

THE LINCOLN VILLAGE OPPORTUNITY STRATEGY

City of Milwaukee
Department of City Development
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Lincoln Village Opportunity Strategy

June 2019

Department of City Development – Planning Division



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The Basilica of St. Josaphat

Kosciuszko Monument Committee

Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers

Milwaukee Christian Center

Southside Organizing Center

Milwaukee Police Department

Department of Neighborhood Services

Department of Public Works

Department of City Development – Commercial Corridor Team

Community Development Grants Administration

Lincoln Avenue Neighborhood Block Watch Group

Lincoln Avenue School/La Escuela Lincoln Avenue

Milwaukee County Parks

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office

Milwaukee County Housing Division

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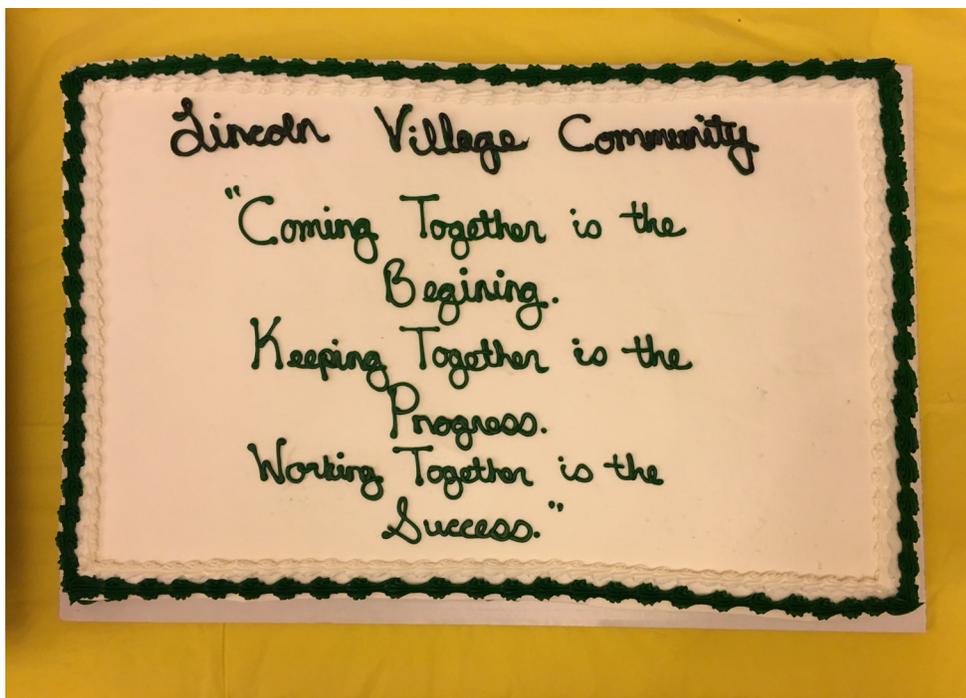
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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The Lincoln Village Opportunity Strategy was developed through a partnership between neighborhood businesses, residents, community organizations, and local government to channel the commitment of area stakeholders into a series of action items to achieve the desired goals for the neighborhood.

This Opportunity Strategy (“the Strategy”) was developed with the recognition that no one organization acting alone can be responsible for the economic and business development, beautification, community safety, and other goals that area businesses and residents have for their neighborhood. However, this comprehensive strategy, developed through extensive neighborhood engagement and discussion, can provide a road map for various partners to follow, with each group responsible for actions that best match their own resources and expertise.

Ultimately, if carried out successfully, the Strategy will help improve the economic health of Lincoln Village, make existing community spaces more accessible and enjoyable for residents and visitors, and improve the appearance of this historic business district.

WHY CREATE THIS STRATEGY?

The Basilica of St. Josaphat - a Milwaukee icon that anchors one of the City’s most historic and intact commercial corridors – is undertaking major investment to improve its appearance and solidify its position as the cultural center of its near South Side neighborhood. While vacancy rates are low and many businesses are thriving, area stakeholders want to ensure that the overall trajectory of the Lincoln Village commercial district is positive and

that Lincoln Avenue continues to position itself as one of Milwaukee’s prime commercial corridors.

The former business association has been dormant for a number of years, and area leaders have concerns with how some properties may be contributing to the physical appearance of the corridor, as well as criminal activity (real and perceived). In addition to the investment at the Basilica, there has been major recent and planned investment in areas adjacent to Lincoln Village. There is a need to align the efforts of public and private sector partners committed to the area to spur action and advance the revitalization along Lincoln Avenue. In early 2019, Alderman Perez and Lincoln Village area leaders asked the Department of City Development to help develop a plan that would identify strategies to address the following **5 Key Planning Questions**:

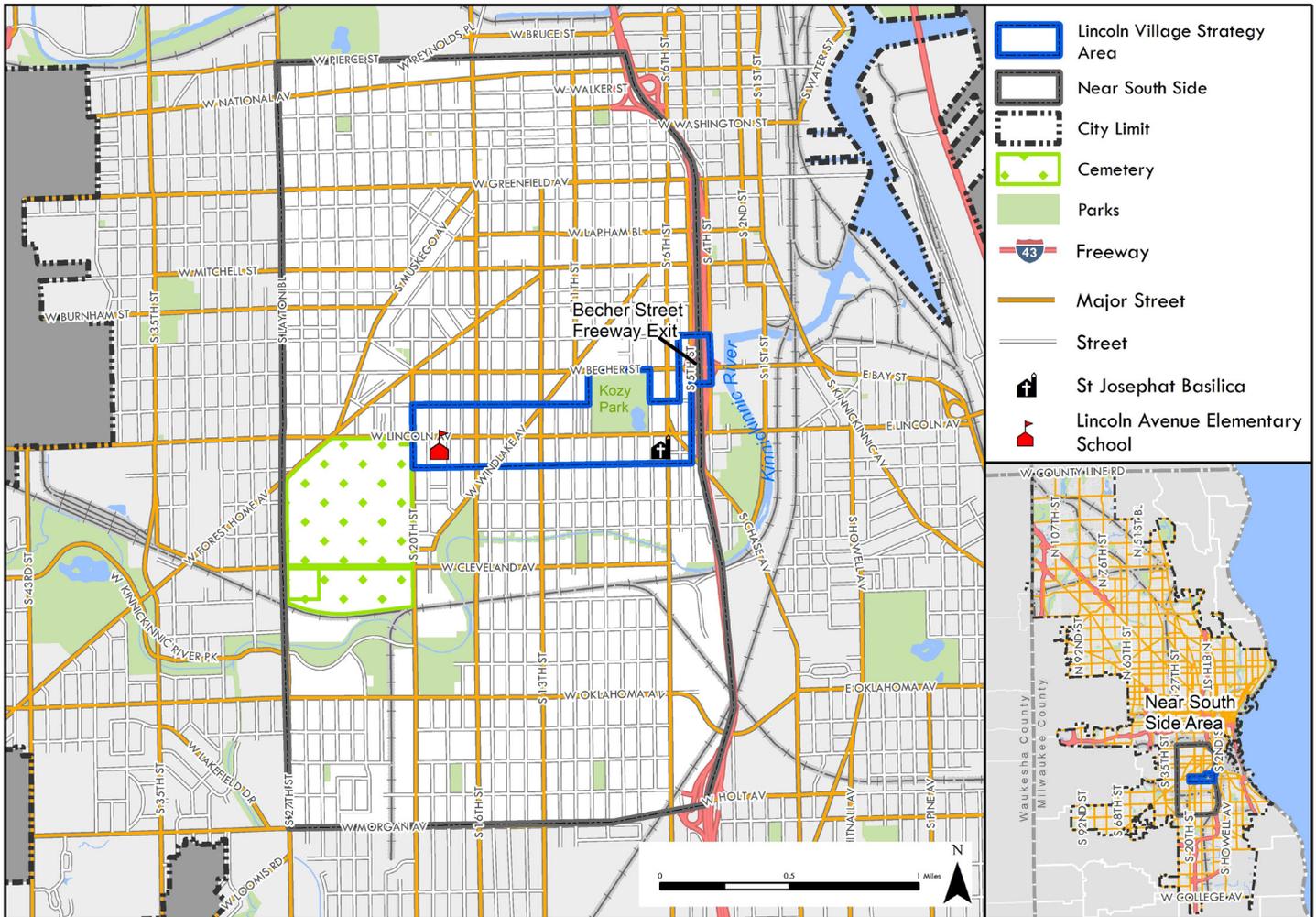
- 1. How can the Basilica best position itself as a shared community space and cultural place of welcoming for the Lincoln Village and surrounding neighborhoods?*
- 2. What steps can be taken to help improve the appearance and business mix along Lincoln Avenue? Does this include reestablishing the Lincoln Village Business Association?*
- 3. How can various City departments (DCD, DNS, DPW, MPD) best support efforts to revitalize Lincoln Avenue, including addressing real and perceived public safety concerns?*
- 4. Do the pending City improvements to Becher Street near the I43 Freeway off ramp provide opportunities to improve this gateway to Lincoln Village?*
- 5. What companion strategies can be deployed to improve the housing conditions of the residential blocks directly adjacent to the Lincoln Village commercial district?*

