

MILWAUKEE *comprehensive* Plan

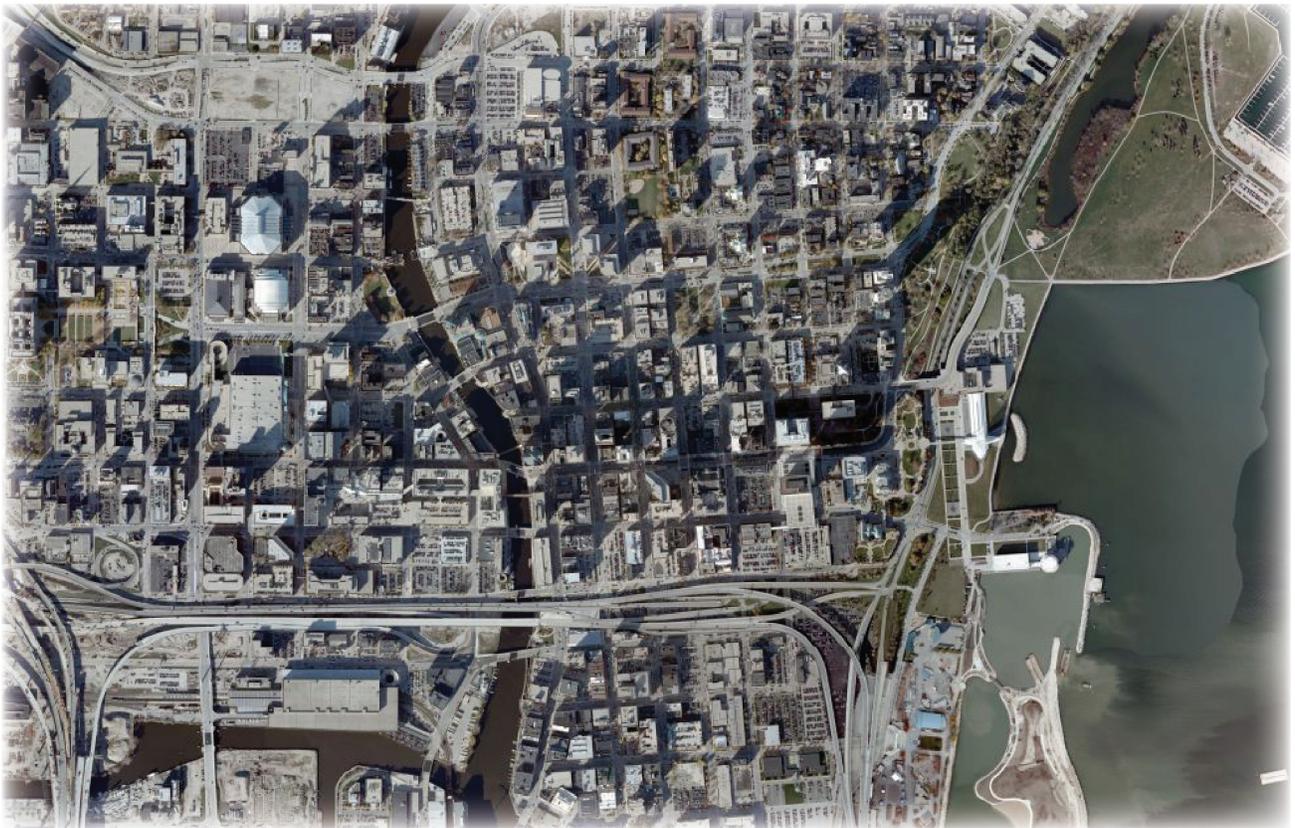
DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT
OCTOBER, 2010

Downtown

A Plan for the Area

Chapter Two - Background Information and the Plan Process

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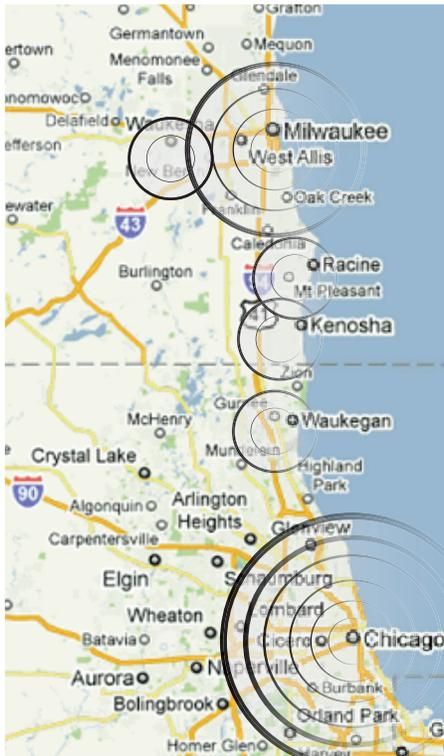


Chapter 2 Plan Context and the Plan Process

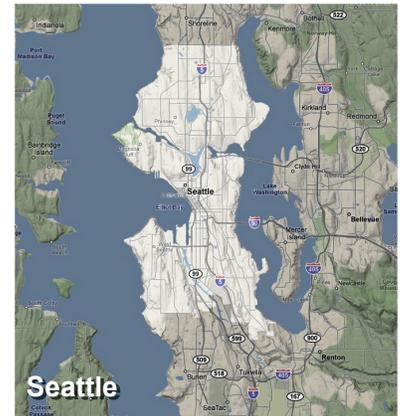
Physical and Demographic Description of Downtown

The creation of this Downtown Plan, while partly guided by current and emerging contextual issues, was at the same time framed by the physical make-up and existing conditions of Downtown.

Geographic Context. Located on the western edge of Lake Michigan, 90 miles north of Chicago, the city of Milwaukee is the largest city in the state of Wisconsin. With an estimated 2008 population of 604,000, Milwaukee, in terms of population, is the 23rd largest city in the United States. For comparison sake, Milwaukee is sandwiched between Boston (22nd) and Denver (24th) in population rankings and more populous than the municipalities of Atlanta (538,000), Seattle (599,000), and Washington D.C. (592,000).



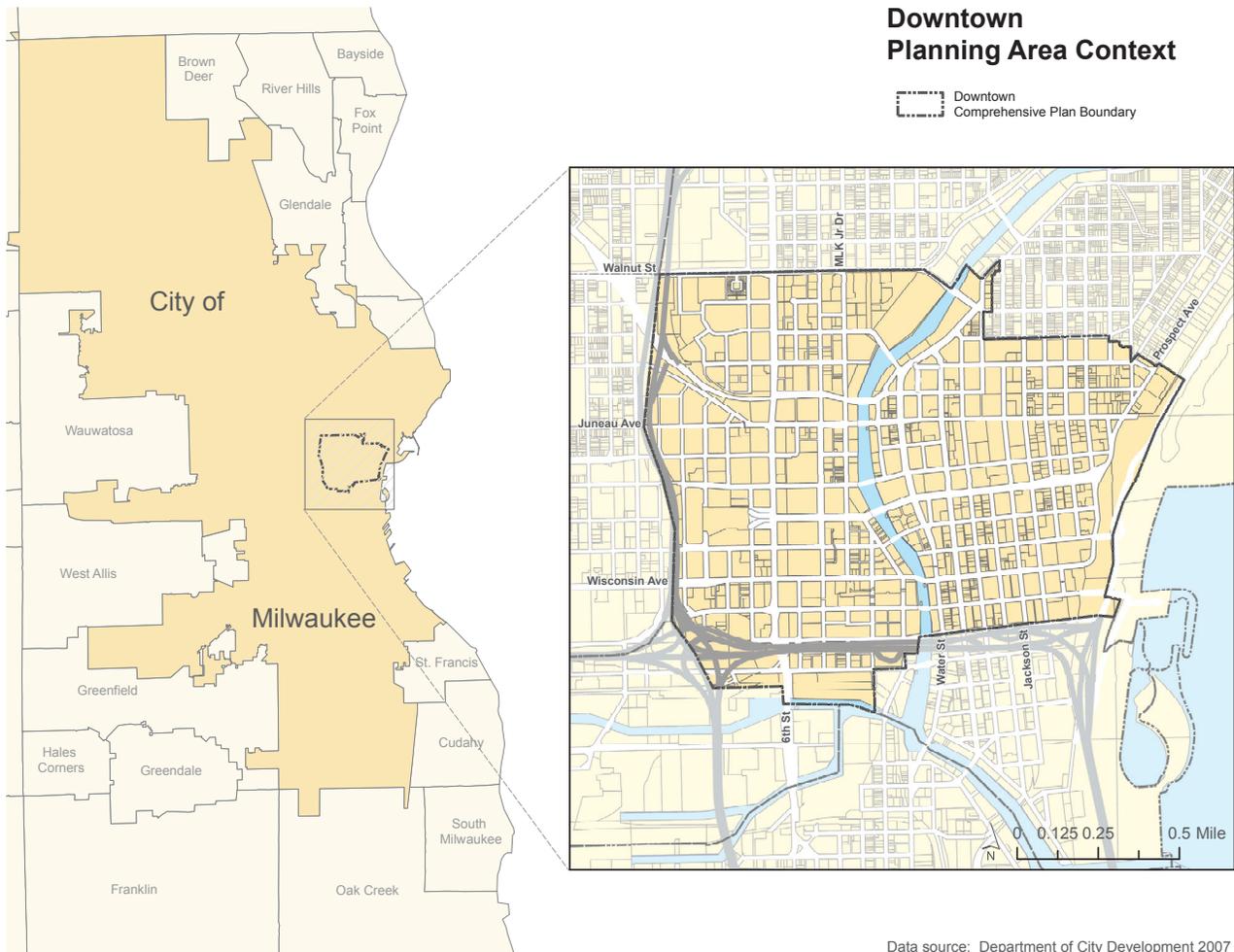
Map of southeast Wisconsin and northern Illinois



Simple comparison of similar sized cities in terms of area and population.

The city of Milwaukee is the hub of the Milwaukee MSA, comprised of four counties – Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington. The approximate 2008 population of this area is 1.5 million persons – making the Milwaukee MSA the 39th most populous MSA in the United States. As a comparison, the Milwaukee metro area is similar in size to the Nashville (38th) and the Jacksonville, FLA (40th) MSA's.

Downtown Milwaukee is an area of approximately 1,000 acres. For this plan, Downtown is bordered on the north by Walnut, Pleasant, and Lyon Streets; on the south by the Menomonee River and Clybourn St; on the east by Lincoln Memorial Drive; and on the west by Interstate 43.



