

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



DEPARTMENT OF
CITY DEVELOPMENT

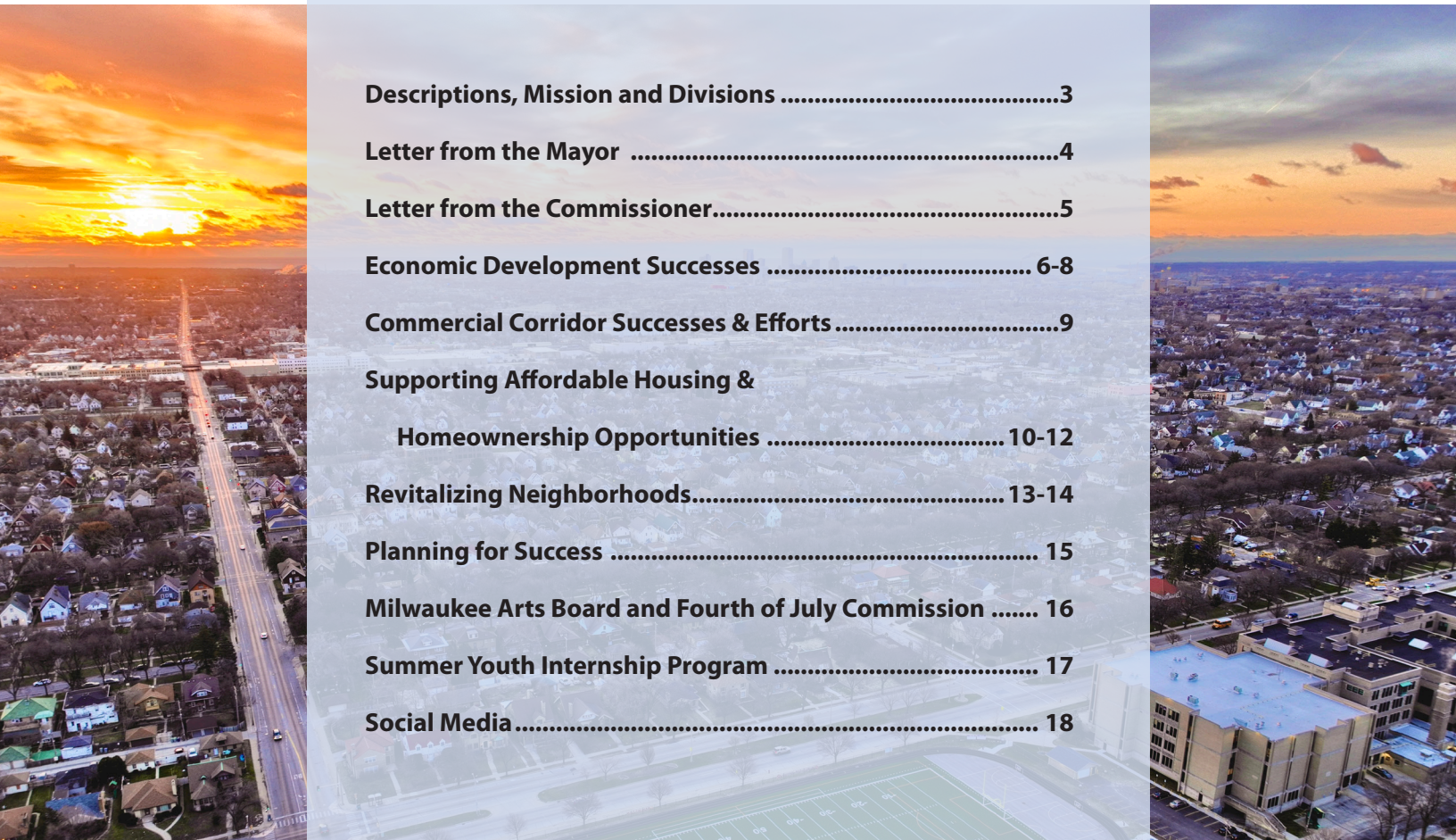


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Department of City Development

Mission

The mission of the Department of City Development (DCD) is to improve the quality of life in Milwaukee by guiding and promoting development that creates jobs, builds wealth, strengthens the urban environment, and at the same time, respects equity, economy, and ecology.

