

2022 Mayor’s Design Awards Recipients

*All information and pictures were provided by the nominator of the project.
Nominations are open to the general public.*

Spaces and Places

The following projects have found unique opportunities to contribute to the character of their neighborhoods and have made their streets and public spaces more attractive and inviting by engaging the public, enhancing public infrastructure, and creating meaningful community spaces for all to enjoy.

Visual Vibes on Villard (1st Aldermanic District): As the pandemic continued through the summer of 2020, the Villard Avenue BID launched its “Visual Vibes on Villard,” project, a large-scale public art effort that commissioned Milwaukee artists to create murals on local buildings. The themes of the murals were health & wellness, environmental conservation, neighborhood history, culture, & community pride.

Brady Beach (3rd Aldermanic District): Nomad Pub and Club Brady, two bars along Brady Street, worked together to close part of North Warren Avenue between their two businesses and create new outdoor seating – naming the area “Brady Beach.” This enabled these two businesses to serve more customers and create an active social gathering place at the heart of this vibrant district.

Northwestern Mutual Community Park (4th Aldermanic District): The new Northwestern Mutual Community Park at the Henry Maier Festival Grounds is a publicly-accessible playground for children and families to enjoy.

Painting the Near West Side (4th Aldermanic District): Painting the Near West Side is an initiative of the Near West Side Partners with the goal of beautifying the neighborhood’s commercial corridors while showcasing the talent of local artists. Six murals were installed in 2021 with two more planned this year. The project was funded by a Choice Neighborhood Initiative Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

La Placita & Pandemic Memorial (12th Aldermanic District): The La Placita gathering space at El Rey on Cesar Chavez Drive is a community asset with a sculpture of Cesar Chavez, benches, and lighting. This project received support from the City’s Community Improvement Project program. Led by La Familia de Arte, the 12 tiled bollards along Cesar Chavez Drive are the result of inscriptions made by 1,800 community residents during the summer of 2021.

- Six pillars on the east side of the street honor “Everyday Heroes of the Pandemic”
- Six pillars on the west side of the street are inscribed with the names of loved ones, the “Fallecidos” who we lost during the pandemic.

- These colorful bollards symbolize the strength and unity of this community during challenging times.

Historic Highway 41 Bus Stops (11th and 13th Aldermanic Districts): The Historic Highway 41 Business Association worked with Milwaukee County Transit System, elected officials, area businesses, and local artist Ryan Laessig to create a truly unique set of seven bus shelters. Now framed with beautiful metal panels, not only does this project prevent vandalism on the bus shelters with graffiti-proof coating, but also serves as works of art promoting the local historic business corridor.

Tiefenthaler Park Community Center (15th Aldermanic District): Tiefenthaler Park on Milwaukee’s Northwest Side is an expanded community center that more than doubles PEAK’s existing facility with additional learning labs and outdoor spaces.

Franklin Square and North Division High School (15th Aldermanic District): The revamped Franklin Square Playfield is a 3.2-acre neighborhood park originally constructed in the 1920s that includes an expanded playground, modern playground equipment, renovated basketball courts, and Milwaukee Recreation’s first agility course. In addition, the adjacent North Division High School added green infrastructure along with two outdoor classrooms to provide opportunities for community gatherings, eco-learning opportunities, and performing arts activities.

Test of Time

The following projects have added value to the city by restoring or reusing their properties in a way that preserves and enhances the character of their neighborhoods and reinforces the traditional neighborhood fabric. These projects will help to preserve the city's built environment and architectural legacy for future generations.

Oriental Theater Revitalization (3rd Aldermanic District): The rehabilitation of this historic theater included new seating, improved acoustics and lighting, lobby renovations, and an expansion into the adjacent vacant storefront. This effort, led by Milwaukee Film, will allow the public to experience this iconic landmark for generations to come. The project was supported by federal historic tax credits.

Central Standard Craft Distillery (4th Aldermanic District): Central Standard renovated a long-vacant 16,200-square foot building in the center of downtown into an updated distillery, restaurant, bar, events space, and rooftop patio. This project is helping to revitalize this historic district and bridge the gap between Downtown and the Third Ward.

Milwaukee Soldiers Home (10th Aldermanic District): Located on the grounds of the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center, this veteran housing development was built in 1867 as a place of healing for service members returning from the Civil War. Pierce Engineers teamed with Ramlow/Stein Architects in the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation design of Old Main in 2017. After years of work, 101 supportive housing units are now available at the Milwaukee Soldiers Home for veterans and their families facing homelessness. The building was registered in the National Trust Most Endangered Historic Places in 2011 and declared a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service in 2012.

Eagleknit Innovation Hub (12th Aldermanic District): Wangard Partners transformed a large historic warehouse building in Walker's Point into Eagleknit Innovation Hub – a four-story, 30,000-square-foot ecosystem of innovation-focused businesses, start-up companies, and tech space. A context sensitive modern addition was also built on the south side of the building. This development will help combat racial inequities and offer game-changing career opportunities for underserved individuals throughout Milwaukee County. The project was supported by federal historic tax credits.

