2.6 “Program Areas”).

### Target community development block grant (CDBG) funds to improve neighborhoods.

The Northeast Side Plan recommends that there continue to be a close correlation between neighborhood planning goals/priorities and CDBG funding. The City of Milwaukee’s Community Block Grant Administration expends approximately \$30 million of federal funds annually in 17 neighborhood planning areas, three of which are in the Northeast Side Plan plan area: Harambee, Riverwest and Hillside. The Block Grant office selects projects for funding based on neighborhood planning priorities and partnerships. Projects range from housing rehab programs, business development, job creation and job training, youth recreation programs, homeless shelters, crime prevention programs and community organization. Target Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Funds for Job Creation

MEDC offers loan programs and services to facilitate business investment and expansion, job creation and retention, neighborhood stabilization and development. The Northeast Side Plan recommends strategic use of this resource to support the development goals of plan area neighborhoods, districts and corridors.



### 7 Smart Growth Principle: Reinvent, reinvigorate, and re-energize the economic base.

Urban centers act as a growth engine for the rest of the metro region, and as such must continually reinvent, invigorate, and energize their economic base.

Urban centers can only be as successful and marketable as their employment picture. Family-supporting jobs, either in

## IMPLEMENTATION

Industrial Centers, Walk-to-Work neighborhoods or concentrated along transit routes, are the primary basis for income generation in urban neighborhoods. A range of support services is also needed for residents to gain and retain employment, e.g. job networks, workforce development, training/retraining, child care, etc.

### Principle Seven Implementation

Create family-supporting jobs. The Northeast Side Plan recommends that jobs with the largest multiplier effect (e.g. manufacturing jobs, large employers) take top priority and that scarce public resources be devoted to securing and retaining these jobs. Another important priority is the support and expansion of homegrown businesses, both expansion of market share and addition of manufacturing capacity, e.g. “next generation” manufacturing, etc. Last and definitely not least, small business has historically been the greatest source of new jobs for the national and local economy. These small but growing businesses should not be underestimated or overlooked. In addition, small locally-based businesses give neighborhood shopping districts the kind of appeal that city dwellers seek out. They generate loyalty to neighborhoods that creates market value that translates into property tax base.

### Implement Catalytic Projects.

The Northeast Side Plan has recommended catalytic projects (large impact projects involving community partners) that are discussed in the plan by area. The Northeast Side Plan also embraces the Strategic Policy Framework of the City’s Economic Development Policy Plan and its initial five catalytic projects; (1) Workforce development; (2) Great Lakes Green Industry Complex; (3) UW-Milwaukee Fresh Water Research and Technology Center; (4) Life Ventures Centers that expose children to careers; and (5) Centers for Family Prosperity that provide neighborhood-based access to financial information, employment counseling, job training, income supports, and other resources.

The Northeast Side Plan recommends that community-based organizations strengthen services for job seekers: Use Community Block Grant lead agencies such as the Harambee Ombudsman Project, one-stop shops such the Center for Family Prosperity in Riverworks (part of Riverworks workforce development), MATC training centers, and social outreach agencies to improve information and support services for job seekers.



### 8 Smart Growth Principle: Cities are for people. Good cities put people first.

The “greenness” of a city can be measured by its public services (transit, etc.), its public realm (parks, waterfronts, promenades, plazas, children’s play areas, etc.), and how well it accommodates all groups of people (old and young, rich and poor, majority and minority, residents and visitors, etc.).

### Principle Eight Implementation

The following are measures for success taken from the “Great Cities Initiative” Project for Public Spaces. Northeast Side Plan neighborhoods, districts and corridors, compare favorably to most of the following success measures, and The Northeast Side Plan recommends that all measures be continued (if underway) and initiated (if only found in some neighborhoods, districts and corridors, and not in others).

The Northeast Side Plan also recommends that a forum or regular platform for sharing of ideas and collaboration between neighborhoods be established to achieve a wider sphere of implementation and success. This collaboration is already underway for commercial districts, and ongoing on an informal ad hoc basis between some neighborhood groups in the Northeast Side Plan, e.g. Harambee and Riverwest, but could be a source of “cross-fertilization” of ideas, and a valuable opportunity for information sharing.