DCD Divisions:

- City Real Estate
- City Planning
- Commercial Corridor Team
- Economic Development
- Finance and Administration
- Housing Development/
Neighborhood Improvement
Development Corporation (NIDC)
- Redevelopment Authority of the
City of Milwaukee (RACM)



To fulfill this mission, the Department of City Development:

- Works with partners throughout the region to ensure an economic climate that stimulates investment and job creation.
- Builds on the city's competitive advantages, including its built environment, natural setting, diversity, and status as a center of commerce and culture.
- Encourages high-quality, sustainable development that respects and enhances its context.
- Makes sound planning and investment decisions, which serve the needs of local residents, workers, and businesses.
- Fosters and supports business development.
- Promotes neighborhood economic development.
- Ensures processes, reviews, and approvals are efficient, consistent, and user-friendly.

Moving Milwaukee Forward



Milwaukee's growth in 2025 reflects my priority of ensuring every resident has access to safe, quality, and attainable housing. The Department of City Development (DCD) leads these efforts by advancing new affordable and workforce housing developments, preserving existing homes, and creating pathways to homeownership. These investments are strengthening neighborhoods, supporting local businesses, and building new opportunities for hard working families. I've declared 2026 to be the Year of Housing in Milwaukee and look forward to DCD's continued leadership on these efforts throughout the year.

This year also marked a major milestone with the adoption of the Housing Element within the City's Comprehensive Plan. This is a testament to DCD's leadership and collaboration with residents and community partners. This roadmap positions our city to meet current and future housing needs.

This Annual Report demonstrates accomplishments made possible by the talent, dedication, and expertise of DCD staff. Their commitment to public service continues to drive meaningful results for our city.

By aligning development with community priorities, we are building stronger and more connected neighborhoods. I am proud of the progress achieved and confident this work will continue to shape a vibrant Milwaukee for years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cavalier Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Mayor Cavalier Johnson

Building a Stronger Milwaukee



Milwaukee's continued progress is a direct reflection of the people behind the work. I am proud to lead a team at the Department of City Development who work relentlessly to drive meaningful change across our city. The team's commitment to thoughtful planning, strong partnerships, and effective execution is what makes visions a reality.

In 2025, this dedicated work was evident in projects and initiatives all over Milwaukee. Continued Riverwalk extensions aim to enhance connectivity and public space. The demolition of the former Northridge Mall site prepared a sizable development parcel in a key area of our region. Neighborhood partnerships with nearly 30 community organizations delivered more than 40 neighborhood improvement projects across 13 aldermanic districts.

Forward momentum in repositioning former vacant and tax foreclosed properties for new neighborhood serving uses demonstrates that roadblocks will never be permanent obstacles. The Department's work in 2025 brought investment to every corner of our city.

This work directly impacts the daily lives of our residents. At the Department of City Development, we are honored to serve the public and together we are building a stronger Milwaukee.



DCD Commissioner Lafayette Crump

Economic Development Successes

Northwestern Mutual's North Tower

- In 2025, work continued on Northwestern Mutual's \$500M renovation of their North Tower.
- By the end of 2025, the 540,000-square-foot building was fully enclosed and Mason Street was reopened to the public.
- Northwestern Mutual currently has over 4,600 employees in downtown Milwaukee. Once the North Tower is fully opened in 2027, they are committed to having 5,750 employees in downtown Milwaukee by 2030.



TID Amendments

In 2025 five Tax Incremental Financing Districts were amended to support Public Infrastructure and public spaces throughout the City, including:

- Investment of over \$45M in public infrastructure to support efforts to address reckless driving, construct protected bike lanes, high-impact paving and Riverwalk segments.
- Over \$7M for public spaces including the construction of the Gary P. Grunau Memorial Plaza on W. Highland Avenue at Vel R. Phillips Avenue and the improvements to the Erie Street Plaza and Catalano Square in the Third Ward.
- A new statute honoring Beechie O. Brooks in the Halyard Park neighborhood.