Geographically, Downtown is split nearly equally into two halves by the Milwaukee River. The eastern half is adjacent to the Lakefront and is primarily dominated by its residential and office land uses. It is characterized by its original small-block grid system and corresponding building stock of older and historic structures, mid and high-rise condominium and office buildings, and low-rise apartments. The western half is notable for its large-scale blocks and building forms. The majority of the metro area's predominant entertainment and civic uses are located in the western portion of Downtown including the convention center, sports and music venues, and the Milwaukee County government complex highlighted by the neo-Classical Milwaukee County Courthouse, as well as the Milwaukee Public Museum and Milwaukee Public Library. Marquette University adjoins Downtown to the west.



The Milwaukee River is the seam between east and west Downtown

Plan Context – Historical Development

Milwaukee’s first permanent, non-native resident was Solomon Juneau, who established his residence and trading post in 1822 in the vicinity of Wisconsin Avenue and Water Street. Over 180 years later this intersection is still considered the center of Downtown Milwaukee.

In 1835, following a number of treaties with Native American tribes, the U.S. government acquired, surveyed, and platted lands for the eventual European and Yankee settlement of Milwaukee. The surveying and platting led to the development of three distinct towns by three different land speculators and developers – Solomon Juneau and Byron Kilbourn developing Juneautown on the east side of the Milwaukee River, Kilbourntown on the west side, and George Walker establishing the south side with Walker’s Point. Milwaukee was literally divided from its inception.



Photo credit: UWM

Water Street, late 19th Century.

Water Street is Milwaukee’s oldest street and was originally developed between Wisconsin Avenue and Clybourn Street with a grid that also incorporated parts of Broadway, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Clybourn Streets. Along these streets the city’s main commercial and financial center developed and supporting retail and services soon followed. This district is home to the city’s largest collection of historic and iconic buildings – the Iron Block (1860), Mitchell (1877), Mackie (1879), Loyalty (1886), and Grain Exchange (1900) buildings along with many other turn of the century commercial buildings primarily along Water and Broadway streets.

The northern end of Water Street, near Knapp and Juneau, developed differently from the south end. Whereas the south was the established business and finance hub, the north end was a collection of taverns and an early red light district. The bawdy uses no longer exist but this portion of Water Street is considered to be one of Downtown’s primary bar and nightclub centers to this day.



Photo credit: UWM

Wisconsin Avenue (Grand Avenue), circa 1880’s.

A market district formed around what is now City Hall, extending west, across the Milwaukee River to Plankinton and 2nd Streets. This market district, taking its name from the city’s first market house evolved into an unofficial town “square” due to a platting accident that formed a triangle of land between Plankinton, Wells, and 2nd streets. Between the market place and town square, retail, entertainment, and supporting services followed. A second story tenant in the market hall was forced to move when it was decided to construct city hall (1893) on that site. The tenant, a German language theater and opera company, moved across the street to the present day Pabst Theater in 1895 and established Wells and Market streets as a Downtown theater district.

On the west side of the river, in Kilbourntown, a primarily German enclave was established around what is now Old World 3rd Street and Juneau Avenue. This early German influence can be seen today in Mader's German restaurant and Usinger's sausage company. Except for the preserved row of small storefront buildings along Old World Third Street, the smaller-scale development in Kilbourntown was gradually replaced with larger commercial buildings served by elevators and subsequent development of numerous assembly buildings that are in use today.

Wisconsin Avenue, west of the river, was one of the last original areas of early Milwaukee to develop commercially. In 1840 the first bridge to connect the two sides of Wisconsin Avenue was constructed spurring new development. By the 1880's the western portion of Wisconsin Avenue, named Grand Avenue, was considered to be the city's premier retail district. A change to larger-scale, department store retailing ensued at the turn of the century and with the advent of the cinema in the 1920's, led to the construction of movie palaces including the remaining Grand and Riverside theaters.

The earliest residents came to Milwaukee primarily from the East Coast and New England and settled on the high ground on the northeast edge of Downtown, primarily between the 1840's and the 1910's. This area became known as Yankee Hill. Today its Yankee roots can be found in the neighborhood streets, named after prominent New England financial and political figures: Astor, Van Buren, Mason, and Cass.



Usingers, Old World Third Street



Photo credit: UWM

Jackson Street and Juneau Streets, Circa 1885.



West Wisconsin Avenue today

Plan Context – Current and Emerging Issues and Trends



Downtowns require attractions for all age groups



Shanghai/Pudong skyline

Photo credit: Wikipedia



Manpower International headquarters

Fast forwarding to the 21st Century, since the adoption of the 1999 Downtown Plan much has changed both locally and globally that has a direct impact on the future of Downtown Milwaukee. Indeed, many of these changes were not anticipated in 1999, nor could they have been. In this regard taking a step back and examining recent trends provides an opportunity to identify the implications for Downtown from this point forward.

Demographics. The local and national populations resemble a bow-tie, demographically speaking. The two largest population cohorts are the young, “Millennials” born between 1980 and 1992; there are about 70 million Millennials in the country. Their parents, the Baby Boomers, were born between 1946 and 1964 and constitute 75-80 million, each year adding 5 million persons to the “Empty Nester” population of parents whose children have moved away to start their own households. The knot of the bow-tie is Generation X (born between 1965 and 1979) at 35 million. Trends and demographic research indicates the Millennials are marrying later, if at all, and the Boomers are living and working longer. Both of these cohorts will have a lasting impact on Downtown living. Both groups are willing to be mobile and a significant number prefer urban/downtown living –provided the downtowns offer reasons to locate there. Not surprisingly, a 2009 study by UWM on who is actually living in downtown Milwaukee shows that Boomers and Millennials comprise the majority of residents moving to Downtown in the past few years. To retain them Downtown must offer a wider array of housing, cultural and social amenities, and an overall high degree of livability, resulting in an increasing variety of activities connected by an attractive pedestrian realm flowing with foot traffic – the lifeblood of any vibrant Downtown.

Globalization. The last decade has witnessed an explosion in a world economy that has created an international middle-class, most notably in China and India. The existence of billions of individuals in Asia and SE Asia acquiring the means to purchase electronics, cars, and new housing has strained construction and petroleum resources. The impacts on American urban and suburban development trends are still being sorted out. Will high fuel and materials costs signal a noticeable slowing of outward suburbanization? Conversely, will urban centers benefit from such a land use contraction? In light of a possible contraction, cities and downtowns will need to plan and react accordingly, by maximizing and building upon existing infrastructure, becoming more sustainable, and drawing upon higher densities to create enjoyable places of interaction and investment.

Housing. Ten years ago few anticipated the threat, severity and ramifications of the recent bursting of the real estate bubble and the ripples it would create throughout the rest of the local, national, and global economy. Continued Downtown growth and expansion now must take place in a context of diminished real estate values and increased restrictions on credit availability.

Water. Fresh water is becoming scarce and more valuable as a resource and commodity. Milwaukee has access to a virtually unlimited supply of fresh water. Milwaukee can and should benefit culturally, recreationally, and also economically from this reality and its implications that are now just starting to come into sharper focus.

Transit. Due primarily to political and economic changes since 1999, expanding modes of transit Downtown and throughout the region is becoming more of a reality than at any time in over a generation. A combination of successful referenda, federal stimulus spending, and a frightening spike in oil and gas prices has increased the broader acceptance of mass transit projects in recent years. In 2008, Milwaukee County voters approved an increase in the sales tax for transit and parks improvement and the creation of a regional transit authority to fund a Downtown streetcar, expanded bus lines, and the introduction of bus rapid transit throughout Milwaukee County. In 2009, Congress and the Obama Administration, partly in response to the near-collapse of the financial and real estate markets and ensuing recession, approved \$8 billion for high-speed rail, including a route connecting Chicago-Milwaukee-Madison, and the Twin Cities. The Wisconsin Legislature also examined funding for extending commuter rail service from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee.



New condominium development along Milwaukee's lakefront



Downtown Milwaukee lakefront



Milwaukee County Transit System bus



Seattle streetcar

Photo credit: Wikipedia



UW-Milwaukee and the YMCA occupy space in the Grand Avenue complex

UWM. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has been steadily expanding both its research capabilities and its physical plant in recent years. This ensuing growth will include a new UWM school located in downtown Milwaukee – a newly created Joseph J. Zilber School of Public Health.

Lakefront. Two significant additions to the Milwaukee Lakefront were developed Downtown following the 1999 plan: the addition to the Milwaukee Art Museum, designed by Santiago Calatrava and the Discovery World museum just south of the Calatrava addition. These two developments have generated the most activity on Milwaukee’s lakefront since Summerfest, setting the stage for greater transit and pedestrian improvements to better accommodate and connect these and future projects.

The Marquette interchange / 794. In 2004 work began on re-constructing the Marquette freeway interchange, extending from the southwestern edge of Downtown Milwaukee to the Milwaukee River, just west of Water Street. The tightening of the “spaghetti” network freed up eight vacant right-of-way parcels Downtown and will allow for significant development opportunities with further re-struction of I-794 between the Lakefront and the Third Ward.



Milwaukee Art Museum grounds

Bradley Center. The Downtown’s most popular entertainment venue and the home of the NBA Milwaukee Bucks, the Bradley Center, was constructed in 1988 and is now in need of major renovation or replacement altogether. The relevant questions associated with the Bradley Center revolve around its current location, a possible future location, and how associated and adjacent programming will catalyze improvements to both the Bradley Center and Downtown.