### Great Cities “checklist”:

#### Make community goals a top priority in city planning. In great cities:

- Citizens regularly participate in making their public spaces better and local leaders and planning professionals routinely seek the wisdom and practical experience of community residents.
- Residents feel they have responsibility and a sense of ownership for their public spaces.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- Neighborhoods are respected, fostered and have unique identities. There is a sense of “pride of place.”
- Public spaces are planned and managed in a way that highlights and strengthens the culture of a particular community.

### **Place the emphasis is on pedestrians, not cars. In great cities:**

- Pedestrians and bicyclists are more numerous than vehicles (on at least some streets).
- Streets function as “places” and have numerous attractive destinations along them.
- Transit options are available to get to places where people want to go and are used by all kinds of people.
- Parking does not occupy most of the public space; free parking is difficult to find.
- There is a walkable commercial center convenient to every neighborhood that provides everyday needs and services (grocery store, pharmacy, library, medical services, coffee shop etc.)

### **Insist that new development projects enhance existing communities. In great cities:**

- New developments, both public and private, are designed to include mixed uses and to be easily reached without using a private vehicle.
- Developments are human scale and connect with places to cut through rather than mega scale, internalized and islands unto themselves.
- There is a mix of new housing types and layouts that allows and encourages people to grow old there.

### **Create well-loved public spaces that are accessible and well-used. In great cities:**

- There are public places within both neighborhoods and downtowns where people can gather informally and regularly.
- Parks feature attractions for people of different ages and are used at different times of day; they are more than simply recreation facilities.
- The waterfront allows people to actually reach the ocean, lake or river.
- Amenities (benches, transit waiting areas, etc) are comfortable, conveniently located and designed to support the intended use.
- Negative uses or users do not dominate the public spaces.
- Both children and seniors can easily and safely

walk to where they want to go (e.g. children can walk to school, seniors can walk to movies, grocery stores).

### **Make civic institutions are catalysts for public life. In great cities:**

- Schools are centrally located to support other neighborhood activity.
- The library is a multi-purpose and popular place where people go for many different types of activities.
- Civic institutions (museums, community centers, hospitals, government buildings, etc.) have resources and activities that appeal to people of all ages and all cultures in the community.



### **Encourage local economic development. In great cities:**

- There are many locally owned businesses-markets, mom-and-pop stores, street vendors, and larger independent stores; these local businesses are encouraged by the city; people know their retailers by name.
- The mix of locally owned businesses is such that at least some of them are “third places” -places where people can just spend time.
- Local businesses work with schools to provide internships or part time jobs.

### **Ensure that public spaces are managed, programmed and continually improved. In great cities:**

- The public realm is managed to maximize community interaction and to facilitate public outcomes.
- Spaces are managed to provide opportunities for generations to mix.

## IMPLEMENTATION



### 9 Smart Growth Principle: Neighborhoods are the building blocks of cities.

Reinvest in urban neighborhoods by reinforcing the social networks that are at the core of neighborhood strength and vitality. Use community-building to bridge to capacity-building. Use neighborhood “empowerment” as an economic development tool.

#### Principle Nine Implementation

##### Organize!

The Northeast Side is by far the most well-organized area in the City of Milwaukee. Even so, there are areas, individuals and businesses, that are “left out” of any organized group or represented only by the local Alderman. By continuing to join existing groups or organize new merchants associations, business improvement districts, neighborhood associations, block clubs, and advocacy groups, neighbors and businesses can play a significant role in problem-solving and decision-making.

In partnership with the Northeast Side plan, there are three newly formed neighborhood associations, one new Business Improvement District, one additional Main Street organization, two new major coalitions of partners, and six active clusters in Harambee that are now part of the decision-making process.

##### Invest in neighborhood capacity-building.

The best Northeast Side plan example of this is the current Harambee Great Neighborhood Initiative which is drawing investment and cooperative effort from many partners: Thrivent for Lutherans, Habitat for Humanity, Riverworks, Harambee Ombudsman Project, ICRC, MLKEDC, LISC, King Drive BID, local churches, schools and many other community partners. Riverwest Neighborhood Association also has a long and active history of neighborhood involvement. Upper

East Side Neighborhoods also have a long history of activism and problem-solving that has led to betterment of neighborhoods in many different respects. These neighborhoods regularly work with the local Alderman to pass ordinances, lobby public officials, interact with large institutions in the area, to improve quality of life.