Harbor District Riverwalk Groundbreaking

- In June 2025, DCD and Harbor District Inc. held a groundbreaking for a new Harbor District Riverwalk.
- This stretch of Riverwalk—from Greenfield Avenue to Kinnickinnic Avenue —is the longest section ever built at one time in our city's history.
- It has been nearly seven years in the making, and when complete, it will transform how people connect with this diverse urban waterfront.
- This project was shaped by the voices of Harbor District residents and the broader Milwaukee community as they shared what mattered: access, safety, nature, and a sense of belonging.



Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee (RACM) highlights

Northridge Mall

- The former Northridge Mall site is the largest development site within the City of Milwaukee and holds incredible potential to be reimagined as an asset for the Northwest Side and the whole city.
- RACM led the \$12M demolition of the former Northridge Mall, completing demolition of the above-ground structures in the fall of 2025.
- Demolition was funded by our partners at the State of Wisconsin and has allowed the City to move forward with planning the redevelopment of the 58-acre site and surrounding area now known as Granville Station
- DCD staff worked with neighborhood stakeholders on the Granville 2.0 Vision Report, released in December 2025, to propose a vision for future development of the former mall site, focused on attracting an anchor user to bring new economic opportunities and amenities to the broader neighborhood.
- DCD will market the former mall for sale in 2026.

150+

ENGAGED IN PERSON

200+

ONLINE CONTRIBUTIONS

5,000+

PROJECT WEBSITE VISITS



BROWNFIELD LOANS



4
HOUSING PROJECTS
WILL CREATE A TOTAL
OF
240
AFFORDABLE UNITS



THE PROJECTS:

- Historic Patterson Place
- Bronzeville Arts and Tech Hub
- Compass Lofts
- Union at Rose Park

- The Authority played a critical role in providing loans to affordable housing developments in 2025 by approving \$3M of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Brownfield Revolving Loans (RLFs).
- The Authority was awarded an additional \$650K of Brownfield RLF funds from the USEPA in 2025, which pushes the total Brownfield RLF awards to \$17.35M. The nationally-recognized loan fund program has provided 25 below-market loans averaging \$750K over the years for residential, commercial, and industrial redevelopment.
- **Looking ahead:** Authority staff continue to prepare for the development of the Kneeland Project by assembling financial tools to install the needed infrastructure to develop the ~10-acre site. Bid issuance for the infrastructure is expected in the Spring of 2026.



REMEDIATED
300
ACRES



LEVERAGED
\$1B
OF PRIVATE
INVESTMENT



CREATED OR
RETAINED NEARLY
5,000
JOBS

Authority's Brownfield Program has received over **\$38M** from the USEPA over the past **25 years** to investigate and remediate hundreds of brownfields throughout the City of Milwaukee.

Commercial Corridor Successes & Efforts

- In 2025, DCD's Commercial Corridor Team awarded 91 Commercial Revitalization Grants for a total of **\$890K**, helping business and property owners to invest over **\$7M** in their properties or commercial spaces. Funding for these grants comes from the Commercial Revitalization fund, as well as tax incremental financing.



- Retail Investment Funds (RIF) assisted the conversion of the former Walmart building at 7025 W. Main Street into the third **Monterrey Market** grocery store location in the City of Milwaukee
- Funding from Tax Increment District (TID) #91 (Park Place) provided Signage, Façade, and Storefront Activation Grants to assist in the reactivation of 10950 W. Good Hope Road as **IVR Bar**, a new independently-owned restaurant
- Signage, Façade, and Storefront Activation grants helped enable the conversion of the former City-owned library building at 6431 N. 76th Street into Racine Liquidators, a retail appliance store
- Signage and Façade Grants were creatively leveraged to assist with the construction of accessibility improvements at Cactus Club, located at 2496 S. Wentworth Avenue

- The Commercial Corridor Team collaborated with the East North Avenue BID #20 to facilitate expansion of the BID's boundaries. The expanded boundaries now provide greater financial sustainability and additional resources to the BID
- In partnership with Riverworks Development Corporation, the Commercial Corridor Team facilitated the disbursement of a \$50,000 Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Vibrant Spaces Grant, which was used to assist with the buildout of the Beerline Plaza at 450 E. Townsend Street



Supporting Affordable Housing & Homeownership Opportunities

Tax Increment Financing for Affordable and Workforce Housing

Five new affordable housing developments opened their doors in 2025 after receiving support from DCD's Housing Division.