Aerial image of the Marquette interchange and downtown Milwaukee

Photo credit: Bing

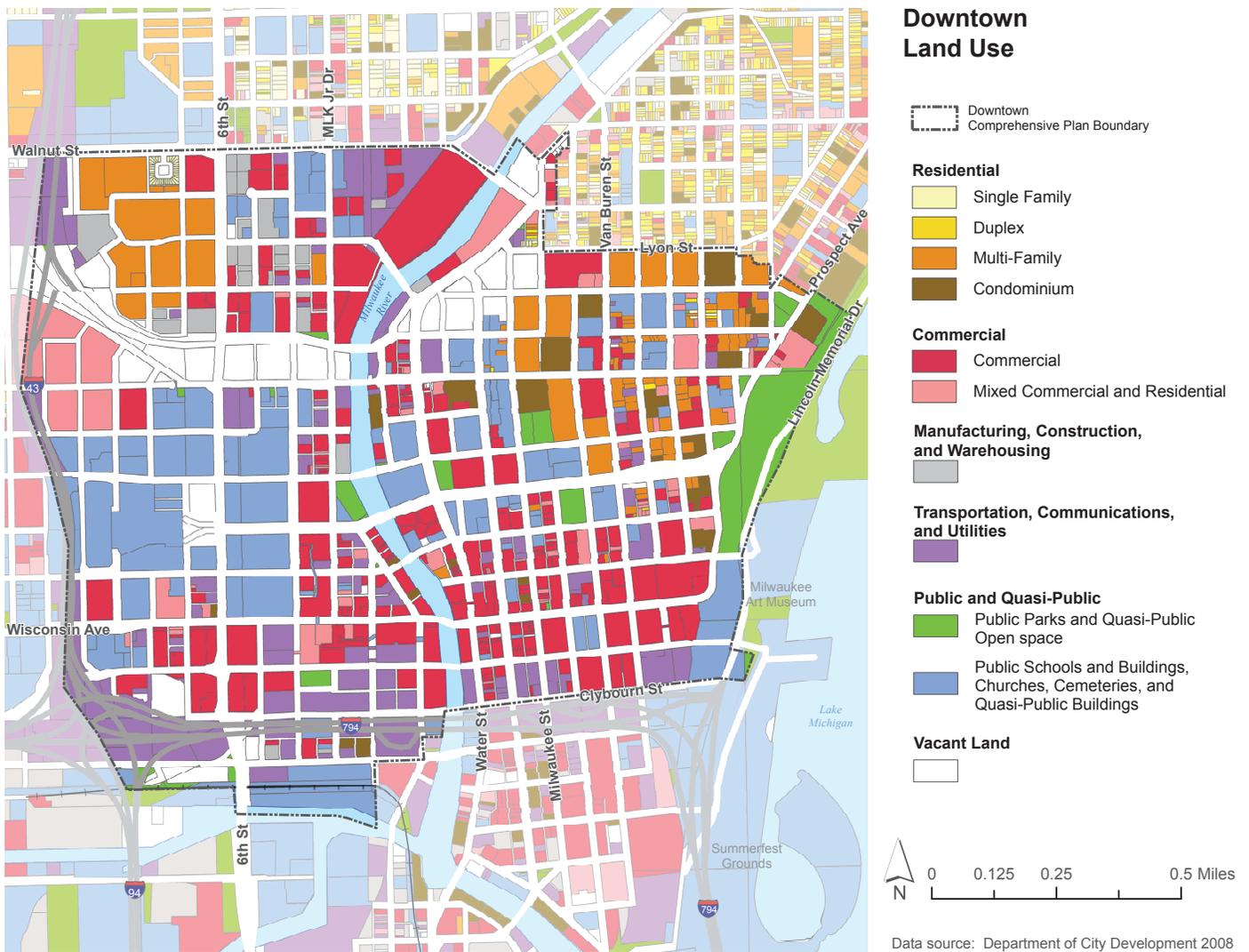


The Bradley Center

Existing Conditions

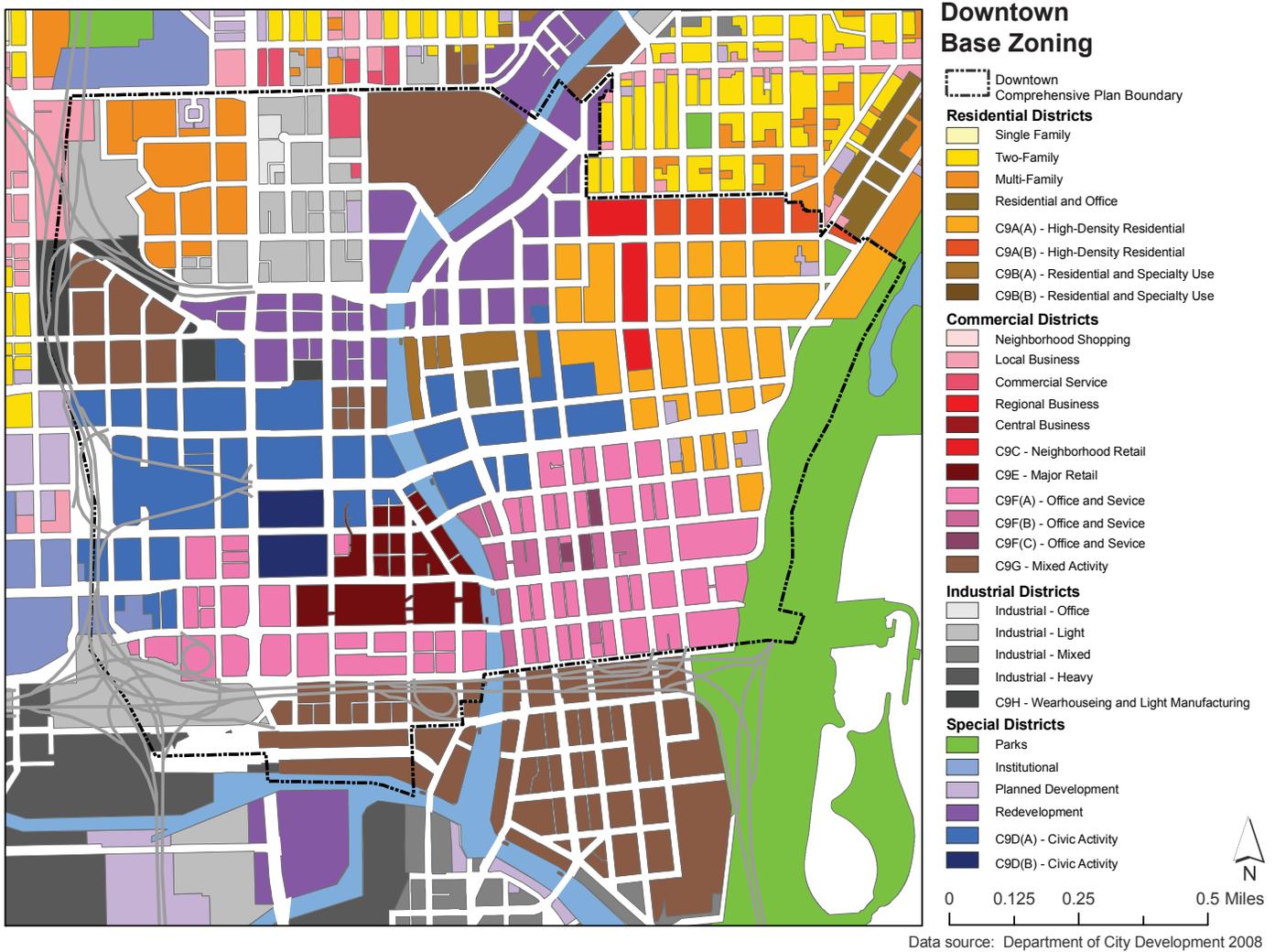
Land Use Map

The dominant land use category Downtown is commercial, which is comprised of office, retail, and supporting services. Civic and government uses are the next prominent land use, particularly on the west side of Downtown. Additional land uses include parks and open space along the lakefront, the predominantly residential northeast quadrant, surface and structured parking lots, street rights-of-way, and vacant space in the former Park East freeway corridor.



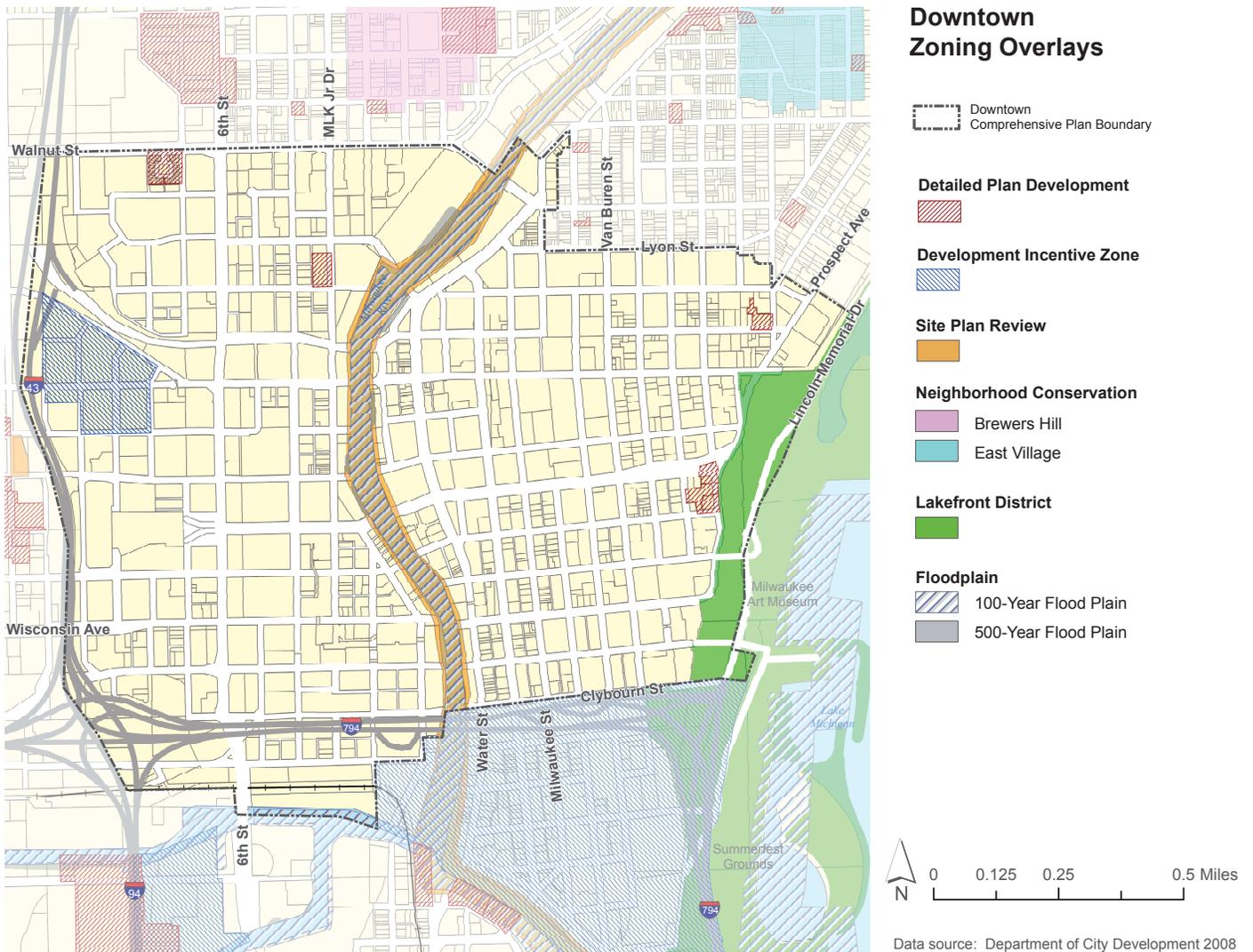
Zoning Map

The downtown area is primarily zoned “Central Business District” Zoning, with exception of the northwest portion of the plan area, the Park East redevelopment area, and a few small planned development areas. While the Central Business District zoning encompasses the majority of the area, that broader zoning category is divided into 13 specific sub-districts, each with its own “Use” and “Design” standards. The design standards include complex Floor Area Ratio limitations on maximum building size. Minimum parking requirements are not required in the Central Business District except for in the C9A District. The zoning districts in the northwest portion of the plan accommodate mostly residential and light industrial uses.