##### Use design standards, special districts, and overlay zones to preserve character.

Zoning is a broad-based application of land use principles that works for the majority of land uses in the city. Where there are special or unique situations, or districts, corridors and unique areas that need a more tailored and site-specific approach to urban design, the Northeast Side Plan recommends an additional layer of design standards (usually requiring a case-by-case review of all development proposals) to help that district, corridor or area preserve its character (“pattern language”), keep its most valuable assets, and meet its development goals. Design standards may be applied as part of an historic district, overlay district, redevelopment plan, or as a condition of approval in situations where public approval is required, e.g., a public investment or land sale will have conditions for approval.

##### Use Targeted Investment Neighborhoods (TINs) to reverse decline.

The Targeted Investment Neighborhood (TIN) program is a neighborhood revitalization strategy in which the City of Milwaukee, working with a neighborhood community partner, focuses resources in a relatively small area (6 to 12 city blocks) in an effort to stabilize and increase owner-occupancy, strengthen property values and improve the physical appearance of the neighborhood. The goal of the program is to reverse trends of disinvestment by improving the physical and social infrastructure of a neighborhood, improving its desirability as place to live, work and invest. The Northeast Side Plan currently has two active TINs, the Brooks TIN in the Bronzeville area, and the Harambee North TIN just underway. A TIN in the Holton Street area is recommended for consideration.

##### Use Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation (NIDC) programs.

For owner-occupants in TINs (see above description), NIDC administers low-interest rehabilitation loans and technical assistance. For landlords in TINs, NIDC offers forgivable loans for the rehabilitation of residential rental units of two or more bedrooms. NIDC also offers the Buy In Your Neighborhood Program, a special financing program that allows homeowners to purchase a rental property within a three block radius of the house where they live, for only a 10% down payment. NIDC’s Community Homes Program buys, rehabilitates, and resells homes for home ownership by low

## IMPLEMENTATION

and moderate-income families. NIDC includes in its production activity the building of affordable homes to promote and strengthen home ownership efforts in several Northeast Side neighborhoods.

### **Support neighborhood shopping districts.**

Urban neighborhoods must market to their strengths and reinforce one of the top reasons why people choose to live in urban areas—neighborhood shopping districts that have it all (sorted and stacked)—from book stores to bakeries, hardware to hipwear, specialty groceries to one-of-a-kind coffeehouses and diners—and have what you can't find at the mall, places with real personality and enduring appeal.

Neighborhood shopping districts within the Northeast Side are at varying levels of organization and development. Historic King Drive, Brady Street, East North Avenue, and Riverworks have successful Business Improvement Districts with a high level of participation from member organizations and successful track record in regard to obtaining and using resources. It may be desirable for the Northeast Side to form a partnership for collaboration and information sharing between all commercial districts, so that newly formed or organized districts may benefit from tried-and-true approaches and methodologies of older successful districts. Topics could range from business recruitment to public art to promotional events.



### **Strategically use Capital Improvements Programs (CIP).**

The City funds capital improvements to public rights-of-way, such as street repaving, which may be enhanced with lighting, landscaping, and special paving, usually in conjunction with significant private investment from special projects and/or on a cost-sharing basis with local property owners.

The Northeast Side plan has done successful streetscaping projects on North Avenue and King Drive. Most recently the City has installed new streetscaping treatment on Holton Street up to Center Street (the Northeast Side Plan recommends that this be continued to Riverworks). Major streetscape improvements are also planned for Bronzeville. Improvements are also being planned for King Drive north of

North Avenue to continue the economic momentum of the historic district northward to Locust Street.

### **Use targeted public improvement projects.**

The Department of City Development (DCD) has the ability to partner with neighborhood merchant groups and business improvement districts to make major improvements in commercial districts. Such improvements could include installation of harp lights, special paving materials at intersections, or public art improvements in the public way. Several Northeast Side business districts have implemented programs with considerable success, e.g. Historic King Drive, University Square, East Side BID.

### **Actively recruit businesses for commercial sites.**

Milwaukee's Northeast Side constitutes a strong market for retail development. Purchasing power profiles, developed by the UW-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute, are designed to help businesses, developers, and organizations assess their strengths and market the competitive advantages of urban density—particularly valuable for underserved city neighborhoods such as Harambee, Riverwest, UWM.