- The MLK Library Apartments
- LaMarr Franklin Lofts
- Riverwest Workforce Housing and Food Accelerator
- The Corliss
- The Midtown Homeownership Initiative.



LaMarr Franklin Lofts.

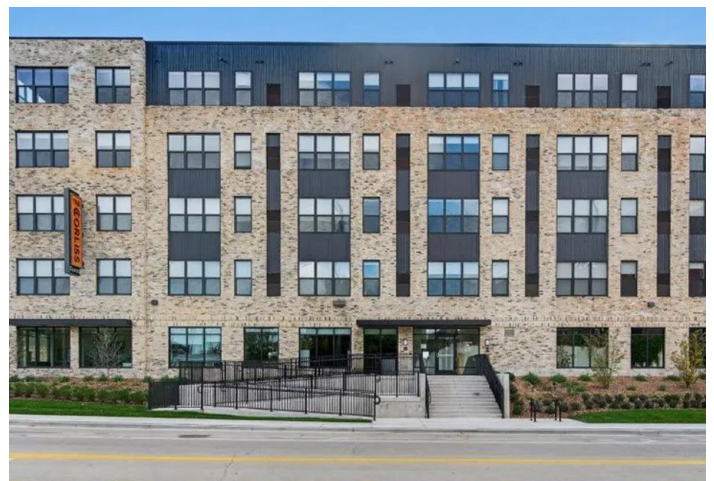


Riverwest Workforce Housing and Food Accelerator.

THESE
5
DEVELOPMENTS PROVIDE
886
HOUSING UNITS, SUPPORTED BY
\$14.44 million
IN TID INVESTMENT
AND LEVERAGED
\$287.6 million
IN PRIVATE CAPITAL



The Corliss.



The Corliss.

In 2025, DCD updated the Tax Increment Financing for Housing Development Guidelines to help ensure sufficient housing opportunities for current and future Milwaukeeans across a range of incomes, including prioritizing affordable and workforce housing.

Six new affordable housing Tax Incremental Districts (TIDs) created in 2025 will support the creation of 1,300 new homes spurred by by \$33.6 million in TID investment leveraging \$225+ million in private investment.



- Under DCD's expanded TIF guidelines, two workforce housing TIDs will also be created, creating 433 new homes, including 130 with rent limits established to support Milwaukee's workforce housing. On the northwest side of Milwaukee, Cudahy Farms, a \$56.8 million development, will bring a mix of 212 affordable and senior apartments to the former John C. Cudahy YMCA Youth and Family Center site. TID No. 122 provides \$3.7 million to the new development.



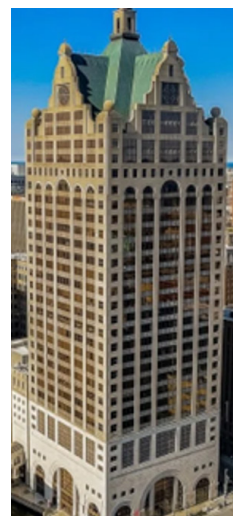
- The Northwoods Apartments renovation will preserve 72 units of existing affordable housing with a \$15.2 million investment. The renovation of the 1971 buildings will upgrade unit interiors, building systems, building envelope, parking lot and the grounds. TID No. 123 was created and provided \$1.67 million to The Northwoods Apartments renovation.
- The Harambee Home Ownership Initiative will provide 59 new affordable homeownership opportunities in the Harambee neighborhood. The single-family homes are to be built by Habitat for Humanity on repurposed City-owned vacant lots. TID No. 124 awarded \$2.85 million to support the \$17.5 million investment.



- The Historic Patterson Place is a \$21.1 million adaptive reuse of the former Carleton School located at 4116 W. Silver Spring Drive converting the former school into 30 apartment units, 18 townhome units and 3,000 square feet of multi-purpose space. TID No. 125 provided \$970,000 towards the development.