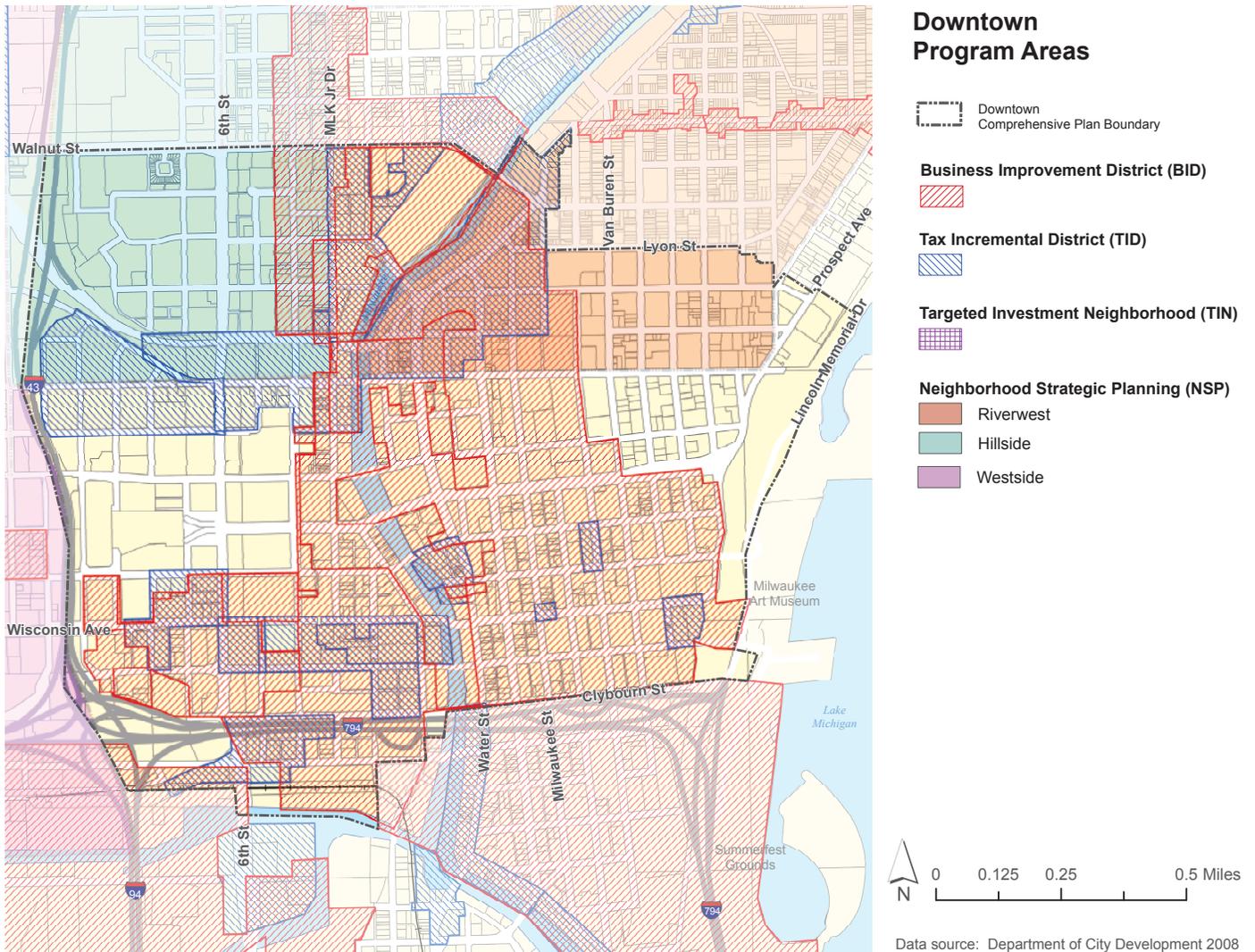
Overlays Map

Overlay districts currently in Downtown are the Riverwalk, various planned developments, primarily large residential projects; the Pabst brewery redevelopment; and the Lakefront.



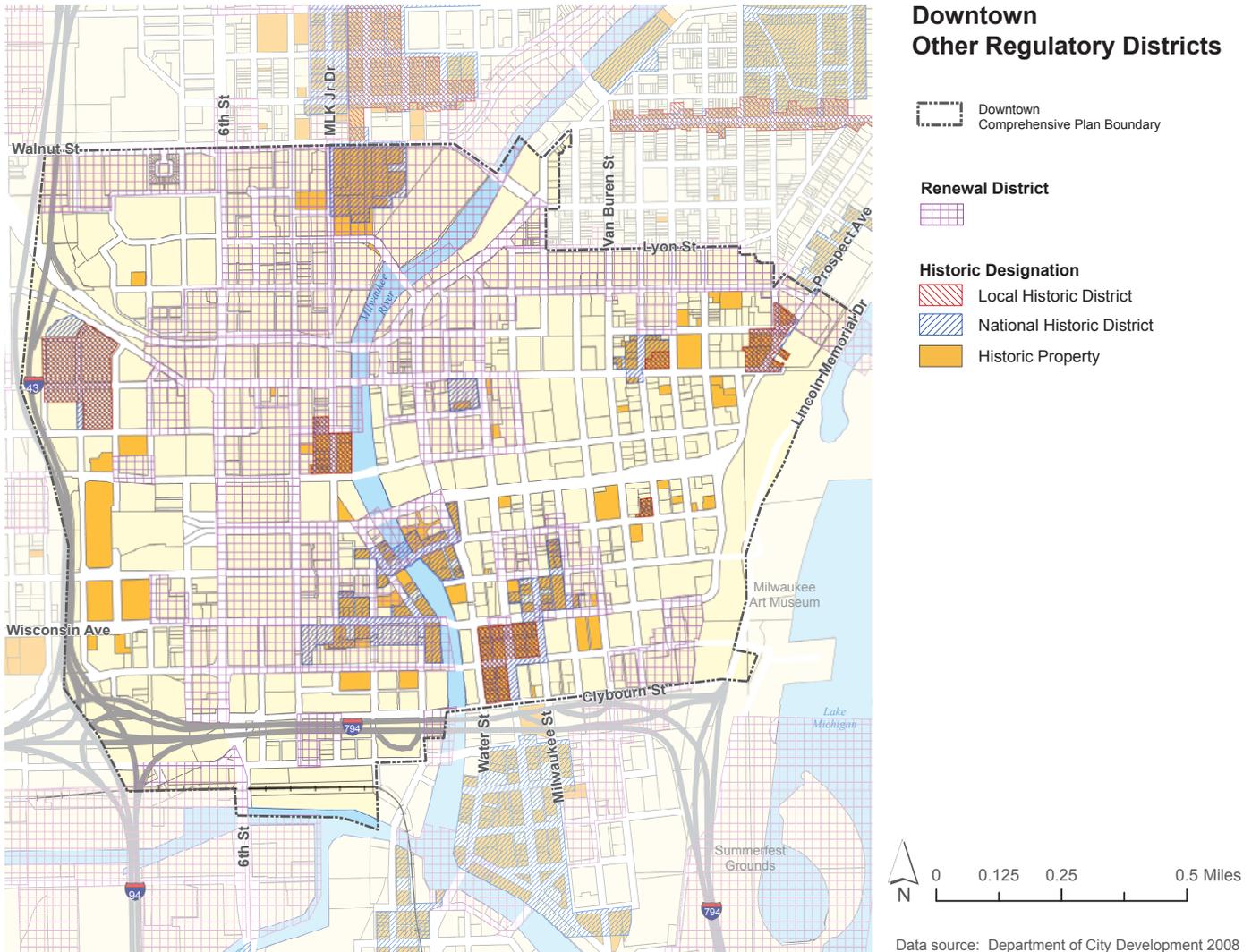
Program Areas

Program Areas are special districts that are either financed or governed by a separate set of policies or regulations. Examples of program areas include tax increment finance districts, business improvement districts, and Community Development Block Grant eligible areas. Downtown Milwaukee contains each of these types of program areas: the Downtown and MLK Drive BID's; the Pabst, Park East, Library Hill, Grand Avenue, Intermodel; Cathedral Square and Roundy's TIF Districts; and the Hillside and Riverside CDBG NSP areas.