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Lincoln Village neighborhood leaders and the Common Council members who represent the area engaged the Department of City Development (DCD) to facilitate the creation of this Strategy in early 2019. DCD's Planning Division partnered with a group of urban planning graduate students from the UWM School of Architecture and Urban Planning to develop this document. This project team carried out the market and demographic analysis included in this document and recommended the Strategy's Areas of Focus based on analysis and public input. DCD led the public engagement process for the project, partnering with multiple City departments

(including MPD, DNS, DPW and others) and other neighborhood stakeholders to conduct a series of meetings focusing on priority neighborhood issues. This engagement took place during the spring of 2019 and is detailed, along with the feedback received, later in this document. Community input was used by all of the partners working on the project to shape the Action Items they will carry out to help implement this Lincoln Village Opportunity Strategy. This list of Action Items and responsible parties is found at the end of this document, and can be used to track progress and accountability in carrying out the Strategy during the remainder of 2019 and beyond.

LINCOLN VILLAGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR AND THE NEAR SOUTH SIDE



LINCOLN VILLAGE OVERVIEW

The Lincoln Village Commercial Corridor extends from 5th Street on the east to 20th Street to the west and includes one block north and south of Lincoln Avenue, as well as Kosciuszko Park extending north to the Becher Street off-ramp. The commercial corridor is anchored by Kosciuszko Park and the Basilica on the eastern end, and Lincoln Avenue Elementary School on the western end. Freeway access to the neighborhood is located two blocks north of Lincoln Avenue, as the Becher Street ramp serves as a gateway to the neighborhood.

Located along the Corridor, Kosciuszko (“Kozy”) Park is a great asset and amenity for the Lincoln Village neighborhood. At 34 acres, Kosciuszko Park contains a network of winding paths that allow people to take strolls through the park, a public building space that is used to host a variety of community and kids programs and events, and a water park that can be enjoyed during the summer months. The park is located a block west of the Basilica of St. Josaphat.

DEMOGRAPHICS*

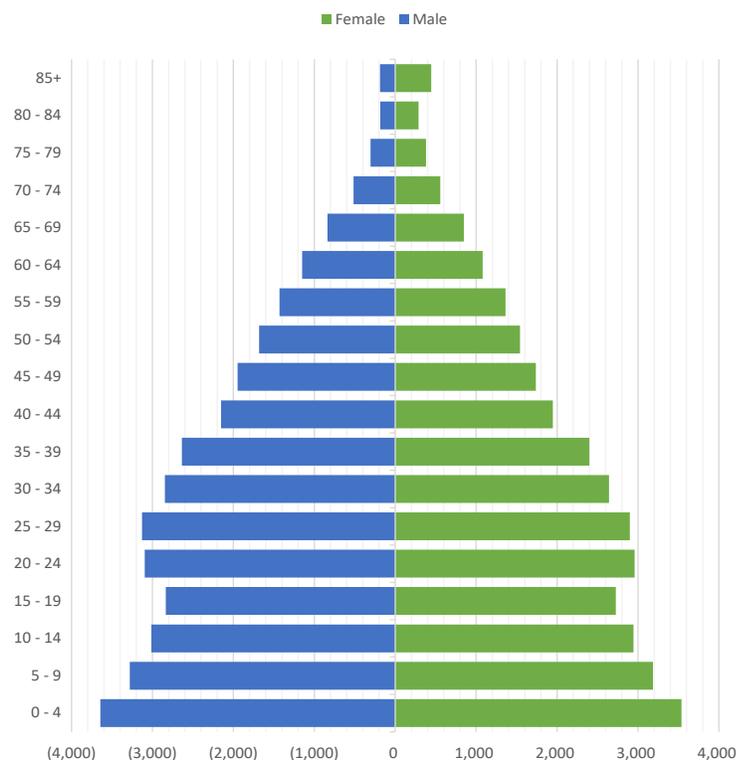
This Strategy is focused on the Lincoln Avenue Commercial Corridor and its immediate environs, which is located in the Near South Side Area. The Near South Side is home to about 68,000 residents. The population is about 66 percent Latino and is relatively young. The largest age group is in the 0-4 years old range. The median age is younger (27.5) in the Near South Side than in the City of Milwaukee (31.6), and household sizes are larger (3.4 persons per household compared to 2.5).

* Demographic and business estimates are from 2017 ESRI Business Analyst, ESRI 2018 Community Analyst, and 2017 5 Year American Community Survey (Census Bureau).

The area has a slightly below average median household income (\$32,500) in comparison to the City of Milwaukee (\$38,800).

Over half (52%) of workers are employed in the Service Industry, and 21% are in Manufacturing. The unemployment rate (about 9%) is slightly higher than the City of Milwaukee (6.2%).