37th Street School Apartments (15th Aldermanic District): Located in the Washington Park neighborhood, this former MPS school building was transformed into an affordable housing development serving Milwaukee seniors. This project was supported by federal tax credits and local tax incremental financing incentives.

Neighborhood Renaissance

The following projects have added value to the city by providing new or improved options for neighborhood housing, or by adding or improving cultural, educational, or other community amenities that strengthen neighborhoods and enhance the quality of life for residents.

Westlawn Renaissance III (2nd Aldermanic District): The 75-acre site where Wisconsin's largest public housing development once stood is continuing its evolution into a thriving mixed-income community. The latest additions, Oak and Walnut at Westlawn Gardens, together have added 94 new affordable apartments along Silver Spring Drive, furthering the ongoing renaissance of the area.

Hmong American Peace Academy (5th Aldermanic District): Following years of student enrollment growth, the Hmong American Peace Academy outgrew its initial facility and expanded its campus to serve more students.

Amani Block by Block (7th Aldermanic District): The Amani Block-by-Block initiative takes a comprehensive and resident-led approach to improve housing on one block in the Amani neighborhood. The initiative, which started as a pilot, focused on the 2900 block of North 26th Street, with the idea of creating a model block that could then be replicated on other blocks throughout the Amani neighborhood. The effort involves partnerships between neighborhood residents, community organizations, and the Northwestern Mutual Foundation.

UCC Ricardo Diaz Early Learning Academy (8th Aldermanic District): The United Community Center is ranked in the top 25 Hispanic serving nonprofits in the nation and has grown into an intergenerational hub that serves more than 15,000 people each year. UCC's new state-of-the-art learning academy, named in honor of their former leader Ricardo Diaz, serves as a center for child care, early education services, health care, and job resources.

Thirteen31 Place Apartments (12th Aldermanic District): Led by Rule Enterprises and Lutheran Social Services, this mixed-income housing development in Walker's Point was once a tax-delinquent brownfield. The majority of partners involved in the development are graduates of LISC Milwaukee's Associates of Commerce Real Estate (ACRE) program designed to prepare people of color for a career in real estate.

Bay View Point Condominiums (14th Aldermanic District): When a rare piece of empty land in the Bay View neighborhood became available for development, the developer of this project created new housing options that would complement the existing neighborhood. Bay View Point Condominiums incorporates a modern aesthetic into a 100+ year old neighborhood, creating new opportunities for homeownership and raising the bar for residential infill.

Vibrant Corridors

The following projects are revitalizing the City's commercial corridors by constructing or restoring their properties in a pedestrian friendly way that activates the public realm, adds new housing or employment opportunities, and adds to the vibrancy and diversity of our commercial districts.

AN OX Café (2nd Aldermanic District): AN OX Café, serves Asian comfort food and offers the space for private events. Owners Sia and Johnni Xiong worked tirelessly to open AN OX Café and make their dream a reality, overcoming many barriers in the process. Since 2018, the City of Milwaukee has awarded more than \$60,000 in façade, signage and Retail Investment Fund grants to AN OX Café for building renovations and improvements.

The Avenue/3rd St Market Hall (4th Aldermanic District): The former Grand Avenue Mall is now Third Street Market Hall, a 40,000 square foot food and entertainment hub located in the heart of Milwaukee's Westown neighborhood. The Market Hall is a celebration of the city's cuisine, diversity, creativity, and culture.

321 North Jefferson (4th Aldermanic District): This new seven-story, 60-unit mixed-use apartment building is adding new life to an often-forgotten part of the Historic Third Ward. Originally planned as a WE Energies substation, which would have created a dead zone in the neighborhood for many decades to come, the company partnered with Joseph Property Development to redevelop the property in a way that adds vibrancy to the area while providing the needed utility infrastructure within the structure.

Schlitz Park (6th Aldermanic District): Crossroads Plaza at Schlitz Park links together previously-separated buildings into a pedestrian-friendly campus with public gathering spaces. New signage on the small pumphouse along the river is part of the #MilwaukeeFamous campaign where food trucks operate along the Riverwalk. A preserved Schlitz marquee sign hangs in the center of Crossroads Plaza, coupled with the 9,600 square-foot Schlitz mural that reflects the historic nature of the campus while looking to Milwaukee's future.

On the Mill/Cream City Boxing (9th Aldermanic District): Once a beloved dinner theater, this building at 52nd and Mill Rd became a vacant City-owned property and an eyesore for the neighborhood. New owner Kirby Locket saw beyond the existing conditions of the building to envision a place where young people could engage in sports and learn valuable new skills. On the Mill/Cream City Boxing reminds us of what is possible with a little creativity and a lot of determination.

Adams Garden Park (15th Aldermanic District): Owners and developers Larry and Sharon Adams worked to preserve, restore, and modernize this cream city brick building, constructed in 1898, into an environmental hub in Milwaukee's Lindsay Heights neighborhood. Located in a major commercial corridor, Adams Garden Park is adjacent to a vacant lot that will include stormwater catching features, native plants, sculpted art, and room for vendors.