- In the Deer District of Milwaukee's downtown, The Fieldhouse Flats will include 269 affordable units and 40,000 square feet of commercial space with 27,000 square feet leased to MATC for a student athletic facility and field house. TID No. 126 awarded \$6.77 million towards this \$116 million development and is anticipated to be completed by early 2028.
- 100 East Wisconsin is a \$165.2 million commercial-to-residential conversion of an existing downtown office building into 373 apartment units, including 75 workforce housing units. The redevelopment supports the adaptive reuse of underutilized commercial space and represents a significant reinvestment in Milwaukee's downtown. TID No. 127 provided \$14.4 million to support the project.



Homes MKE

In 2025, the Homes MKE program:

- Renovated 32 vacant City-owned houses allowing Milwaukeeans to purchase the rehabbed properties for homeownership.
- The 32 new Homes MKE homeowners and rent-to-owners brought along their 54 family members, totaling 86 Milwaukeeans who moved into rehabilitated homes
- Empowered buyers to build generational financial stability by partnering with providers of homebuyer and credit counseling, while linking down payment assistance and Section 8 homeownership initiatives to help put homeownership within reach.
- Leveraged ARPA funding to enable emerging developers to combine private capital with Homes MKE subsidies to extend the impact of ARPA investments and adding credibility and accountability to the portfolios of young developers who have the power to impact Milwaukee today and in the decades ahead.
- Strategically invested in neighborhoods with high concentrations of vacant houses and historical disinvestment, renewing the sense of neighborhood cohesion on many Milwaukee blocks.
- Insisted on superior rehabilitation standards by following a rigorous system of inspection, allowing buyers seeking affordable price points the opportunity to purchase high-quality homes with all new mechanicals and modern interiors that maintain the value of the property long-term.



Homes MKE Housing Rehabilitation Specialist & Real Estate Specialist in the neighborhood promoting the housing initiative.



Homes MKE Real Estate Specialist discusses accessibility in housing with the developer and agency.



Homes MKE Outreach Liaison gives away a houseplant at the Aldermanic District 2 Town Hall.



Homes MKE Housing Rehabilitation Specialist prepares to inspect a property.

Down Payment Assistance

233

NEW HOMEBUYERS

were able to become homeowners through the support of the Milwaukee Home Down Payment Assistance Program.

STRONG Homes Loans

50

EXISTING HOMEOWNERS

received partially forgivable STRONG Homes Loans to assist with emergency and essential home repairs allowing them to remain in their homes.

Revitalizing Neighborhoods

City-Owned Property Sales

DCD's Real Estate Division worked to reposition tax foreclosed properties and return them to occupancy, bringing new life to vacant properties.

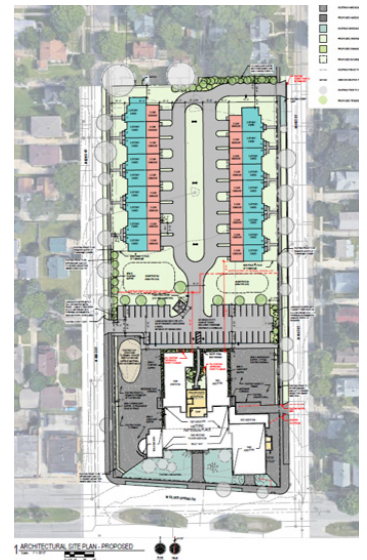


Ordinance Change

- In 2025, DCD Real Estate worked with the Common Council and the City Attorney's Office to update Milwaukee City Ordinance 304-49, which dictates how DCD sells City-owned real estate acquired through property tax foreclosure. The updated ordinance will align itself with State Statute 75.69 which was updated in 2024.