2018 Population By Age

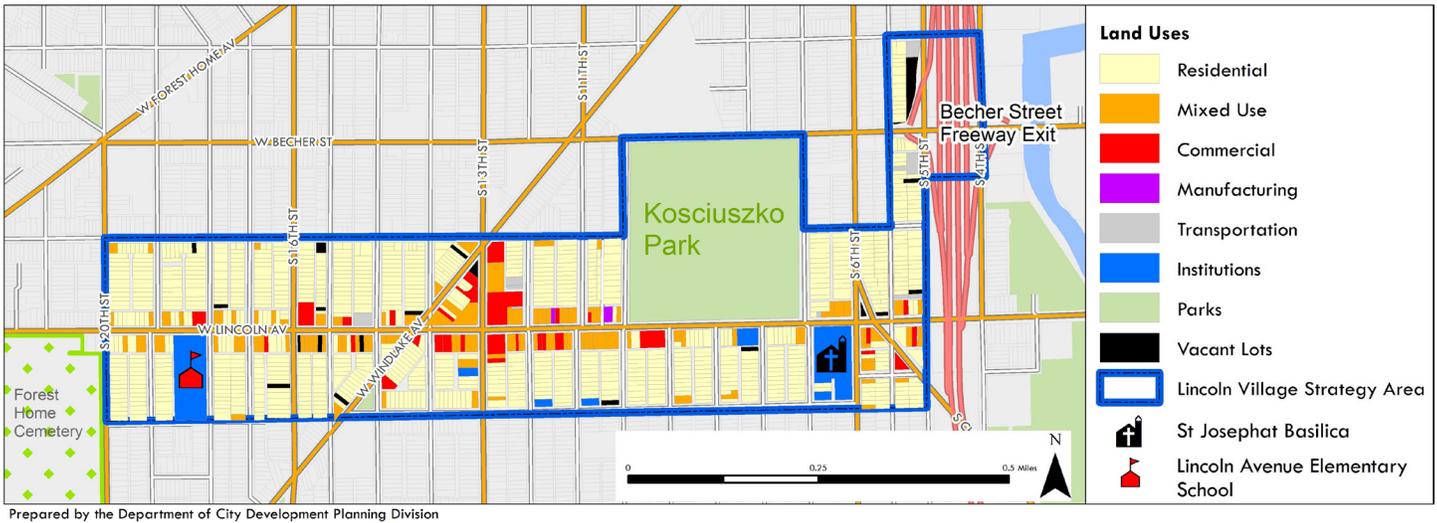


BUSINESS MIX OF THE CORRIDOR*

Lincoln Avenue is a very diverse corridor, home to a mix of retail, services, and restaurants. There are about 100 businesses employing approximately 840 people; most businesses within the Corridor are small, with fewer than 10 employees.

The two largest sectors present in the Corridor are ‘Retail Trade’ (26 businesses, 23%), and ‘Other Services’ (22 businesses, 20%). Other than an

LINCOLN VILLAGE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR



abundance of small grocery and convenience stores, the Retail Trade Sector is very diverse and eclectic. “Service” businesses are also very diverse, ranging from beauty salons and health care clinics, to business services. With 2 schools and 138 employees (16%), the ‘Education’ sector has a large presence in the Corridor.

CORRIDOR POTENTIAL

The Lincoln Avenue Corridor is a unique commercial district with great historic character and significant potential. Approximately 170 buildings along the Corridor date from the 1880’s to the early 1940’s. Recent efforts to restore, rehabilitate, and re-purpose some of the commercial buildings include Ben’s Cycle, Tres Hermanos, and Stefans Soccer. Continued momentum would help existing businesses grow, and attract businesses and customers to the area, looking for a unique shopping or dining experience.

While the Corridor houses over 100 businesses, there are also several other commercial corridors and nodes located within the Near South Side. As stakeholders move forward with planning for a business organization within the Corridor, they should be aware of the strengths and specialties of

the other commercial corridors in the area, in order to distinguish Lincoln Avenue.

A Retail Gap Analysis was conducted in conjunction with this Strategy. It examined retail segments where area residents may be shopping outside the neighborhood, and where new retail offerings in Lincoln Village may be successful. The results identified two specific types of businesses that could be targeted for recruitment to the Corridor: Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores, and Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores.

The Lincoln Avenue Corridor has several overlapping target markets: the persons that live in the Near South Side Neighborhood, the people that work along the corridor, and the people that visit the Basilica (either regularly or sporadically). According to [Trip Advisor](#), the Basilica is the top visitor attraction in Milwaukee, able to regularly draw potential customers from outside of the area. Based on this, the Corridor would likely be able to support a wider variety of restaurants and unique retail. A business association or organization should consider this information as it seeks to make the Corridor more competitive.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

Public and stakeholder input was critical in developing this Opportunity Strategy. The Department of City Development worked with local alderpersons representing the Lincoln Village area to convene nine stakeholder meetings to help identify challenges and opportunities and guide the direction of this Strategy.

Each of the activities/meetings focused on a specific topic to gather feedback from stakeholders on what matters most to the district. Representatives from multiple city departments participated in each of the stakeholder meetings so the city could shape its strategies and address neighborhood concerns.

JANUARY KICKOFF

During the January kickoff meeting, stakeholders gathered to express their interest and concerns, and to set the agenda for the Strategy. Issues discussed included the following:

- Focusing on Kosciuszko (Kozy) Park. Improving safety and changing perception of Kozy Park is imperative.
- More information about Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) is vital.
- The plan document and “Action Items” need to be coordinated with the deployment of summer policing strategies.
- Crime (specifically prostitution and solicitation) and litter are major issues.

MARCH 1ST, 2019: COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR WALK

The focus of the Corridor walk was to allow stakeholders a chance to discuss neighborhood safety and building conditions in the Corridor. Stakeholders observed that:

- Litter/trash along the sidewalks and roadways was a problem, and
- Storefront signage that violates city ordinances was prevalent.

MARCH 4TH, 2019: KOSCIUSZKO PARK

Stakeholders discussed issues and safety in and around Kosciuszko (Kozy) Park. Of note:

- Perception of Kozy Park is improving; new playground equipment and the Kosciuszko Community Center attract families; and, the recent monument restoration has been highly successful.
- Community events in the Park (Bloom and Groom, National Night Out, Polish Moon Ride) bring the community together.
- Kozy Park is used by a wide range of organizations and programs. For example, St. Josaphat Parish School and young people enrolled in Milwaukee Christian Center’s programming are exercising leadership in organizing peers and leading events in the Park.

In order to keep the positive momentum of improving the perception of Kozy Park, stakeholders agreed that improving park safety is imperative. Recent high-profile incidents in and around the park have been negative for the Park’s image, including;

- Kozy Park has become a gathering place for a group of “entrenched loiterers”, possibly including some homeless persons. This group gathers daily to drink, possibly use drugs, and engage in maladaptive behavior that impacts the ability for families and others to enjoy the Park.
- “Street harassment” (e.g. catcalling) of young women is frequent.



represent the businesses within the Lincoln Avenue Commercial Corridor.

Positive takeaways included;

- The Basilica is a draw for tourism and anchors the eastern end of the Corridor.
- The unique historic character and architecture of the corridor makes it attractive for pedestrians and businesses.

- Litter and trash in the park is a constant problem. In addition to food containers this includes the presence of alcohol bottles, needles and other drug paraphernalia, impacting the ability for children and pets to safely enjoy the Park. Milwaukee Christian Center, St. Josaphat Parish School, and County Park staff have had to adjust programming to keep youths inside the Community Center on certain days due to negative behavior in the Park.

- Drinking alcohol in the park without a county issued permit is illegal, and often ignored.

- Concerns about the physical upkeep of the Community Center were discussed. County budget issues make ongoing maintenance and improvements a challenge as the building approaches the end of its lifespan.