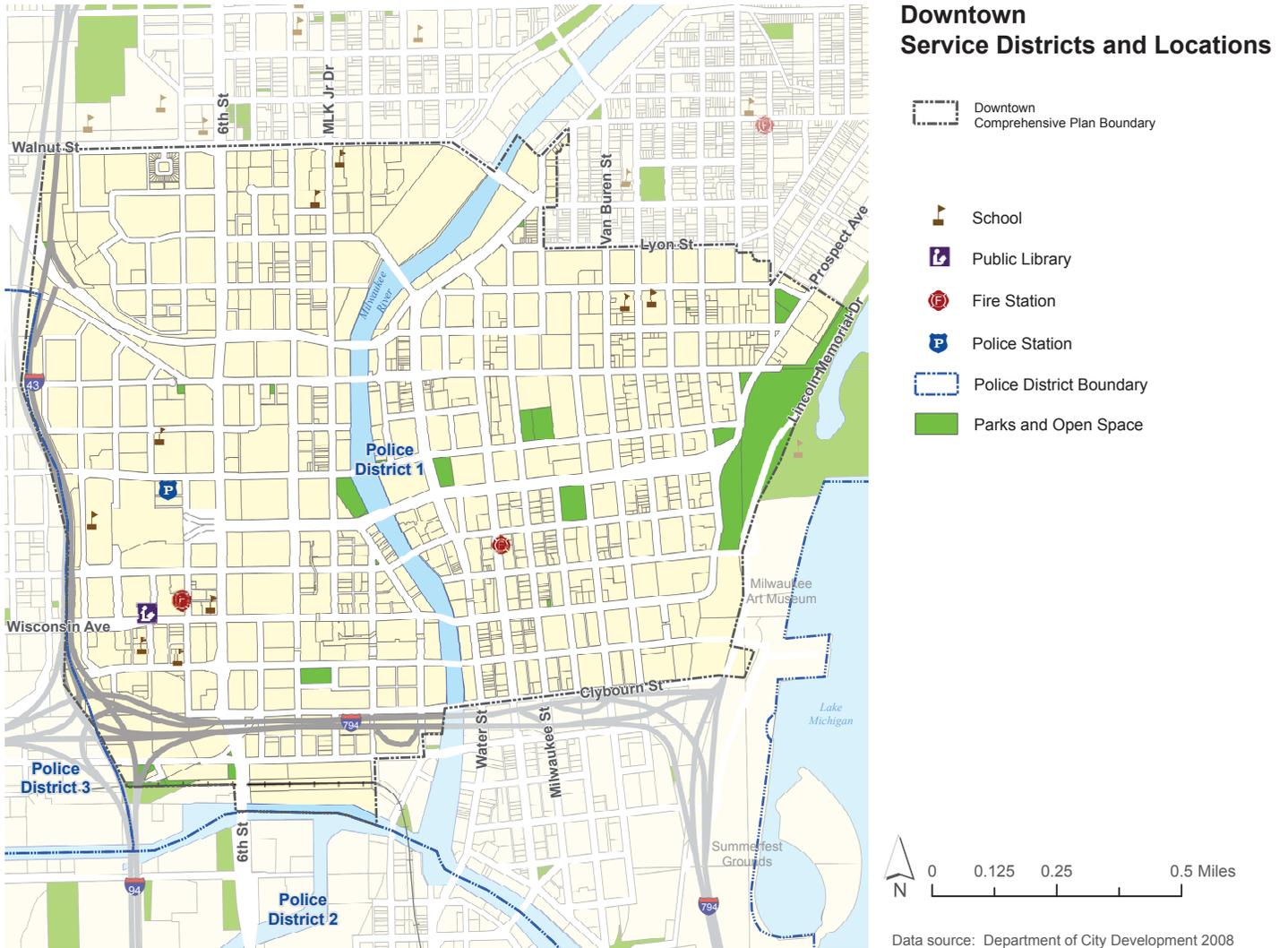
Regulatory Districts

Regulatory Districts are areas that, due to a unique use or character, require additional protections or guidelines not included in the base zoning regulations. Downtown Milwaukee has two regulatory district types: a Renewal District for blighted or under-developed areas and Historic Districts, which includes City Hall, Pabst Theater, Postman Square, the arcade portion of the Shops of Grand Avenue, the collection of historic buildings in the Broadway / Michigan area, and several scattered sites in the old Yankee Hill district.



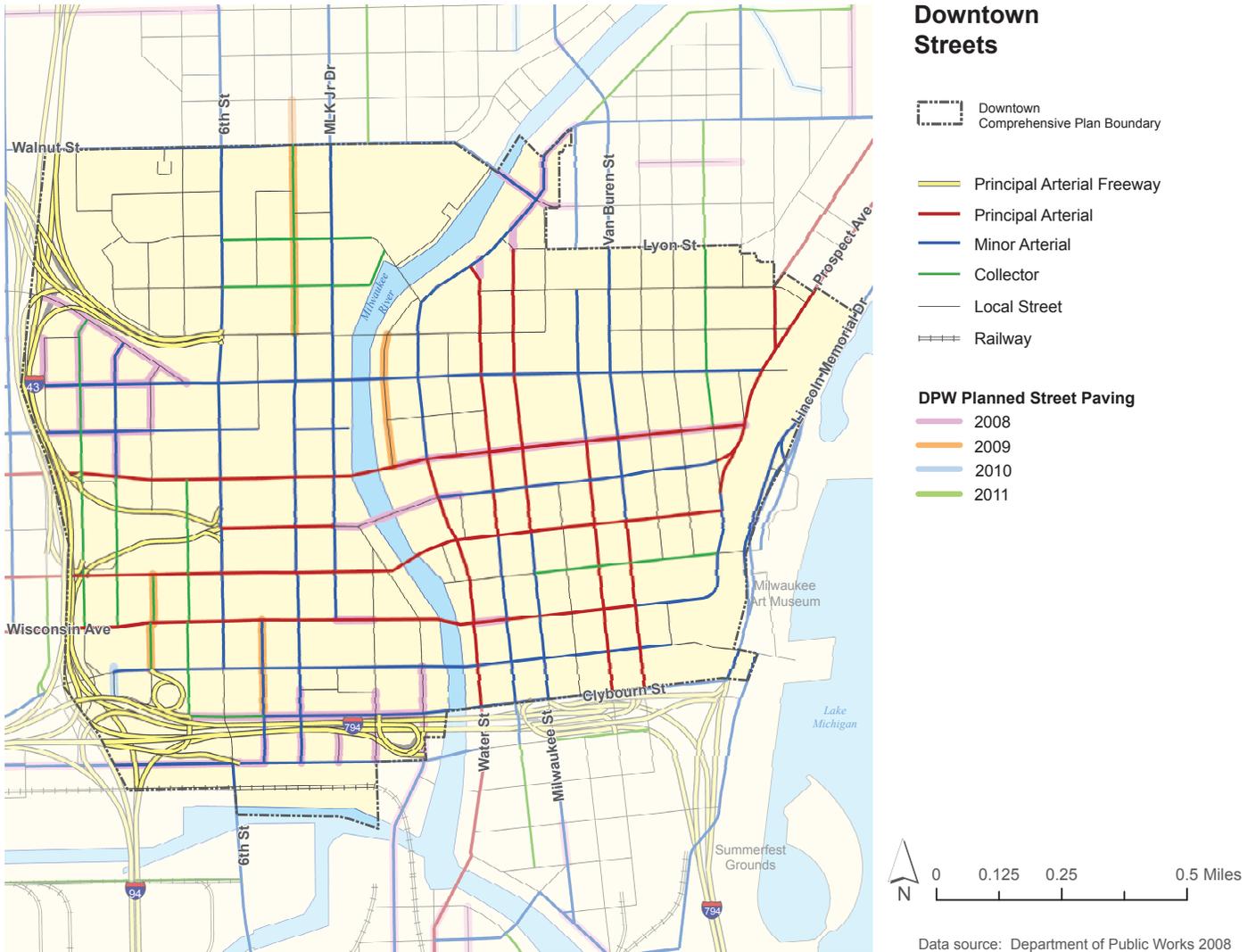
Service Districts

Service Districts are locations within which public services and civic uses are provided, such as police and fire stations, libraries, schools, and parks.