Carleton School

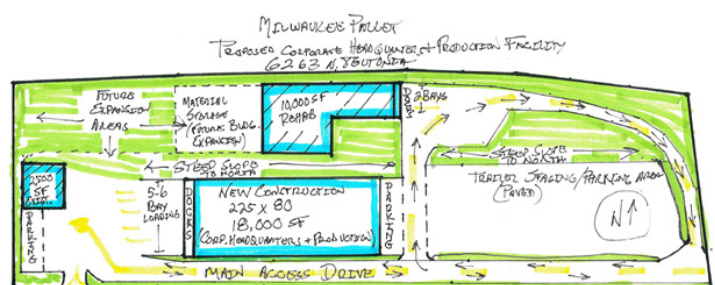
- Milwaukee Public Schools ("MPS") declared Carleton School surplus in 2012, after being vacant since 2005. The property was marketed by DCD in conjunction with MPS and sold to AndersonWebb, LLC and Wisconsin Redevelopment, LLC for adaptive reuse.
- The developer applied to the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority and was successfully awarded Low Income Housing Tax Credits. With the support of DCD Real Estate (land sale) and Economic Development (TID #125), the developer is transforming this former school building located at 4116 W. Silver Spring Drive into 48 residential units and 3,000 square feet of multi-purpose space. The housing units will include 1- and 2-bedroom units and 18 townhouses.
- Historic Patterson Place is a prime example of adaptive reuse through coordinated efforts from State and local government to conserve and repurpose an underutilized property for residential uses. Project completion is anticipated in winter 2026.



Historic Patterson Place.

6263 N. Teutonia Ave.

- DCD Real Estate's Commercial staff transferred a tax-delinquent brownfield property at 6263 N. Teutonia Avenue to a new owner. The site, previously used for illegal dumping including thousands of discarded tires, along with subsurface soil and/or groundwater contamination, was conveyed under State Statute 75.106 to Milwaukee Pallets, LLC, allowing the company to expand its operations.
- By placing the property on the "Do Not Acquire" list and identifying a private buyer, DCD utilized State Statute 75.106 to convey the City's foreclosure judgment interest to the buyer and avoiding significant financial and environmental costs that would have resulted from City acquisition.



Former Wildenberg Hotel

- Twelve years after acquisition and after extensive efforts to identify a new buyer who would rehabilitate the historic structure, DCD successfully closed on the sale of the Historic Jacob Nunnemacher Mansion, also known as the Wildenberg Hotel, located at 3774 S. 27th Street.
- The project will transform this historic mansion and former hotel and mobile home park into a sit-down restaurant, sports bar, banquet hall, and commercial kitchen. A commercial building will also be constructed along the north property line and will house two commercial tenants.



\$5 million PROPOSED INVESTMENT IN THE RESTORATION



Department of City Development, Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation, and Office of Community Wellness and Safety staff at a Fall Community Giveaway Event on November 15, 2025 in one of the Healing Spaces, Polonia Peace Park (1020 W. Montana Street).



Healing Spaces

9

SITE ACTIVATION GRANTS APPROVED

5

HEALING SPACES RECEIVED ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT IN CARE AND MAINTENANCE

AN ESTIMATED

270

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ENGAGED IN THE HEALING SPACES.

Community Improvement Projects Program

43

PROJECTS WERE SUPPORTED BY NIDC IN COLLABORATION WITH

29

DIFFERENT COMMUNITY PARTNERS

\$83,350

IN CIP GRANTS SUPPORTED THESE NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTMENTS ACROSS THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE.

Targeted Investment Neighborhoods (TIN)

8

NEW TARGETED INVESTMENT NEIGHBORHOODS WERE LAUNCHED IN 2025: Bridge Builders, Century City Triangle, Century City Franklin Heights, Century City Garden Homes, Harambee Proud, Historic Mitchell Street, Roosevelt Grove, and Washington Park North

11

OUTREACH EVENTS HELD BY NIDC TO SHOWCASE TARGETED INVESTMENT NEIGHBORHOODS RESOURCES.