MARCH 8TH, 2019: LINCOLN AVENUE BUSINESS DISTRICT OPPORTUNITIES

Since the former Lincoln Village Business Association ceased operations in 2011, there has been no organization or organization representing the business interests of the Lincoln Avenue Commercial Corridor. This meeting was held to discuss the potential to revitalize an organization to

- Events such as the Polish Moon Ride (bicycle event) have been a successful draw.
- The commercial vacancy rate is low.
- Business owner’s have a strong interest in reviving some form of business organization to represent the needs of the Corridor.

Business owners/stakeholders also discussed their biggest concerns, which include;

- Distinct mis-perception of the neighborhood in terms of safety, specifically from S. 7th Street to S. 12th Street.
- Litter is an ongoing problem in the Corridor.
- The high cost of buying and renovating buildings due to their historic nature is challenging, and funding for improvements seems difficult to find.



- Although the commercial vacancy rates are low, the turnover rate for new businesses is high.

MARCH 15TH, 2019 - NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING WALK

Stakeholders conducted a neighborhood walk to observe housing conditions and identify key issues associated with the residences adjacent to the commercial Corridor. The walk focused on housing conditions and code violations, strategies on how to police and manage problem properties, information on city home rehabilitation programs, and observing the general condition of the neighborhood. A major theme of this walk was not only identifying residential properties that are out of compliance but gaining a better understanding of the processes that occur to rectify problems and bring problem properties up to code.



the Southside Organizing Center if interested in attending their upcoming meeting or receiving more information.

APRIL 10TH, 2019 - LINCOLN VILLAGE OPPORTUNITY STRATEGY MEETING

This meeting was an opportunity for the project team to present the strategy findings and recommendations, and for the various City of Milwaukee Departments to outline their strategies, answer questions, and gain feedback from the stakeholders and neighbors. Approximately 50 people attended this meeting.

The **6 Strategic Areas** (see page 8) were presented:

- Basilica as event space
- Business Organization (Business Association or BID)
- Streetscaping Ideas (street beautification)
- Priority Properties (Facade Improvements)
- Code enforcement
- Safety in Kosciuszko Park

APRIL 9TH, 2019: LINCOLN AVENUE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY MEETING

Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, the Lincoln Avenue School, and the Milwaukee Community Schools Partnership co-host a monthly Lincoln Avenue Neighborhood Safety meeting for the Lincoln Avenue Block Watch Group. City Staff, key stakeholders and representatives provided the Block Watch Group a status update on the Lincoln Village Opportunity Strategy, answered questions about the planning process, and invited neighbors to future meetings. Efforts were made to provide attendees with information about the potential formation of a business organization along the Corridor, and connect those attendees with the business stakeholders. Information about forming a “Friends of…” group for Kozy Park was also provided at this meeting; residents were invited to contact

In addition to their findings, the project team provided a survey to gain additional feedback on each of the 6 Strategic Areas. Attendees were asked to write comments and rank each of the 6 Strategic Areas in terms of what they thought was most to least important. Attendees at this meeting ranked improving safety in Kozy Park and organizing the businesses in the Commercial Corridor as their highest priorities, although all 6 areas were ranked very similarly. Comments from attendees included an overarching need to improve safety and cleanliness in the neighborhoods public spaces, to improve perception, and a strong desire for creating a gathering space.

MAY 10TH, 2019 - KOSCIUSZKO PARK FOLLOW UP MEETING

This meeting was an opportunity for stakeholders to address draft “Action Steps” regarding safety in Kozy Park and to continue formulating strategies

for Park safety, programming, and improvements.

MAY 14TH, 2019 - LINCOLN AVENUE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY MEETING

City staff presented materials from the April 10th Opportunity Strategy meeting to Block Watch group, including the 6 Strategic Areas presented at the April 10th meeting. The presentation and feedback session was provided in both Spanish and English. Like the April 10th meeting, attendees at this meeting were also given the opportunity to provide written and oral feedback, and rank the 6 Strategic Areas based on their preference. Attendees at this meeting ranked improving safety in Kozy Park and organizing the businesses in the Commercial Corridor as their highest priorities, although the results indicate that all 6 areas were relatively similar. Comments from attendees focused on improving safety and appearance including addressing litter and streetscaping.

THE 6 STRATEGIC AREAS

This planning process led to the identification of 6 Strategic Areas. These Strategic Areas are the focus of the overall recommendations in this section, and the detailed Action Items in the section that follows.

These are:

1. Using the Basilica as a community gathering or event space.
2. Organizing the businesses in the Lincoln Avenue Commercial Corridor so that they work together to address key issues and develop a strategy to make the Corridor more appealing.
3. Streetscaping (i.e., street beautification) to physically enhance the corridor, and make it more attractive to businesses and customers.
4. Priority Properties (i.e., facade improvements)

improving the exteriors of some of the commercial buildings along the corridor to make it more attractive and welcoming for businesses and consumers.

5. Code Enforcement by the various City of Milwaukee departments needs to be more adequate and consistent.
6. Safety in Kosciuszko Park; improving the image of the Park and ensuring safety and comfort for all its visitors is imperative for the Lincoln Village Neighborhood.

The numbering of the 6 Strategic Areas does not reflect a ranking system; each of the Strategic Areas is critical to improving the quality of life in Lincoln Village. The Action Items were tailored to these six



strategic areas in order to foster alignment between the efforts of the various public and private sector partners that are committed to the neighborhood.

1. BASILICA AS EVENT SPACE

The Basilica of St. Josaphat is a Roman Catholic Church built in 1901 by architect Erhard Brielmaier with interior paintings designed by Gonippo Raggi. The Basilica is one of 82 minor basilicas and modeled after St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. The church is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is designated as a Milwaukee Landmark. Recently, Basilica Foundation members have shown interest in becoming more involved in the local community; given this interest, the project team analyzed the potential to host community events on its grounds.

The project team studied the available locations, and determined that with a total of 44,000 square feet, Basilica’s three parking lots could provide adequate space for small to moderate sized community events, although the event space would need to be concentrated in the largest parking lot located at the corner of South 6th Street and West Hayes Avenue. The City of Milwaukee [Permit Guide](#) should be used as a resource to determine if a

permit is necessary for the type of events proposed.

ALTERNATIVE EVENT LOCATIONS: If the Basilica is unavailable, other spaces along the Corridor should be considered. For example, Lincoln Avenue itself could be a site location for a street festival (i.e., Brady Street Festival or Locust Street Festival in Riverwest). Kosciuszko Park, with open green spaces suitable for larger open outdoor events, could also be explored.

An organizing body such as a business association, local non-profit organization, or “Friends of…” group, would need to be responsible for event planning and execution. BID organizations are often well-suited to take on these types of responsibilities.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The project team presentation on April 10th, and DCD’s presentation to the Lincoln Block Watch on May 14th included the idea of using the Basilica’s parking lots as event space, and proposing potential uses or events such as; a weekly farmers market, makers fair, currency-less swap shop, or arts and crafts festival. Overall, community input was positive regarding arts, food, and cultural events; Bastille

Days or Jazz in the Park were used as examples of types events that could be hosted in the Basilica’s available space. Interest in ethnic concerts such as an annual Latin concert paired with unveiling of the Basilica’s newest improvements such as the lighting of the dome should act as a catalytic event bringing attention to the Basilica as the cultural center for the district. Attendees and survey respondents at both April 10th and May 14th meetings, were most interested in community events that focused on music, food, and culture. Attendees of the May 14th meeting were less concerned about the location of the events, but expressed more interest in events that would be able to bring the community together.