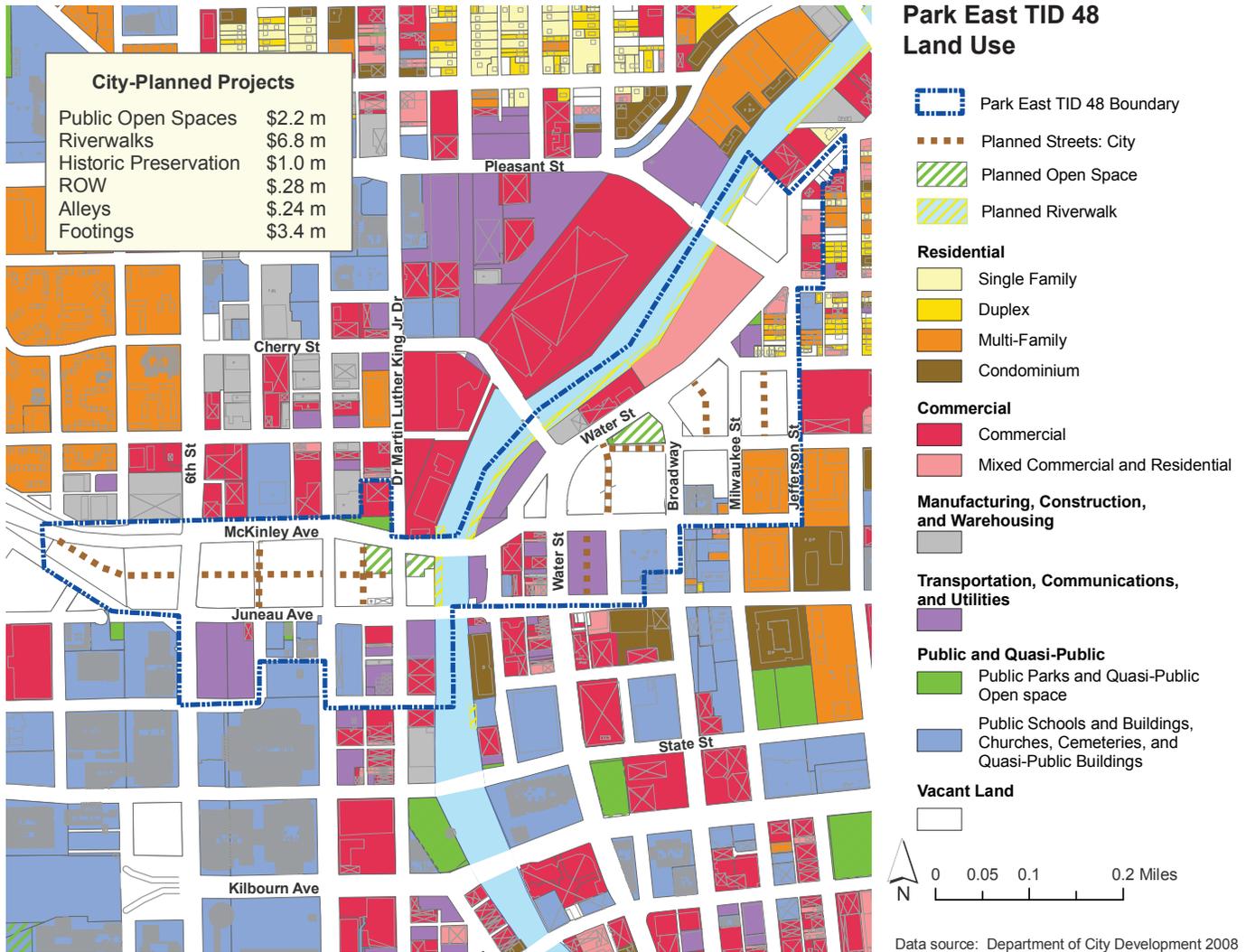
Downtown Streets

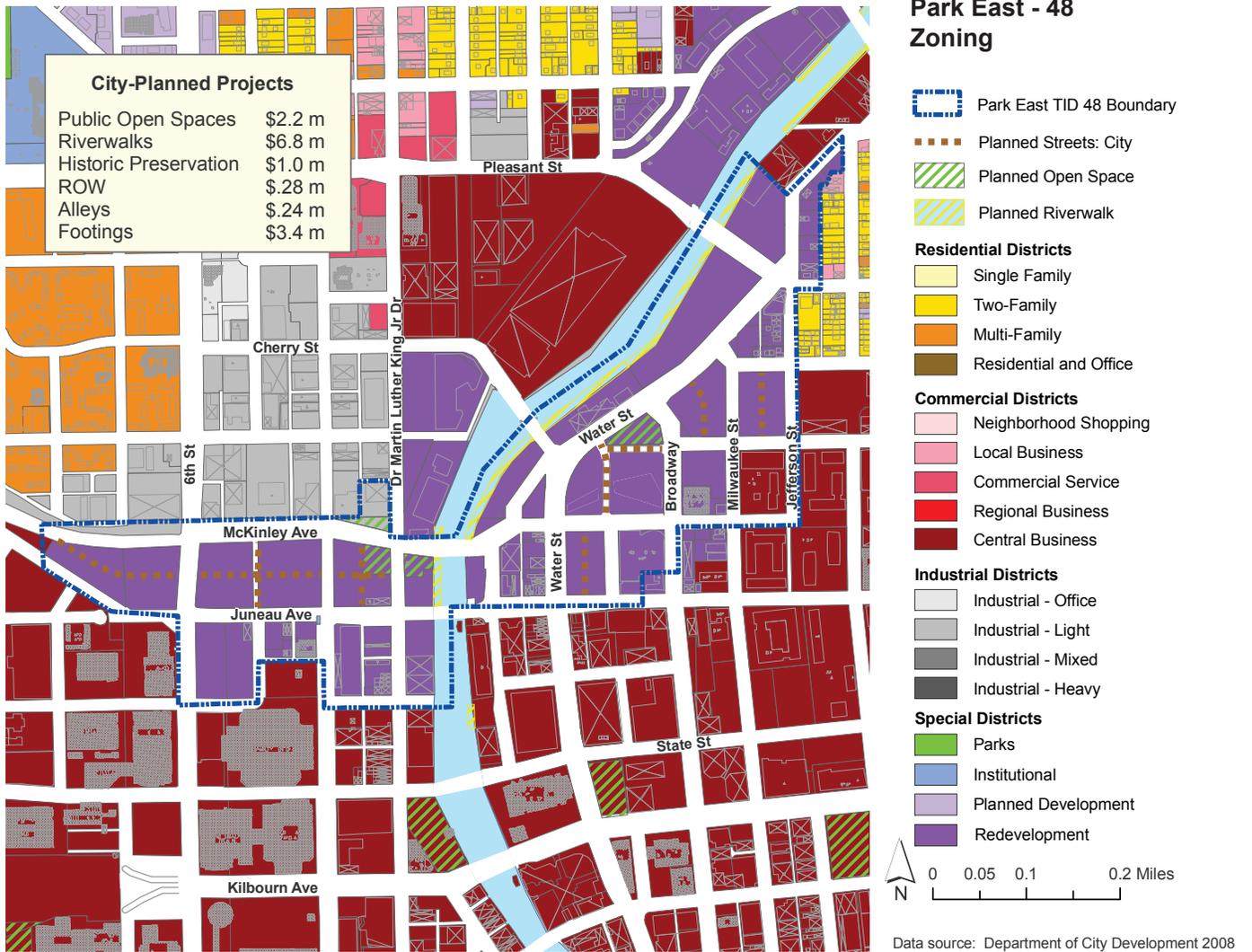
The above map provides service classification for all Downtown streets, ranging from principal freeways that define the western and southern borders of Downtown to local, primarily residential streets in the Yankee Hill area. Also shown are recent planned street improvements through 2011.



Park East Land Use

A former elevated freeway, demolished in 2005, most of the Park East remains vacant with the exception of the A-Loft hotel and the Flat Iron residential development. One public park is planned at the northwest corner of Water and Broadway as shown.





Downtown Demographics and Market Analysis



Flat Iron and North End apartments in former Park East freeway corridor

In 2007, the Milwaukee Downtown BID #21, the UW-Extension Center for Community and Economic Development, and the UW-Extension Milwaukee County conducted a market analysis of the Downtown area. This study focused on identifying destination trade areas and demographics, Downtown employees, young professionals, and the Downtown residential market.

Population. The 2006 Downtown population was estimated at approximately 15,000 persons, slightly less than 2.5% of the city of Milwaukee’s population. From 1990 to 2006 the Downtown population increased by approximately 2,000 persons, an annual growth rate of just over 1%. Reflecting a modest rise in population, the number of Downtown households rose in number as well since 1990, increasing from 5,900 to 7,200.

Population and Household Trends 1990 to 2006				
Population and Households	Downtown Study Area	Primary Destination Trade Area	Secondary Destination Trade Area	State of Wisconsin
1990 Population (Census)	12,701	300,190	921,803	4,891,769
2000 Population (Census)	13,829	285,097	888,854	5,363,675
2006 Population (Estimate)	14,898	283,169	878,203	5,667,706
2000 – 2006 Annual Change	1.30%	-0.10%	-0.20%	0.90%
<hr/>				
1990 Households (Census)	5,887	117,823	359,691	1,822,118
2000 Households (Census)	6,429	113,389	358,828	2,084,544
2006 Households (Estimate)	7,201	113,352	357,678	2,248,740
2000 – 2006 Annual Change	2.00%	0.00%	-0.10%	1.30%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions and U.S. Census Bureau

Percentages may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Individuals between the ages of 18 and 34 make-up 55% of the Downtown area’s population. This age group includes a combination of students, recent graduates, and younger childless workers. The mobility rate of this Downtown age group is high, 74% of the Downtown population moved between 1995 and 2000. Residents aged 55 years and older was also a growing segment of the Downtown population contributing to the increase in condominium developments between 2000 and 2007.

Education and Occupation. Downtown has a high percentage of residents with a college degree. According to 2000 data, 45% of Downtown area residents had either a bachelor's or advanced degree, compared with 23% of Wisconsin residents. In a direct relationship to education level, Downtown area residents are overwhelmingly employed in white-collar occupations – 77% versus the state white collar rate of 58%.

Educational Attainment for the Population Age 25 and Over (2000)				
Geographic Area	Downtown Study Area	Primary Destination Trade Area	Secondary Destination Trade Area	State of Wisconsin
Total Population Age 25 and Over	8,802	166,722	519,950	3,475,878
Less than 9th Grade	4.0%	10.4%	6.3%	5.40%
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	11.7%	16.5%	14.4%	9.60%
High School Graduate	15.8%	24.7%	29.4%	34.60%
Some College, No Degree	17.8%	17.4%	20.8%	20.60%
Associate Degree	5.6%	4.8%	5.9%	7.50%
Bachelor's Degree	28.6%	16.4%	15.3%	15.30%
Master's/Prof/Doctorate Degree	16.5%	9.7%	7.9%	7.20%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – Summary File 3

Percentages may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Occupation for the Employed Population Age 16 and Over (2006)				
Geographic Area	Downtown Study Area	Primary Destination Trade Area	Secondary Destination Trade Area	State of Wisconsin
Total	7,864	125,311	391,818	2,843,048
White Collar	76.90%	58.40%	60.30%	57.90%
Management/Business/Financial	18.60%	11.30%	12.10%	13.40%
Professional	31.80%	23.40%	22.00%	19.90%
Sales	11.60%	10.20%	10.90%	11.00%
Administrative Support	15.00%	13.50%	15.40%	13.50%
Services	14.10%	18.80%	17.30%	15.30%
Blue Collar	9.00%	22.70%	22.40%	26.90%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	0.10%	0.20%	0.10%	0.70%
Construction/Extraction	1.80%	3.70%	3.70%	5.50%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	1.30%	2.50%	3.00%	3.80%
Production	2.70%	9.40%	9.00%	10.00%
Transportation/Material Moving	3.10%	6.90%	6.70%	6.80%

Source: ESRI Business Information Systems (ESRI BIS)

Percentages may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Income. Between 2000 and 2006 average household income in the Downtown area increased at a rate faster than the state of Wisconsin, but household income remained below the state average, \$62,000 for Downtown area residents as compared to the state average of \$67,000. Per capita income for the Downtown area was well above the state average due primarily to the predominance of single and two-person households even though a significant number of Downtown households have incomes below \$15,000 – primarily students and moderate-to-lower income persons. On the other end of the scale, Downtown households with incomes higher than \$200,000 was nearly double that of the state average – 4.4% of Downtown households compared to 2.6% statewide.

Income Characteristics in 2006				
Geographic Area	Downtown Study Area	Primary Destination Trade Area	Secondary Destination Trade Area	State of Wisconsin
Number of Households	7,195	113,346	357,669	2,248,731
<\$15,000	20.00%	19.00%	13.30%	9.50%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	13.80%	14.90%	12.40%	10.20%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	9.90%	12.10%	11.30%	10.50%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	15.50%	17.00%	17.10%	16.10%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	15.40%	16.90%	19.90%	22.40%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	9.40%	9.10%	12.10%	14.20%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	8.60%	6.70%	9.20%	11.70%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	2.90%	2.00%	2.30%	2.80%
\$200,000 +	4.40%	2.20%	2.40%	2.60%
Average Household Income	\$62,140	\$52,736	\$60,364	\$66,730
Per Capita Income	\$34,035	\$21,692	\$24,902	\$26,829

Source: ESRI Business Information Systems (ESRI BIS)

Percentages may not total 100.0% due to rounding

Downtown Employees. In 2000 there were an estimated 78,000 Downtown office employees with highest concentrations mainly in the office towers east of the river. According to 2000 estimates, Downtown workers have \$344 million in annual retail spending potential.