200

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

EVENTS LOCATED ACROSS

6

ALDERMANIC DISTRICTS (1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 15)

Planning for Success

Planning Highlights

- 52 zoning changes, area planning, and other files were reviewed by the City Plan Commission (CPC). Developments and rezonings approved are anticipated to bring **505 new homes** to the city, including approximately **340 affordable housing units, and add an estimated \$218 million to the tax base.** This includes the Field House Flats complex, a mixed-use development that will activate the entire Block 5 of the Deer District.
- **Design review for 92+ projects** to increase the quality of design on development proposals seeking discretionary zoning reviews, City land sales, or City financial assistance, demonstrating DCD's commitment to high quality urban design throughout ALL Milwaukee neighborhoods.
- **500+ Board of Zoning Appeals proposals reviewed**, including providing extensive technical assistance to applicants, residents, and developers.
- **50 Certified Survey Maps processed** to facilitate private development as well as **three public right-of-way vacations.**
- **28th Annual Mayor's Design Awards:** Mayor Cavalier Johnson and Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Architecture, Kevin Hartman handed out awards to 25 well-deserving projects from across the City of Milwaukee. Awardees included Vel Phillips Plaza, Havenwoods Tap Room and Beer Garden, Riverwest Apartments, The Couture, Thrive on King, Concordia 27, and many other projects that various sections of DCD supported through zoning actions, city land sales, commercial corridor grants and TIDs.



Housing Element Adopted

- The Housing Element is an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan to encourage housing choice and growth and advance the citywide goals for housing affordability, fiscal sustainability, economic development, connectivity, health, and climate resilience through updates to the Zoning Code and complementary policies.
- Common Council adopted the Housing Element in July of 2025.
- 2-year planning process
 - 2,350+ residents and housing stakeholders engaged at in-person and online events
 - 9,400+ community members engaged on project website
- During 2026, Planning will advance the Zoning Code updates recommended by the Housing Element.

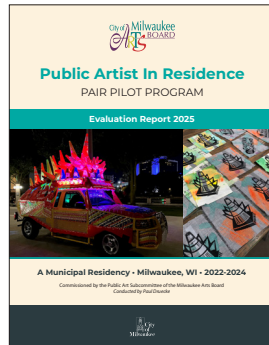


West Side Area Plan Update

- The Planning Division engaged with the community and stakeholders at community events, a charrette, and advisory committee meetings. There were also over 960 unique visitors and 447 online comments on the engagement website.
- The planning process includes partnerships with local neighborhood partners and leaders, engagement, commercial corridor recommendations, market analysis, and opportunities for key catalytic sites and commercial corridors in the area.
- The Plan will include key recommendations from the Reimagining WIS 175 and Stadium District plans.

Milwaukee Arts Board

- 47 Sustaining Grants totaling \$276,600 were awarded to local, arts focused nonprofit organizations to support artistic or administrative staff, operating costs as well as programming costs.
- 3 public art conservation projects provided a total of \$10,000 to restore, resite, and protect public art throughout the city of Milwaukee.
- 2025 was a planning and evaluating year for the Public Artist in Residence (PAIR) pilot program to prepare for the next PAIR placement in 2026. MAB was proud to work with local artist Paul Druecke to complete the Public Artist in Residence Program Evaluation Report, which is available at milwaukee.gov/PAIR.



- The 2025 Arts Celebration in the City Hall Rotunda recognized the Mildred L. Harpole Artists of the Year and Friends of the Arts award recipients.



Photo credit – Pat Robinson

Pictured left to right are Aaron Boyd, Artist of the Year and Amal Azzam, Artist of the Year with MAB members David Flores and Tim Murphy, with Mayor Johnson, Symphony Swan-Zawadi, Friend of the Arts, Nakeysha Roberts Washington, Friend of the Arts and MAB member Amy O'Neill.

Fourth of July Commission

Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson visited several parks for the 4th of July, with the 2025 theme of “Joining Hands in Unity.” Neighbors came together at celebrations across the City of Milwaukee with parades, picnics, games, and fireworks - a tradition dating back to 1911!



FIREWORKS IN

8

DIFFERENT PARKS



CELEBRATIONS HELD AT

- Alcott Park
- Enderis Playfield
- Gordon Park
- Humboldt Park
- Jackson Park
- King Center
- Lake Park
- Lincoln Park
- Mitchell Park
- Washington Park
- Wilson Park

For information about the Fourth of July Commission and its activities, or how to get involved, visit city.milwaukee.gov/July4th.

Summer Youth Internship Program

- The City of Milwaukee's Summer Youth Internship Program (SYIP) is administered by DCD and provides youth ages 16 to 19 an opportunity to work in the City of Milwaukee government.