2. ORGANIZING CORRIDOR BUSINESSES

The second “strategic area” focuses on how the business owners within the Corridor can self-organize so that they may harness their collective voice to implement initiatives. Businesses within the Corridor had an area organization as recently as 2011; the Lincoln Village Business Association, Inc. The business association had a paid executive director position, and relied primarily on grants and voluntary dues as their primary sources of revenue.

In 2011, over 65% of the organization’s total revenue was from gifts and grants, while membership dues

represented 3.1%, of total revenues. With dwindling revenues and the end of the Main Street grant, the Lincoln Avenue Business Association dissolved.

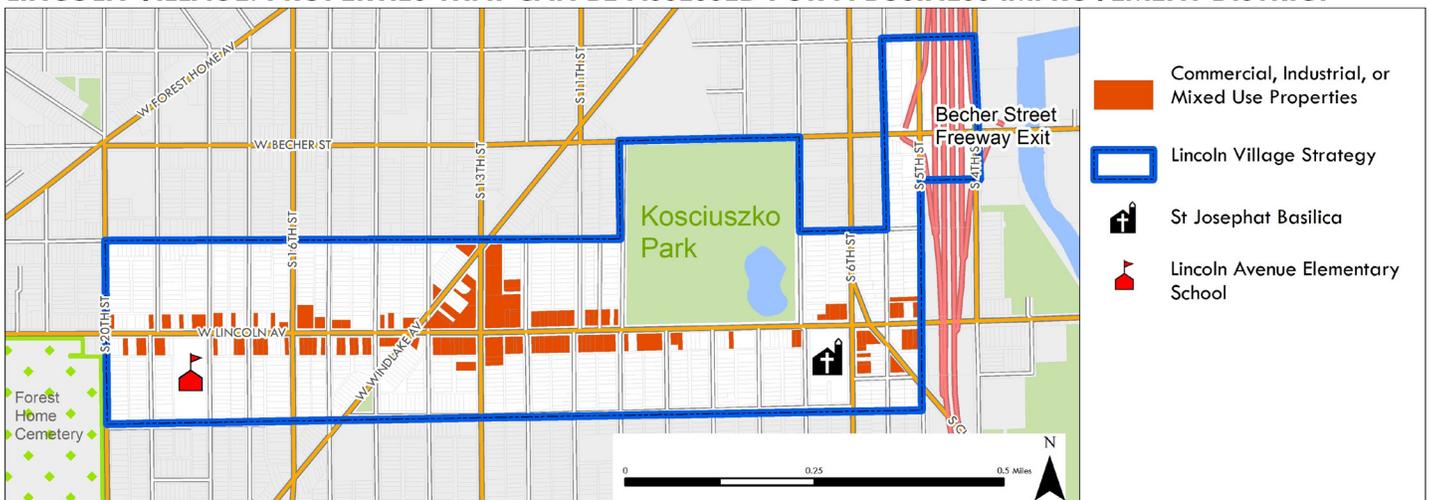
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

As this planning process began, the Corridor businesses expressed interest in exploring the possibility of either re-organizing the Business Association or organizing as a Business Improvement District (BID). BIDs provide an alternative to the Business Association model, through self-taxation which can provide sustainable funding, rather than grants or membership dues. BID expenditures can be used to improve cleanliness and safety of the neighborhood, and carry out other priority projects.

In the Lincoln Avenue Corridor, approximately 124 properties could qualify as assessable for a BID. The combined estimated assessed value (2018) of these properties is approximately \$21.6M. Based on assessment formulas used by similar BIDs, it is anticipated that a Lincoln Avenue BID could have an annual budget between \$27,000 - \$85,000, depending on the assessment formula selected.

The following pages contain a snapshot of other Near South Side area BIDs, highlighting the unique ways area business owners have elected to focus their collective resources.

LINCOLN VILLAGE: PROPERTIES THAT CAN BE ASSESSED FOR A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



Prepared by the Department of City Development Planning Division

POTENTIAL BID EXPENDITURES

Administrative Expenses

- the BID Executive can hire or contract for staff, or elect to have a board manage ongoing activities

Development, fundraising, and promotional activities

- branding
- marketing, to attract customers and potential businesses
- community events

Public Safety and **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)** practices, design, and activities;

- installation of lighting, security cameras, and sensor equipment
- purchase and install traffic calming infrastructure, and signage
- fund a Security Improvement Matching Grant Program
- invest in a partnership with MPD and Operation Impact program

Streetscaping and beautification to improve perception of a district

- planters, banners or trashcans
- landscaping
- gateway projects or public art
- cleaning services
- traffic calming and safety projects (i.e. bumpouts, speed humps)

Provide matching incentives to pair with Commercial Corridor Team Business Assistance grants

- facade grants program
- white box grants
- Retail Improvement Funds (RIFs)

BID CASE STUDIES

There are currently [31 BIDs](#) operating in the City of Milwaukee, including these three in the Near South Side:

CASE STUDY: BID 4 HISTORIC MITCHELL STREET MITCHELLSTREET.COM/

OPERATING SINCE: 1989

ASSESSMENT RATE: \$4.00 PER \$1,000 OF ASSESSED VALUE

MAX ASSESSMENT: \$2,500 PER YEAR

MIN ASSESSMENT: \$400 PER YEAR

NUMBER OF PROPERTIES IN DISTRICT: 123

TOTAL ASSESSMENT VALUE WITHIN DISTRICT: \$60M (2018)

BID INCREMENT: \$111,000

2018 BID EXPENDITURES:

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: \$2,700

MARKETING/PROMOTION: \$4,600

GRAFFITI REMOVAL: \$3,200

SAFETY/SECURITY: \$600

STREET IMPROVEMENTS: \$5,000 (LANDSCAPING, CLEANUPS, BINS)

PARTNERSHIPS: MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPT (BLOCK WATCH GROUP)

MAJOR EVENTS: SUN FAIR, FALL OPEN HOUSE, RESOURCE WORKSHOP

LINK TO HISTORIC MITCHELL STREET BID'S
2019 OPERATING PLAN

CASE STUDY: BID 50 – CRISOL CORRIDOR

[CRISOL CORRIDOR.ORG/](http://CRISOLCORRIDOR.ORG/)

OPERATING SINCE: 2014

LOCATION: SOUTH 13TH STREET AND WEST OKLAHOMA AVENUE

ASSESSMENT RATE: \$1.10 PER \$1,000 OF ASSESSED VALUE

MAX ASSESSMENT: \$1,500 PER YEAR

MIN ASSESSMENT: \$150 PER YEAR

NUMBER OF PROPERTIES IN DISTRICT: 118

TOTAL ASSESSMENT VALUE WITHIN DISTRICT: \$46M (2018)

BID INCREMENT: \$42,000

LINK TO CRISOL BID'S 2019 OPERATING PLAN

2019 BID EXPENDITURES:

STREET IMPROVEMENTS: MULTI-YEAR FUNDS (BIKE RACKS, PLANTERS)

SAFETY/SECURITY: \$15,000 - MPD'S SECURITY IMPROVEMENT MATCHING GRANT

MARKETING/PROMOTION: \$14,000 BILINGUAL MARKETING/RESOURCE MATERIALS,
BANNERS, WEBSITE

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: \$6,000 EVENTS/FUNDRAISERS (TASTE OF GATEWAY),
MOVIE IN THE PARK, SECRET SYMPHONY