DCD provides a search tool for sites in neighborhood commercial districts to enable the real estate development process for companies or brokers (or investors) within or without the metro area.

Information necessary for business recruitment, such as traffic counts, retail rents and other data, is also available for the city's commercial districts.

### **Strategically use the Retail Investment Fund (RIF).**

The RIF funds high-impact retail development projects located in neighborhood business districts. The Northeast Side Plan recommends RIF funds for high-profile high-visibility catalytic projects in neighborhood business districts.

### **Use business development organizations and tools.**

The City of Milwaukee's Neighborhood Business Development Team, part of the Department of City Development (DCD), provides tools for neighborhood reinvestment that either are currently in use in business districts on the Northeast Side Plan or could be used for emerging Business Districts as follows:

### **Promote and support merchant associations.**

Local merchant groups represent many of Milwaukee's diverse neighborhood commercial areas. The Northeast Side Plan strongly recommends this for small business districts such as those in Riverwest that may not want the level of organization and tax assessment afforded by a Business Improvement District, but would appreciate the benefits of a

## IMPLEMENTATION

cooperative and mutually supportive association.

### Promote and support Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

Property owners in BIDs organize, plan and assess for streetscape, marketing, recruitment and other projects to enhance the local business environment. BIDs also work cooperatively to promote the district and address common problems. The Northeast Side Plan has many successful longstanding BIDs (Riverworks, King Drive, Oakland Avenue, East North Ave. and Brady Street). The most recent is the Downer Avenue BID. The Northeast Side Plan recommends this approach for most commercial districts.

### Invest in Main Street Milwaukee programs.

The Main Street Program designed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation is possibly the most successful redevelopment program in the country. Milwaukee has four pilot programs and recently added Historic King Drive to that group. Main Street Milwaukee is a comprehensive asset-building approach to increasing investment, new businesses, jobs, and wealth in urban commercial districts. The central organizing principles (Main Street Four Points) are:

1. Preservation and Design (often centered on adaptive reuse of historic and contributing buildings in a historic district)
2. Organization (businesses “on the street” working cooperatively)
3. Economic Restructuring (small businesses staying competitive with giant competitors like Wal-Mart and Target)
4. Marketing (continuum of promotional events)

### Use Façade Grant programs to improve commercial districts.

DCD administers a façade grant program to strengthen the attractiveness and market appeal of neighborhood commercial districts. In addition to façade improvements, businesses are encouraged to make all aspects of the business customer and pedestrian-friendly. The heaviest use of the program within the Northeast Side Plan Side is Historic King Drive and Brady Street which have combined façade grants with major renovations. The Northeast Side Plan recommends extending this “success story” to Bronzeville and northward on King Drive, and to the west end of Brady Street.

### Use CRAG as a resource.

The Commercial Revitalization Affinity Group (CRAG) is a professional network for people who work to revitalize commercial districts in southeastern Wisconsin. The network

is open to nonprofit economic development practitioners, government employees, and members of the private sector, such as real estate brokers, architects and business owners. CRAG meets monthly for training and networking events on topics such as: Environmental Design and Safety; Commercial District Purchasing Power; Visual Merchandising and Window Display Techniques; Alternative Financing for Small Business; Forming a Business Improvement District (BID); Forming a Business Improvement District (BID); Fundraising for Commercial Revitalization Efforts; and Organizing Neighbors to Fight Nuisances.



### 10 Smart Growth Principle: Promote Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND).

The following description is from “TND Papers”: *A new urban neighborhood (also known as traditional neighborhood development, or TND) is created at the human scale. Buildings are placed closer together and exteriors are designed to be safe and attractive for pedestrians. Streets are constructed for slower speeds and traffic is dispersed through many different connections. Walking in front of a business or around town is simply a pleasant, interesting activity.*

#### Principle Ten Implementation

#### Make all parts of the city pedestrian-friendly

Cities are for people. Good cities are pedestrian-friendly. In terms of the public realm, this means that daily needs (e.g., groceries, hardware, pharmacy, etc.) and transit stops are within a five to ten minute walk of where most people live, that most neighborhoods are walk-to-work, most paths and sidewalks are well-landscaped (hardscape and natural), most destinations are well-connected by sidewalks or des-

## IMPLEMENTATION

ignated walkways, and that pedestrian needs are placed before those of automobiles (for an example of this, see Lower East Side chapter discussion of curb cut restrictions).