Friday Education Days

- Practical sessions on financial responsibility, healthy living, career exploration, work skills, leadership and more.
- Tools to improve communication, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, dependability, self-regulation and building positive peer relationships, important skills for success in both work and life.



Business Tours

- July 25, 2025: Interns learned about a broad range of operations and job opportunities that exist in Milwaukee through visits at Derse, Dropout Fight Club, Owen's Place, Sherman Phoenix, and Unfinished Legacy.



Closing Ceremony

- August 15, 2025: SYIP concluded with a Closing Ceremony during which intern experiences were highlighted, interns were rewarded certificates of completion, and Mayor Johnson and City of Milwaukee supervisors provided parting and congratulatory remarks.



68

YOUTH EMPLOYED

in 12 City of Milwaukee departments over the course of 8 weeks during the summer

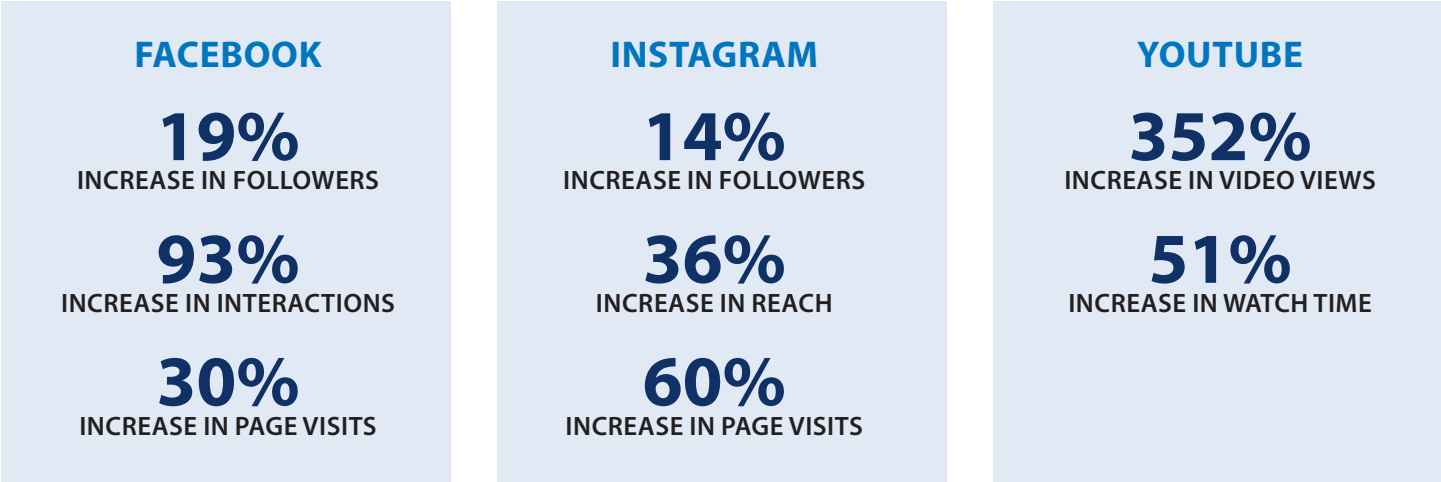
20 HOURS
PER WEEK

16 HOURS
AT ASSIGNED DEPARTMENTS

4 HOURS
AT WEEKLY FRIDAY EDUCATION DAYS
AT VARIOUS MILWAUKEE LOCATIONS

Social Media

- DCD social media channels experienced tremendous growth for a second year in a row in 2025. This included growing reach on LinkedIn and a 350% increase in video views on YouTube. DCD continues to shape the way we connect with the community while keeping the public engaged and updated on the work of DCD.



MOST VIEWED VIDEO:

HOMES MKE PROPERTY TOUR

MOST VIEWED PAGE:

DCD’S CITY REAL ESTATE - PROPERTIES FOR SALE



Homes MKE property tour



Homes MKE for the Holidays ...



Healing Spaces in the City of Milwaukee



How Homes MKE is building affordable ...



Homes MKE developer speaks on program



Behind the scenes of Homes MKE







milwaukee.gov/DCD