CASE STUDY: BID 38 – CESAR E CHAVEZ DRIVE

CESARCHAVEZBID.ORG/

OPERATING SINCE: 2009

ASSESSMENT RATE: \$500 PER PROPERTY (FLAT FEE)

NUMBER OF PROPERTIES IN DISTRICT: 51

TOTAL ASSESSMENT VALUE WITHIN DISTRICT: \$12M (2018)

BID INCREMENT: \$25,500

2018 BID EXPENDITURES:

STREET IMPROVEMENTS: \$10,000 (STREET BEAUTIFICATION, CLEANUPS)

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: MULTI-YEAR FUNDS (THE FARM PROJECT*)

SAFETY/SECURITY: \$1,500 (CPTED - LIGHTING, CAMERAS, SENSORS)

MARKETING/PROMOTION: \$4,600

THE FARM PROJECT is about cultivating awareness of the Chavez Drive BID through events like **CICLOVIA MKE**. More information can be found [here](#)

LINK TO CESAR CHAVEZ BID'S 2019 OPERATING PLAN

The potential creation of a BID generated significant discussion among business owners during the creation of this Opportunity Strategy. In general, a BID board is made up of at least 5 members, of which the majority must be property or business owners within the district. The board members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by Common Council. The BID board is responsible for determining the formula used to assess the properties within the district and drafting, submitting, and carrying out their district's annual Operating Plan.

The annual Operating Plan outlines the use of annual revenues and provides guidelines for the development, maintenance, operation, and promotion of the BID. The operating plan includes: the assessment formula, all proposed annual expenditures, a description method for financing all estimated expenditures, and a description of how the creation of the BID supports development. The Operating Plan governs the operation of the BID during that calendar year, and can be revised annually in response to changing development needs and opportunities.

The City of Milwaukee plays an important, but mostly hands off role: approval of the operating plans, collecting and distributing the assessment (funding) for the BID, and providing technical assistance from the Department of City Development's Commercial Corridor Team. The Commercial Corridor Team also can provide access to various City funds and programs.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Participants at both meetings (April 10th and May 14th) were in favor of the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID) with one participant in favor of reviving the business association. Participants from the Lincoln Avenue Neighborhood Safety Meeting (May 14th) ranked the creation of a BID as their highest priority. They were interested

in learning more about whether a Lincoln Avenue BID would include their businesses (these were the business owners located in the western part of the Corridor). Also during the planning process, a group of area business owners began meeting to explore relaunching the Business Association with the possibility of exploring the formation of a BID.

3. STREETS CAPING

Streetscaping refers to all elements in the right-of-way (ROW) - roadway, trees, sidewalks, lighting and signs. Streetscaping is an essential component of the livability, vitality, and character of a neighborhood and commercial areas. Streetscaping elements can be used to enhance the safety, prosperity, and quality of life of citizens and businesses. Streetscaping along Lincoln Avenue should do more than provide vehicle access to its shops, it should also enhance pedestrian safety and bicycle access.

The City of Milwaukee's current [streetscaping guidelines](#) are available on-line. The City has identified several key ways in which streetscaping can add value to commercial corridors. First, a well-designed streetscape conveys that the area is maintained and cared for by its residents and business owners. Second, streetscaping can contribute to an improved quality of life through design and engineering enhancements, and can result in enhanced business opportunities and economic development. Finally, streetscaping can have a positive environmental effect on an area as sustainable features, like trees and bio-swales, are added which address storm water retention.

Currently, Lincoln Avenue has some elements of streetscaping; planters for potted landscaping are positioned along the sidewalk, banners or flag signs that are mounted on one side of some light poles, and a few U-shaped bicycle racks embedded in the sidewalk are located throughout the Corridor.

Streetscaping Elements in the Lincoln Avenue Corridor



The implementation of streetscaping is generally classified into two categories: short-term and long-term streetscaping activities. Short-term streetscaping are cost effective improvements that can be readily implemented between 3 and 24 months. Elements of short-term streetscaping include flower planters, banners on light poles, as well as re-stripping crosswalks and parking spaces.

Long-term streetscaping generally takes greater than 24 months from initial planning to installation; these projects are more comprehensive in scope. Examples include adding curb extensions, speed tables, or “bump-outs”, and planting sidewalk trees> These activities are usually done in partnership with the City’s Department of Public Works.

The success or failure of any streetscape project depends on continued, regular maintenance. Maintenance within the commercial corridor may come from local organizations (often BIDs) through maintenance agreements. The capital investment in a community through streetscaping be one that will have a lasting positive impact.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the March 1st Commercial Corridor Walk and the March 15th Neighborhood Housing Walk the issue of litter and keeping the Corridor and neighborhood looking clean arose as a major concern. Addressing streetscaping issues along the Corridor would necessitate the development of a business organization or BID.

Participants at both meetings (April 10th and May 14th) were in favor of streetscaping, improving the look of the Corridor, making it more cohesive, and controlling litter. Based on the input survey results, it was considered a high priority. Responses included that streetscaping is very important for the image of the area, particularly around cleanliness and controlling litter, although some concerns were raised about the cost and maintenance, and who would be responsible.

Suggestions included: branded trash cans, outdoor seating, and having prizes or recognition for beautification efforts.



Before

After

overall aesthetics of the Corridor, pedestrians will have a more connected and pleasing experience. Improvements also address the perception of safety. An open façade that allows people to look in and out of store fronts creates

4. PRIORITY PROPERTIES

At the April 10th meeting, project team presented several examples of “good” facades and provided information on how other businesses can improve their facades. Concentration on historic facades that complement the Basilica were highlighted as well as smaller improvements like painting and siding repairs.

The project team identified seventeen properties within the Corridor that needed facade improvements; issues include covered or filled-in windows, damage to exterior walls, windows or canopy and aesthetics that do not fit with the surrounding architecture. These properties could benefit the most from existing grants that the Commercial Corridor Team offers. These grants include [façade and signage grants](#), retail investment funds ([RIFs](#)), and [white box grants](#). The Commercial Corridor Team provides support, technical assistance, and business development resources, including grants and can provide focused support to these property owners to connect them with available funding.

Facade improvements can benefit an entire corridor in numerous ways. In addition to improving the

a more connected area reducing isolation. And ultimately, well-executed facade improvements can increase economic activity.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the March 1st Commercial Corridor Walk, stakeholders identified a number of properties that should be targeted for facade improvement or signage code enforcement. During the April 10th and May 14th meetings, participants suggested that there needs to more awareness of existing funding sources (like the White Box grants, RIFs, and facade and signage grant programs) made to business and property owners. Some suggested other funding sources or assistance (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, Department of City Development) or creating a matching fund within a future BID to help with the costs related to property improvements.

Also, given the historic nature of the buildings, respondents noted that it would be an asset to maintain the architectural integrity of buildings in the Corridor. One respondent suggested Historic Designation as a tool.

5. CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Department of Neighborhood Services (DNS) is tasked with code enforcement which was identified during the planning process as a priority for the area. Inspectors can respond to neighborhood issues, nuisance activities, and gain compliance of maintenance violations.



DNS's Commercial Enforcement Section is responsible for code compliance and enforcing building codes for commercial properties. They inspect buildings for fire and other safety codes, conduct facade inspections (for safety), enforce litter and improper disposal issues related to commercial properties, and enforce the City's Sign Ordinance ([brochure](#)).