60,000 or 77% of Downtown workers are white-collar employees; over 80% worked full-time or more; and 50% of employees lived in households with incomes over \$60,000.

Occupations of Employees Working in the Downtown Milwaukee Study Area				
Occupation (2000)	Downtown Study Area		Milwaukee 7 Region	
	Number of Workers	Percent of Workers	Number of Workers	Percent of Workers
<i>White Collar</i>	60,054	77.00%	584,797	62.70%
Management/Business/Financial	17,080	21.90%	125,721	13.50%
Professional	18,517	23.80%	209,029	22.40%
Sales	6,419	8.20%	99,977	10.70%
Administrative Support	18,037	23.10%	150,070	16.10%
<i>Services</i>	9,477	12.20%	104,982	11.30%
<i>Blue Collar</i>	8,474	10.90%	242,641	26.00%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	124	0.20%	2,160	0.20%
Construction/Extraction	1,619	2.10%	38,454	4.10%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	1,661	2.10%	32,914	3.50%
Production	2,649	3.40%	113,477	12.20%
Transportation/Material Moving	2,411	3.10%	55,488	6.00%
Armed Forces	~10	< 0.1%	148	< 0.1%
Total Employees	78,005	100.00%	932,420	100.00%

Source: 2000 Census Bureau Transportation Planning Package



Milwaukee Downtown Business Improvement District 21

The BID #21 market study included focus groups and interviews with Downtown employees and residents to ascertain attitudes toward Downtown. Focus group findings:

- Participants appreciated the cleanliness and safety of Downtown.
- Downtown employees are disappointed in the lack of retail shops and noted that the Downtown is devoid of many national retailers.

Other disadvantages noted are a lack of convenient parking, conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular traffic, and the lack of a more comprehensive transit system.

Participants noted the importance of a critical mass of shopping and entertainment activities - particularly a movie theater - and to improve walkability within Downtown.

Young Professionals. Young professionals, are defined as persons between the ages of 25-34 with college degrees.

National trends as noted by the BID #21 study:

- Human capital, in the form of educational attainment, is one of the primary drivers of an area's income and economic growth. Regions with a well-educated population experience greater growth in per capita income. Persons ages 25-34 tend to have the highest levels of educational attainment than any age group.
- Young professionals have or are increasingly residing Downtown neighborhoods due to attributes uniquely found in urban centers, such as a critical mass of jobs, urban amenities, and an urban sense of place.
- Younger workers are a significant source of labor as Baby Boomer populations begin to retire.
- The 25-34 age group is more likely than any other group to start or manage a new business.



Downtown plan meeting

Milwaukee overview:

Residents age 25-34 make up a growing segment of the Downtown population, increasing from 22 to 32 percent of overall population from 1990 to 2006. This growth has given downtown Milwaukee the largest share of this age segment among peer cities.

Among peer cities downtown Milwaukee has the largest number and percentage of residents ages 25-34.

2006 Downtown Population Comparison for the 25 to 34 Age Group		
Geographic Area	Downtown Population Age 25 to 34	
	Number	Percent of Total
Downtown Milwaukee, WI*	4,797	32.20%
Downtown Charlotte, NC	2,229	24.20%
Downtown Cincinnati, OH	3,662	19.80%
Downtown Cleveland, OH	1,970	26.90%
Downtown Columbus, OH	1,736	26.40%
Downtown Indianapolis, IN	3,493	30.60%
Downtown Memphis, TN	1,744	19.20%
Downtown Nashville, TN	1,332	14.60%
Downtown Pittsburgh, PA	2,138	14.60%
Downtown Kansas City, MO	2,532	29.00%

Source: ESRI Business Information Solutions *Downtown Milwaukee Study Area

Focus group discussions with young professionals in the larger Milwaukee region were asked a series of questions regarding downtown Milwaukee. Below are sample comments from this focus group:

Positives:

- Small city atmosphere with large city amenities
- Friendlier and more welcoming than other cities
- Many events and activities
- Safe and clean
- Locally-owned shops and restaurants that add character
- Historic and well-preserved architecture
- Relatively short commuting time

Negatives:

- Shortage of retail activity Downtown
- Lack of new employers and job opportunities
- Need for a more comprehensive transportation system
- Escalating housing costs and need for more affordable housing
- Need for more entertainment options including restaurants, theaters, and a well-defined district
- Pedestrian and bike safety

Downtown Residents. An estimated 15,000 persons live in downtown Milwaukee. Between 1996 and 2006 the Downtown area and neighborhoods within one-half mile added an estimated 2,250 new condominium units and 1,500 new rental units for a total of 3,700 new residential units overall. Compared with peer cities downtown Milwaukee contains the second largest Downtown population; the second highest per capita income; the highest percentage of residents with at least a bachelor’s degree; and the highest percentage of white collar workers.

Downtown Population Trends 1990 to 2006							
Comparable Downtown	1990 Population	2000 Population	Population change 1990 to 2000	Annual Change 1990 to 2000	2006 Population	Population Change 2000 to 2006	Annual Change 2000 to 2006
Milwaukee	12,701	13,829	1,128	0.90%	14,898	1,069	1.30%
Charlotte	6,809	6,868	59	0.10%	9,210	2,342	5.70%
Cincinnati	24,072	19,178	-4,894	-2.00%	18,495	-683	-0.60%
Cleveland	4,520	6,343	1,823	4.00%	7,325	982	2.60%
Columbus	6,492	6,319	-173	-0.30%	6,579	260	0.70%
Indianapolis	7,514	10,698	3,184	4.20%	11,415	717	1.10%
Kansas City	7,060	7,861	801	1.10%	8,731	870	1.80%
Memphis	9,954	7,631	-2,323	-2.30%	9,080	1,449	3.20%
Nashville	5,159	4,810	-349	-0.70%	5,064	254	0.90%
Pittsburgh	14,768	16,414	1,646	1.10%	14,647	-1,767	-1.80%

Source: ESRI Business Information Systems (ESRI BIS) and U.S. Census Bureau

Focus group discussions with Downtown residents revealed the following:

- Cars not needed because of Downtown walkability
- Many cultural and dining amenities
- An overall aesthetically pleasing atmosphere
- A friendly and safe place to live
- Room for more entertainment venues
- Need to add more retail and service businesses
- More improved and open spaces
- Improve public transportation
- Need to develop a culture of a Downtown community
- Reverse perceptions that Downtown suffers from crime and racial division.

Downtown Condominium Residents Who are they?

In 2009, the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee's Center for Urban Initiatives and Research prepared a study to answer the question: "Who is living in downtown Milwaukee's condo's?" The study was conducted via a telephone and mail survey of 2,606 Downtown condo owners. There were 804 completed responses. The results reinforced some notions and disputed others:



Prior Residence of Respondents with Primary Residence in Milwaukee Condo		
Prior Residence	Count	Frequency
City of Milwaukee	311	45%
Suburban Community in Milwaukee County	138	20%
Ozaukee County	24	3%
Washington County	4	1%
Waukesha County	60	9%
Another place in Wisconsin	38	5%
Chicago area	28	4%
Elsewhere outside of state	95	14%
Total	698	100%

Most Important Factor in Decision to Purchase Condo		
Factor	Count	Frequency*
Area / Location	333	45%
Urban Lifestyle	157	21%
Close to / More Activities / Events / Entertainment	118	16%
Condo as Investment	80	11%
Affordability / Price / Cost / Good Market / Opportunity	51	7%
Ease of / Less Maintenance	46	6%
View / Views	46	6%
Condo Unit (Appearance, Etc.)	42	6%
Walkability / Bike-ability	26	3%
Life / Lifestyle Change / Wanted Change	25	3%

* Percentage totals are over 100% as many survey participants gave more than one response.

Age. While the median age of a downtown condo owner is 44, in reality there are two age groups clustered around age 28 and 55, divided into single young professional and empty nesters.

Race and ethnicity. Condo owners are primarily white. 92% of respondents identified themselves as white or Caucasian, 3% as Asian, 2% as black or African American, 2% Hispanic or Latino, and 2% as "other. In comparison the city of Milwaukee is just over 45% white or Caucasian.

Retired. Only 12% of respondents indicated that at least one person in the household was retired.

Empty Nesters. 39% responded they had children. Of those condo owners that have children, either living at home or elsewhere, 49% indicated that their children leaving home influenced their decision to purchase a condo.

Income. The most cited income category of Downtown condo owner respondents is in income range of \$100,000 to \$150,000 per year. Approximately 25% of Downtown condominium owners make over \$250,000 per year.

Prior Residence. 55% of Downtown condo owners lived outside of the city of Milwaukee prior to moving Downtown. Of this group, 20%, previously lived in suburban Milwaukee County. The next highest category is residents who moved from elsewhere outside of the Milwaukee metropolitan region. 4% of respondents moved from the Chicago area.

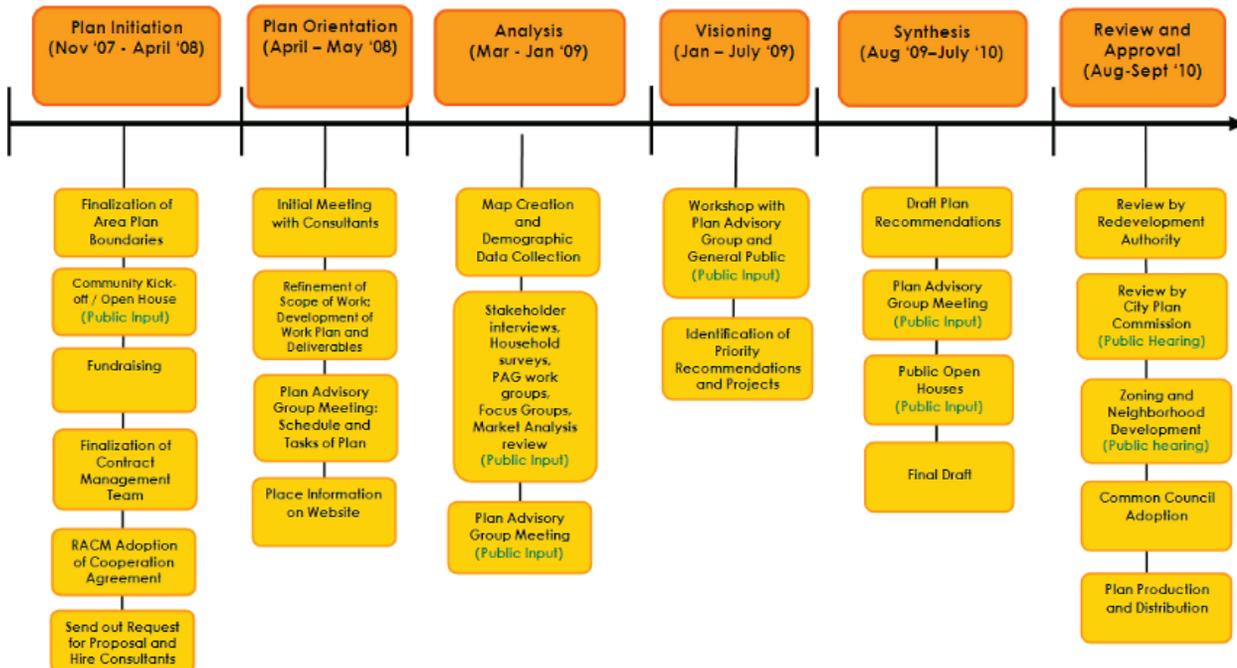
The study focused on reasons for purchasing or moving Downtown. Among all of the reasons that respondents decided to purchase a condo Downtown, the over-riding factors were convenience of location (45%) and urban lifestyle (21%).