The Northeast Side Plan advocates that all new development be evaluated for walkability and impacts on pedestrians. For building design, this means welcoming engaging storefronts in commercial districts, generous windows and front porches in residential areas, and modern or retrofit workplaces designed for daylighting and energy efficiency in manufacturing areas. For parks, this means a connected system of trails.

### **Use design standards, special districts, overlay zones to promote good urban design.**

Promote traditional neighborhood development (TND) and good urban design throughout the city with design standards, special districts and overlay zones that enhance the public realm, ensure high quality architectural design, and integrate land use for efficiency, economy and interconnectedness.

### **Promote New Urbanist policies and strategies for new development.**

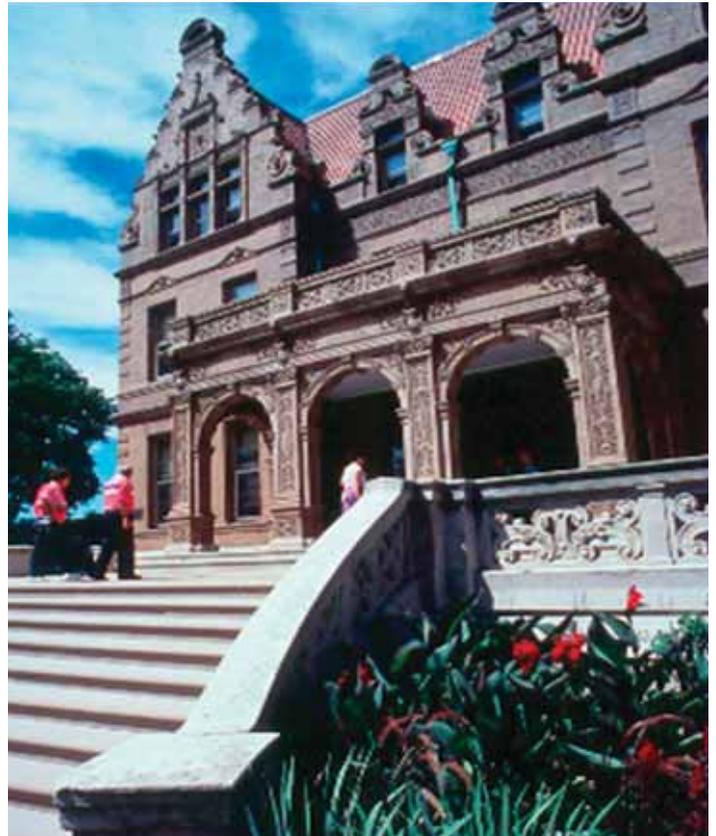
The Land Use Policies and Strategies described in Northeast Side Plan Chapter 3 promote (for all areas), development that is mixed use (on a neighborhood scale), compact and walkable. Based on new urbanist principles, they reinforce traditional neighborhood development (TND) design standards of efficiency, economy and interconnectedness.

These Land Use Policies and Strategies also describe by land use category, specific approaches to achieving well-integrated pedestrian-oriented districts and corridors, preserving the character and purpose of special districts with unique or “signature” design features, conserving what is desirable and marketable about neighborhoods, conserving irreplaceable environmental resources, and implementing efficient sustainable strategies for urban growth and redevelopment

### **Carefully apply general Plan Development and Detailed Plan Development to achieve good urban design.**

Zoning is a broad-based application of land use principles that works for the majority of land uses in the city. Where there are special or unique situations, or districts, corridors and unique areas that need a more tailored and site-specific approach to urban design, the Northeast Side Plan recommends an additional layer of design standards (usually requiring a case-by-case review of all development proposals) to help that district, corridor or area preserve its character (“pattern language”), keep its most valuable assets, and meet its development goals.

This custom zoning is called a General Plan Development (GPD) at the level of overall land use, and a Detailed Plan Development (DPD) at the level of construction documents for buildings and site design. For these to work successfully, the city must actively seek neighborhood input in both the design and development stages of GPDs and DPDs.



### **11 Smart Growth Principle: Preserve historic buildings, sites and districts.**

Preserve historic buildings, sites and districts as part of the core value of cities and central to the experience of urban places. All urban areas have a unique history, many with outstanding or landmark features—geographic, natural and historic. Most are irreplaceable. Be proactive about designating, maintaining, and keeping them “alive” through adaptive reuse. Consider them to be as worthy of management as financial assets (stocks, bonds, etc.) in a community investment portfolio.