The [Special Enforcement Section](#) within DNS is responsible for addressing both residential and commercial properties within the commercial Corridor. Special Enforcement often handles cases that have multiple or continuing actions.

DNS' [Residential Code Enforcement Section](#) is responsible for inspecting residential properties. In Lincoln Village, about 2/3's of households are renter households. Currently about 45 percent of area landlords reside within one of the Near South Side (53204, 53207, 53215) zip codes; however, the remaining 55 percent of landlords do not. As a strategy for encouraging code compliance, the Outreach

and Training Section of DNS should focus on connecting landlords with their [Landlord Training Program](#). This is an award winning program that teaches landlords best management practices, including keeping illegal activity off of properties and understanding codes and laws related to operating a rental property.

DNS also offers programs related to housing to assist with code compliance. The [Neighborhood Improvement Project](#) (NIP) program and [Code Compliance Loan](#) program assist homeowners in making repairs to remedy code violations.

The [Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation](#) (NIDC) [Strong Homes Loan Program](#) also provides partially forgivable loans to help homeowners with needed repairs. DNS and NIDC both have committed to taking steps to market these programs in Lincoln Village.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the March 1st Commercial Corridor Walk and the March 15th Residential Housing Walk, stakeholders observed numerous examples of code compliance problems throughout the Lincoln Village neighborhood. Two issues stood out; litter and signage. Litter is abundant throughout the

neighborhood, and includes issues with both commercial and residential owners and tenants properly maintaining or providing trash receptacles. Second, commercial signage violations are numerous; examples include covering up more than 1/3 of a storefront's window. Stakeholders asked DNS to focus enforcement on these types of violations.

During the April 10th and May 14th meetings, participants



were generally positive about DNS enforcing the existing ordinances, that neighbors and landlords need to have a better understanding of, and follow the codes, to improve the appearance of the neighborhood and Corridor.

Often, DNS inspectors are in the position of reacting to complaints (i.e., instances of graffiti, or unsafe conditions). In these circumstances, it is up to the property owner, neighbors, or often times, the renter to take it upon themselves to report a code violation. Participants stated that renters will often keep quiet about code violations for fear of conflict with their landlord or having to pay for repairs without restitution.

6.SAFETY IN KOSCIUSZKO PARK

Kosciuszko (Kozy) Park is a 36 acre Milwaukee County park with a fish-able pond, a playground, a small water park, and a recreational center; it is utilized by a variety of non-profit groups and schools in the area, with year round programming for kids. In 2013, the Restore Kosciuszko Monument Committee restored and re-dedicated a century-old statue of General Thadeusz Kosciuszko, an American Revolutionary War hero of Polish descent.

While Kozy Park remains a strong neighborhood anchor, business owners, residents, and groups active in the Park indicated that certain nuisance behaviors including drinking, drug use, and harassing behavior must be addressed for all users to feel safe and welcome in the park.

Kozy Park is part of the Milwaukee County Parks system and is under the jurisdiction of their parks department and the Milwaukee County Sheriff. MPD has been working with the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office to develop a strategy to reduce crime that occurs in the park and increase the safety of the

park for citizens. Additional presence from the MPD or the Sheriff's Office will help address crime that occurs in the park and will also help with perception. If the perception changes then residents will use the park more often which will then also increase the safety of Kozy Park.

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office needs to have strategic, engaged, and consistent presence this summer. The Sheriff's office committed to targeted patrols this summer and more proactive community engagement.



Developing strategies on changing the expectations of park behavior was supported as a key to improving both safety and perception of Kozy Park. This would include enforcing existing ordinances such as the prohibition of alcohol without a permit in County Parks. Posting signage to remind people of applicable park rules and relevant contact information for responding to problems was favored by some residents.

Engaging neighbors to become more involved in the Park is another strategy: the Southside

Organizing Center (SOC) is working with volunteers to bring additional neighbors to monthly cleanups. SOC is also working with the Kosciuszko Monument Committee and the Park People to determine if there is interest in creating a "Friends of..." group for Kozy Park. A "Friends of..." group could manage Park cleanup activities and help organize existing volunteers who currently help in the Park while work to attract resources to the Park. Also, SOC will use their social media accounts to alert current active stakeholders about park news and to publicize park events.

The Milwaukee County Parks Department Kosciuszko Community Center staff committed to taking a more proactive role in communicating with stakeholders about the Park's programming and issues within the Park. In the long term, Milwaukee County Parks Department identified a need to develop a long range facilities plan for the Kosciuszko Community Center.

During the planning process, the Community Development Grants Administration allocated funding to Journey House to support a Community Ambassador to work on Lincoln Avenue during the summer of 2019. The Ambassador program provides additional eyes on the street - and the park - to assist with cleanliness and observing and reporting potential problem issues.

COMMUNITY INPUT

During the April 10th and May 14th meetings, participants ranked Safety in Kozy Park as one of the highest priorities for the Strategy. Developing strategies on changing the expectations of park behavior and more frequent Sheriff's Office patrols were supported as a key to improving both safety and perception of Kozy Park.



ACTION ITEMS

The Lincoln Village Opportunity Strategy is made up of a series of coordinated actions that each committed business, resident, community organization, and government partner can carry out to achieve the overall goals of the Strategy. These action items are a collection of the commitments and recommendations that were made during the development of the Opportunity Strategy to address the 6 Strategic Areas that were the focus of the planning process.

RESIDENT AND COMMUNITY GROUP ACTIONS

1. The Southside Organizing Center (SOC) and the Kosciuszko Monument Committee will work with The Park People to establish a Friends of Kosciuszko Park organization to support park beautification, events, and safety.
2. Residents and other Kosciuszko Park stakeholders should continue to carry out cleanups and other park improvement projects. SOC and a potential Friends Of... group will assist in engaging a larger group of neighborhood residents in these efforts.
3. Journey House will deploy a newly-funded Neighborhood Ambassador to provide additional "eyes on the street" and general assistance with welcoming visitors and assisting with cleanup efforts along Lincoln Avenue during the Summer of 2019.
4. Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers' Department of Environmental Health will support other organization's efforts and will advocate for issues and policies related to the environmental health of the community including, but not limited to: waste management, green and gray infrastructure improvements, safety, and neighborhood beautification efforts.

BASILICA ACTIONS

1. The Basilica will utilize the September 2019 “Lighting of the Dome” event as a major neighborhood showcase, including area businesses and residents in the planning of the event.
2. After the “Lighting of the Dome” event is completed, the Basilica will evaluate how to best support or host similar community events in 2020 and beyond. This may include formation of an Event Committee that includes other neighborhood stakeholders to plan and execute events.
3. The Basilica will continue to partner with the Lincoln Village Business Association on events in the neighborhood that serve as an asset for neighbors, revitalize the area surrounding the Basilica, and showcase the area. This could include increasing hosting of community meetings, such as monthly MPD safety meetings.