Respondents were also asked, "If you could do it all over again, would you still purchase your condo?" and 80% responded affirmatively.

Planning Process

The Downtown Plan update has been a highly inclusive effort. Spanning a 18-month long process, the public input portion for this plan included a public-private steering committee, on-line and hard copy surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, public workshops and two open-houses; one on-line and one in-person. Through this process, over 2,500 persons gave voice and opinion to the development of this plan.

Downtown Area Plan Update Timetable



The plan’s steering committee (Contract Management Team) consisted of public sector participants representing the City of Milwaukee’s Department of City Development, the Department of Public Works, and the Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation. The private sector members represented the Downtown Milwaukee Business Improvement District, Greater Milwaukee Committee, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, and the Milwaukee Development Corporation. The Contract Management Team served as the plan’s “executive committee”, reviewing and approving the consultant selection, as well as the overarching goals and major recommendations in the plan.



Downtown Contract Management Team

Surveys

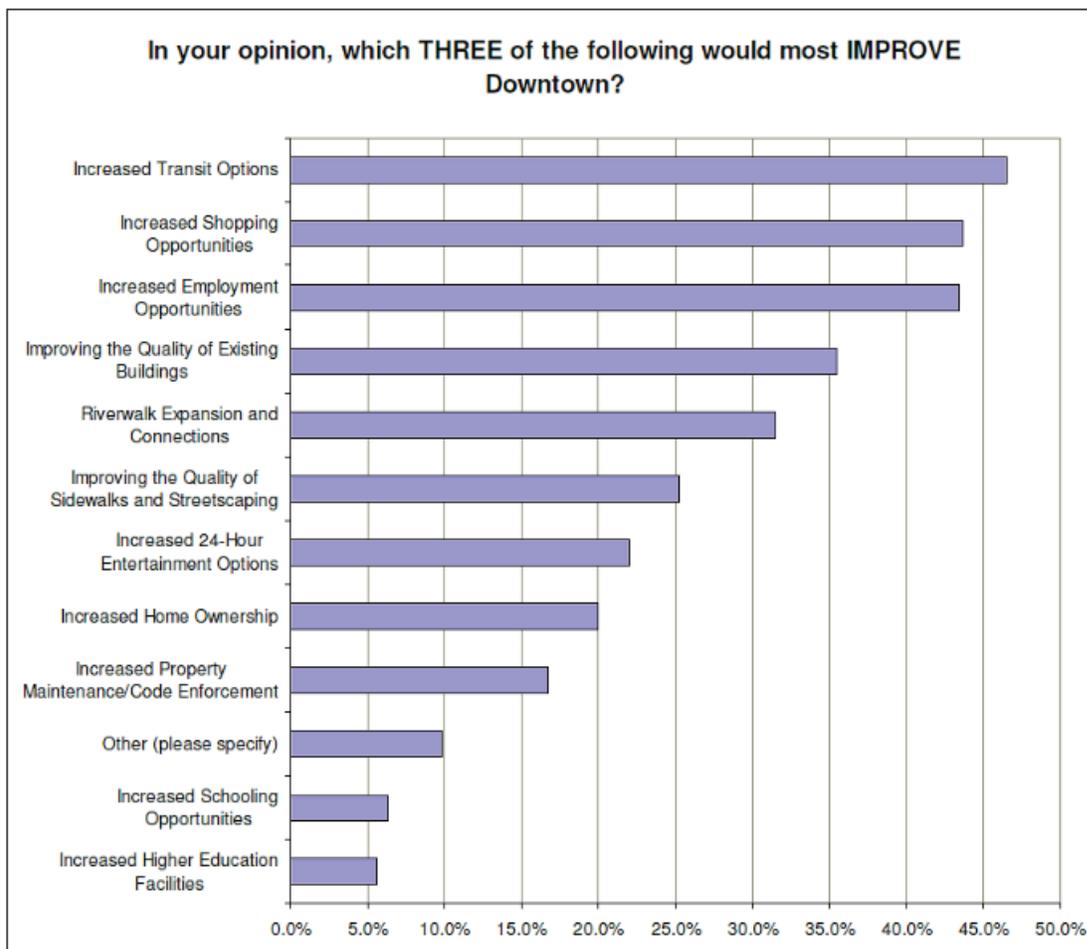
Surveys were distributed between January 2008 and May 2008, both on-line and hard copy. While not a scientific survey, it provided another means to participate in the public process and allowed for 2,440 persons to express their thoughts for the future of the Downtown.

Notable samples from the survey include:

- 44% identified themselves as Downtown employees.
- 23% said they were Downtown residents. 64% reported that they lived within the City of Milwaukee, and 78% of respondents lived within Milwaukee County.
- According to survey respondents, their primary reasons for living Downtown are the cultural and entertainment venues (78%) and the proximity to the lake/river (73%).
- 85% of those who work Downtown prefer to work Downtown.
- When asked what is needed most, all respondent groups tended to agree that a movie theater is paramount. It was the most important desire expressed among property owners and residents of Downtown. Gas stations were another suggestion, especially among business owners, employees, and suburban residents.
- 68% of respondents thought that historic buildings and districts are extremely important to the vitality of Downtown. 30% thought they were somewhat important. Only 2% thought that they were not important.
- Nearly 96% of all respondents said they considered the rehabilitation of existing buildings as or more important than new construction.
- 64% of all respondents thought that surface parking was not a good land use in Downtown.
- Survey Respondents were asked to name the top three improvements that would most improve Downtown. The most popular response was increased transit options (47%), followed by increased shopping options (44%), and expanded employment opportunities (43%).

Stakeholder Interviews

The consultant team conducted over 40 confidential interviews of Downtown stakeholders' selected by the Contract Management Team, City staff, and the stakeholders themselves. The stakeholder interview list spanned a wide range of groups and organizations, including those representing academia, foundations, Downtown business and non-profit organizations, government, major employers, real estate, social services, and residents.



Source: 2008 Downtown Survey

Focus Groups

During the Fall/Winter of 2008, a series of six focus groups were conducted to further gauge public opinion regarding the current condition and future of downtown Milwaukee. The focus groups were broken down by category of activity and interest in order to include a wide range of Downtown constituencies. The six focus groups were: 1) Downtown Residents; 2) Downtown Employees; 3) Downtown Business Owners; 4) Lower Income and Supportive Housing Issues; 5) Downtown Attractions and Marketing Entities; and 6) Downtown Public Service Ambassadors (providing on-the-ground experiences with issues and perceptions).



Downtown Plan meeting

In summary, the focus groups findings revealed the following observations:

- Retail, both specialty boutiques and everyday-residential-serving types, are lacking Downtown.
- Downtown is spread out with too much development emphasis on the periphery.
- Where's the movie theater?
- The Third Ward is a success. Downtown connections to the Third Ward should be improved to tap into that energy and vibrancy.
- There is a sufficient supply of parking Downtown in spite of a perception of inadequacy.
- Multiple focus groups independently concluded that local media, particularly print and radio, perpetuate negative stereotypes and perceptions about Downtown and Milwaukee as a whole.
- Downtown needs a wider range of housing options, particularly apartments and student housing.
- While the restaurant scene is healthy in some areas, there are large gaps both west of the river and near the lakefront. Employees and residents felt that there were very few mid to high-quality "grab and go" options.
- Transit options such as a streetcar, KRM, and high-speed rail would greatly enhance Downtown. Participants noted that Milwaukee is currently behind the times in regards to mass transit.
- Downtown has a number of strengths, but Milwaukee needs leadership, vision, and an attitude that it is OK to think big. Learn from Chicago rather than remain in its shadow.

Workshops

The Downtown plan process included two interactive visioning workshops. The first workshop was conducted near the beginning of the plan process; the second was held near the end. Conclusions from these events revealed:

- Downtown Milwaukee contains a number of attractive cultural, entertainment, and other leisure-time venues, but the areas between them can be improved both with supporting commercial amenities and visual improvements to blank walls and parking structures.
- The Lakefront is particularly lacking supporting amenities such as restaurants, cafés, and family-friendly services, contributing to the disconnect between the Lakefront and Downtown proper.
- Workshop participants were uniform in their belief that Downtown has an ample supply of parking although a perception problem exists, particularly among suburbanites. A remedy should be uniform and clear signage.
- Establishing a connection between the Third Ward and Downtown is essential, necessitating creative use of the space under the I-794 freeway through public art, lighting effects, and other devices for eliminating the perceptual and physical gap.
- On the policy side, numerous participants stressed to the City that it should not discourage the street level amenities it purports to want by charging fees for café' seating, awnings, and other decorative sidewalk features.
- Uniformly, participants stressed that housing, office, and retail densities should be increased throughout Downtown.
- An accompanying theme was a wide desire and belief that the center of Downtown needs to be the development priority as opposed to diluting synergies by dispersing development, particularly retail, to the peripheries.
- The remaining one-way streets Downtown should be converted to two-way.
- The Shops of Grand Avenue should turn outward with shop entrances on street level along Wisconsin Avenue, reinforcing Wisconsin as a street lined with major retail.
- Not locating Miller Park Downtown was a big mistake.



Downtown Plan meeting



Downtown Plan meeting