#### **Principle Eleven Implementation**

##### **Be proactive about preservation**

As one of Milwaukee’s original settlement areas, the Northeast Side Plan has the largest concentration of historic buildings and districts, both Local Landmark and National

## IMPLEMENTATION

Register of Historic Places, of any part of the city. Even so, there are still many eligible buildings without designation (listed by chapter) and districts with no one to advocate for them. Harambee may have the least designated historic-eligible building stock. The Murray Hill neighborhood (due to absentee landlord clusters near the UWM main campus) may have the most threatened or “at risk” building stock. The Northeast Side Plan plan has made several recommendations for a more proactive approach to these and other Northeast Side Plan neighborhoods.

### **Identify, adapt, enhance, support historic districts, streets, sites, and buildings.**

The Department of City Development’s Historic Preservation staff identifies and researches historic buildings (with assistance from Milwaukee County Historical Commission, consultants and community partners), makes recommendations for adaptive reuse and building alterations, and works with advocacy groups such as Milwaukee Preservation Alliance, heritage groups such as Historic Milwaukee, and neighborhood groups such as Water Tower Landmark Trust to restore and revitalize historic assets. Relative to the number of historic districts and buildings within the Northeast Side Plan area, i.e., the enormity of the task, this area is understaffed and under resourced. The Northeast Side Plan recommends that additional resources be sought in light of the economic value of these properties to the city.



### **12 Smart Growth Principle: Approach regional issues regionally.**

Planning for large-impact issues, such as transportation, environmental conservation, workforce development, education, business development and retention, and housing needs, can only be done with regional cooperation and collaboration. Only then will this region be able to capitalize on its assets and support economic growth.

#### **Principle Ten Implementation**

Build on Milwaukee 7 (M7) Strategies: The Milwaukee 7, launched in September 2005, is the metropolitan planning group made up of top level elected officials and community leaders from the seven counties of southeastern Wisconsin: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Waukesha and Washington. M7 was formed around the core idea that a regional, cooperative economic development platform is needed to enhance the competitiveness to the region.

The recommendations of the Northeast Side Plan are consistent with the Milwaukee Seven (M7) strategies for the metro region and the City of Milwaukee’s Economic Development Strategy and Policy Framework: (1) To attract, retain and grow diverse businesses and talent; (2) To grow, expand and attract existing export driver industries and emerging business clusters; (3) To be globally competitive in an innovation economy.

The Northeast Side Plan recommends a masterplan for the Riverworks Industrial Center that incorporates the above M7 regional planning strategies. In addition, the Northeast Side Plan recommends that Glendale and Riverworks Industrial Centers become more unified and promoted as an economic unit. In addition the Northeast Side Plan recommends that express transit linking downtown Milwaukee to the

## IMPLEMENTATION

Glendale and Riverworks Industrial Centers be implemented as workers-to-jobs economic development strategy.

Aligned with emerging opportunities identified by M7 and the City's Economic Development Policy Plan, the Northeast Side Plan recommends expansion of UWM's creative partnerships with local employers, UWM's Schools and programs, e.g. biomedical technology research at a new School of Public Health; freshwater research at the UWM Great Lakes Water Institute; research and product design in "next generation" manufacturing at a new or expanded School of Engineering; and community learning in partnership with the School of Continuing Education located downtown at the Grand Avenue campus.

### **Make local strengths a regional asset**

The Northeast Side Plan like the M7, takes an asset-building approach to development; in some cases preserving place-based assets such as the Milwaukee River to maintain its value for the community; and in other cases redeveloping assets such as underperforming or under-used portions of districts and corridors, e.g., the East Side BID's "west end," Bronzeville, Holton Street, and King Drive north of North Avenue.

The Northeast Side Plan also recommends support and expansion of community assets such as the Urban Ecology Center, Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, Northcott Neighborhood House, Heartlove Place, America's Black Holocaust Museum, Woodland Pattern Book Center, Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin, Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, and many many others too numerous to mention.

In all cases, the Northeast Side Plan recommends making targeted and catalytic investments that build on the great asset of Milwaukee's neighborhoods, special districts, historic buildings and streets.