LINCOLN AVENUE BUSINESS OWNER ACTIONS

1. Area business leaders will work to re-launch the Lincoln Village Business Association and consider future formation of a Business Improvement District. The formation of a BID would bolster the efforts of the Business Association by providing dedicated funding to implement priority strategies and access to additional resources. Technical assistance is available from the Department of City Development Commercial Corridors Team.
2. The Business Association will utilize available funding to carry out the short- and long-term street improvement projects recommended in the Lincoln Village Opportunity Strategy. This will require voluntary contributions to the Business Association, or the formation of a BID.
3. Property owners should maintain and improve their properties to the standards of this unique and historic commercial corridor. Owners should utilize city business assistance programs to help with eligible facade and signage improvements.

LINCOLN AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ACTIONS

1. Lincoln Avenue School will continue to uphold its core Community School pillars; parent engagement, sustainability, and safety to ensure Lincoln Avenue is a trusted and responsible neighborhood stakeholder.
2. Lincoln Avenue School will continue to make the facility available to host neighborhood safety and block watch meetings, and will also evaluate how to best support or accommodate other community events including BID activities.
3. Lincoln Avenue School recognizes the amount of waste and litter found in the neighborhood and will continue to build curriculum that educates students on the benefits of recycling, composting, and waste management.
4. Lincoln Avenue School will continue to advocate for increased neighborhood safety efforts including traffic calming and pedestrian safety for the families who attend the school and neighborhood stakeholders.
5. Lincoln Avenue School will foster and steward a relationship with the Lincoln Avenue BID to work toward common goals and initiatives.

DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

1. The Commercial Corridor Team will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance to area property owners as they work to revitalize the Lincoln Village Business Association and evaluate the creation of a Business Improvement District. If desired, this could include providing input on a potential operating plan and assessment formulas.
2. The Commercial Corridor Team will target the “priority properties” identified within this plan to encourage property and business owners to utilize the city’s business assistance programs.
3. NIDC will engage in targeted outreach with neighborhood groups adjacent to Lincoln Avenue to market the STRONG Homes Loan Program.
4. Planning will convene partners as necessary to advance the Strategy and utilize the city’s Design Review Team process to elevate design along the corridor on projects requiring city approvals.

DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES ACTIONS

During the Summer of 2019, DNS will carry out the following efforts in the Lincoln Village neighborhood:

1. Special Enforcement will survey the area for zoning violations (including focusing on signage and illegal occupancy), issue orders when warranted and assist MPD with identification and enforcement at nuisance properties.
2. Commercial Code Enforcement will conduct an initial comprehensive survey of the commercial buildings in the area, issue orders, and make referrals to available resources as warranted. They will perform regular checkups on nuisance properties to ensure progress is being made to come into compliance.
3. Residential Code Enforcement will conduct an 11 week (quarterly) inspection cycle in the neighborhood. They will focus on the following issues:
 - Residential property code violations with referrals for available resources
 - Parking issues on private properties including nuisance vehicles
 - Garbage issues
 - Illegal occupancy (residents or businesses illegally occupying a structure)

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ACTIONS

1. DPW will carry out a High Impact Paving project to repave Lincoln Avenue in Lincoln Village during 2020. High Impact Paving can be completed in a matter of days, eliminating the challenges of a lengthy construction period. Additionally, in the coming years, DPW will evaluate High Impact Paving for Becher Street west of I43/I94.
2. DPW will evaluate options to slow traffic and improve safety on South 5th Street between the Becher St. Off ramps from I43/I94 and Lincoln Avenue, as well as along Lincoln Avenue itself.
3. DPW will work with State of WI Department of Transportation to evaluate long-term realignment options for Becher St. ramps that improve this gateway to Lincoln Village. In the interim, pursue lighting, mural, or other options to beautify the Becher St. Underpass.
4. DPW will work with Business Association to evaluate opportunities for Association or BID-led streetscaping improvements.

MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIONS

1. MPD will engage in targeted patrols and targeted deployment strategies to address quality of life concerns and criminal behavior in Lincoln Village. This includes additional bicycle and foot patrols and enforcing City ordinances relating to these issues.
2. MPD will partner with Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department to ensure that criminal activity within Kosciuszko Park is addressed. Ongoing communication will be required given the frequency with which potential criminal activity in the park spills over or impacts the surrounding neighborhood, and vice versa.
3. MPD will partner with DNS and the Community Prosecution Unit to identify nuisance properties, especially ones that may be harboring drug or prostitution activity, and then aggressively enforce nuisance statutes against property owners.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY AGENCY ACTIONS

1. The Sheriff's Department will maintain a routine presence of Sheriff's deputies in Kosciuszko Park. The Sheriff's Department should remain in frequent, proactive communication with MPD and neighboring stakeholders about issues in the Park to ensure it is a safe place for neighborhood children and families.
2. Milwaukee County Housing Division will continue to provide homeless outreach services on a regular schedule at Kosciuszko Park and the Becher St. underpass to help individuals in those areas secure permanent housing.
3. Over the long term, County Parks staff and other stakeholders should evaluate the Kosciuszko Community Center's anticipated lifespan and the investments and partnerships required to ensure that the facility continues to serve the needs of the surrounding community.
4. Milwaukee County Parks will create a resource handout that can be shared with area stakeholders to identify key phone numbers to call for issues in Kosciuszko Park. They will also explore including this information, as well as information about County ordinances about drinking and hours of operation, at appropriate places within the park.

LINCOLN VILLAGE OPPORTUNITY STRATEGY CONTACT INFORMATION

LINCOLN VILLAGE COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

THE BASILICA FOUNDATION: COLLEEN CHENEY-TRAWINSKI 414.902.3524

ORGANIZING BUSINESS ASSOCIATION: JOHN ROZGA/ROZGA FUNERAL HOMES 414.671.5200

SIXTEENTH STREET COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION: STEPHANIE MERCADO 414.897.5596

COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR: REGINA STIEBER 414.902.9734

SOUTHSIDE ORGANIZING CENTER: TRAVIS HOPE 414.672.8090

CITY OF MILWAUKEE GOVERNMENT PARTNERS:

DISTRICT 12: ALDERMAN JOSE PEREZ 414.286.2861

DISTRICT 14: ALDERMAN TONY ZIELINSKI 414.286.3769

MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT, DISTRICT TWO: CAPTAIN ALEX RAMIREZ

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER: JOSE ACEVEDO 414.935.7728

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER: ELIEL CONTRERAS 414.935.7728

COMMUNITY PROSECUTION UNIT OFFICER: MATTHEW DIENER 414.935.7763

COMMUNITY PROSECUTION UNIT OFFICER: KEVIN VODICKA 414.935.7763

DISTRICT TWO MAIN LINE: 414.935.7222

MPD'S NON EMERGENCY NUMBER: 414.933.4444

MILWAUKEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT PARTNERS:

MILWAUKEE COUNTY PARKS, KOSCIUSZKO CENTER MANAGER: RILEY GARCIA 414.645.4624

MILWAUKEE COUNTY HOUSING DIVISION: HOUSING FIRST OUTREACH 414.278.4678

MILWAUKEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE: TED CHISHOLM 414.278.4633

SHERIFF'S NON EMERGENCY NUMBER 414.278.4788

CITIZEN COMPLAINT WEBSITE: [HTTPS://COUNTY.MILWAUKEE.GOV/EN/SHERIFF/CONTACT/CITIZEN-COMPLAINT-FORM](https://county.milwaukee.gov/en/Sheriff/Contact/Citizen-Complaint-Form)

OR DOWNLOAD THE MILWAUKEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE WEB APP ON YOUR PHONE