

CHAPTER 5: CATALYTIC PROJECTS

The catalytic project recommendations for the Near South Side are intended to promote the implementation of the plan goals and objectives. The catalytic projects will help increase the value of surrounding properties, show neighborhood progress and stability, represent visible investment in the planning area and spur additional investment. Some of the projects are currently underway and should continue, other projects should begin immediately and other projects may require a long-term vision because they are contingent on private property owners and the consolidation of properties. See Map 16 for general catalytic project locations.

CATALYTIC PROJECT #1 - AMERICAN SYSTEM-BUILT HOMES

LOCATION

The homes are located along Burnham Street between Layton Boulevard and 28th Street.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The block contains six homes, known as the “American System-Built” homes, which were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1915 as a model for quality affordable housing. The materials for the homes were pre-cut in a factory and then assembled on-site. The process cut down on wasted materials and avoided the cost of skilled on-site labor.

Frank Lloyd Wright® Wisconsin Heritage Tourism Program, a non-profit organization, is working to restore this block of historic houses after receiving a Save America’s Treasures grant in 2006. Three homes were purchased and will be restored. One of the single family homes will be a museum, open to the public that will provide educational opportunities for children, architectural students, professionals, academics, the general public, and neighborhood residents. The other homes will be restored and maintained as residential units, providing quality housing for the neighborhood.



VISION

The restoration of these homes can be seen as catalytic on multiple levels. First, it would provide educational opportunities for area students to learn about architecture, historic restoration, quality affordable housing, Frank Lloyd Wright, energy efficiency, and construction. Second,

the increased tourism could strengthen local commercial districts. Commercial areas and other attractions in the area could be strengthened to provide opportunities for other venues to benefit from visitors coming to the neighborhood. Third, the renovated homes will add value to the existing neighborhood and encourage additional home renovations.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for this catalytic project include:

- Develop interpretive signage and public art.
- Develop wayfinding signage to direct people to the Frank Lloyd Wright homes.
- Encourage the restoration and preservation of all Frank Lloyd Wright homes on this block.
- Increase awareness of these homes and promote them as historic, educational and economic resources.
- Create a local historic tour brochure that highlights the American System Built homes.
- Encourage quality infill affordable housing throughout the Near South Side that is modeled after the ideal represented in the American System-Built Homes designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

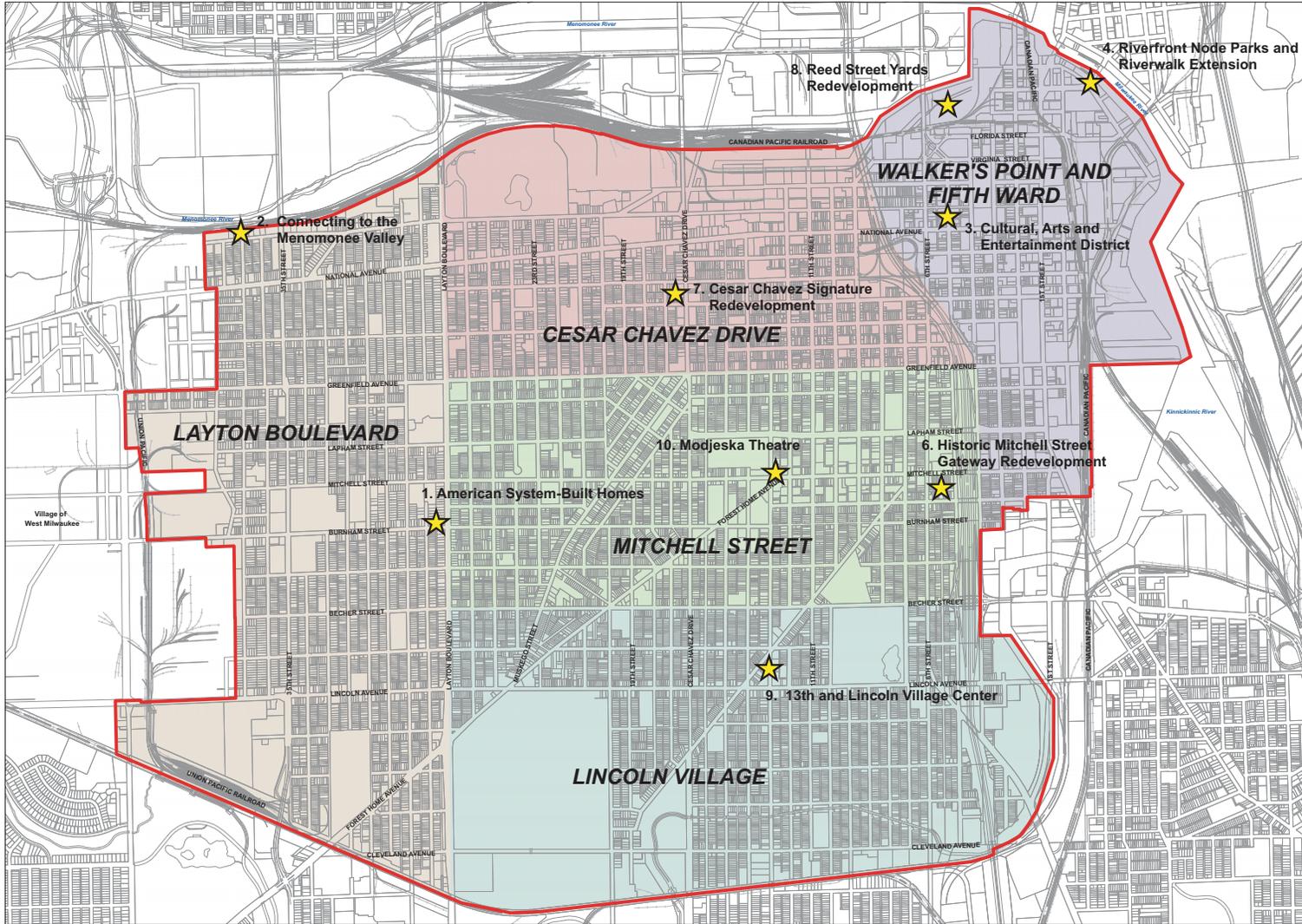
Responsible parties for this catalytic project include:

- Frank Lloyd Wright® Wisconsin Heritage Tourism Program
- Private property owners
- Local businesses
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning
- Visit Milwaukee
- City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission
- Layton Boulevard West Neighbors

TIMING

Work on this catalytic project could begin immediately. Three of the homes are currently being renovated and the museum is open to the public during construction.

MAP 16: CATALYTIC PROJECTS



Legend

- ★ Catalytic Projects
- Plan Boundary

Catalytic Projects:

1. American System-Built Homes
2. Connecting to the Menomonee Valley
3. Cultural, Arts and Entertainment District
4. Riverfront Node Parks and Riverwalk Extension
5. Alley Gate Pilot Program (Not on Map)
6. Historic Mitchell Street Gateway Redevelopment
7. Cesar Chavez Drive Signature Redevelopment
8. Reed Street Yards Redevelopment
9. 13th and Lincoln Village Center
10. Modjeska Theatre



CATALYTIC PROJECT #2 - CONNECTING TO THE MEMOMONEE VALLEY

LOCATION

These project locations are adjacent to the Near South Side Plan boundary and extend through the Menomonee Valley, Silver City and Clark Square neighborhoods and west, via the Hank Aaron State Trail.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The catalytic project includes residential, industrial and underutilized rail yard uses. There is little access between the Near South Side neighborhoods on the south Valley bluff into the Menomonee Valley itself. There is a tunnel that was used by workers from the neighborhood to access their jobs in the Valley near 37th Street, but this has been sealed off after jobs left, maintenance and regular use declined, and criminal activity began.

VISION

Connecting to the Menomonee Valley is seen as a catalytic project for the Near South Side because the Valley will provide convenient access to jobs and recreational amenities that are limited in the dense residential neighborhoods of the Near South Side. The catalytic project entails a series of four interconnected projects that will physically reconnect the Menomonee Valley to the Near South Side and the surrounding neighborhoods, providing pedestrian access to jobs and recreation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for this catalytic project include the implementation of the following projects.

HANK AARON STATE TRAIL SYSTEM

The Hank Aaron State Trail is a 7-mile paved trail between Miller Park and Lakeshore State Park for bicyclists, walkers, runners, and skaters. In 2010, construction of the west extension of the Trail will take place, running from the Menomonee Valley through the VA Grounds, State Fair Park, past the Milwaukee County Zoo, meeting the Oak Leaf Trail in Underwood Creek Parkway. In 2012, an east extension through the 24-acre Hank Aaron State Trail Natural Area will be constructed, which will connect to the Mitchell Park Domes via a bike/pedestrian bridge. More than 400,000 people live within a 15-minute bike ride of the Trail and use it regularly to reach job, recreation, and entertainment destinations.



VALLEY PASSAGE

The Valley Passage, to open in 2010, is a bike and pedestrian connection between the Menomonee Valley and the Silver City neighborhood. At 37th and Pierce Streets, the Passage forms a winding pathway down, through an underpass beneath the railroad track, and meeting with the east/west extension of the Hank Aaron State Trail, then crosses the Menomonee River as a bike/pedestrian bridge that aligns with the existing Hank Aaron State Trail along the north bank of the river.

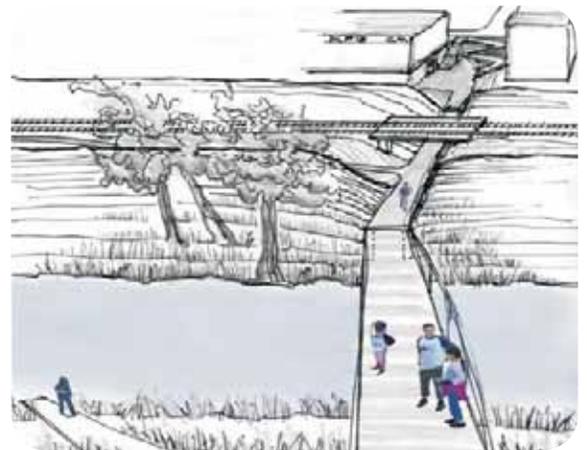


Image courtesy of Menomonee Valley Partners

In addition to the reconstruction and re-opening of the tunnel, the following additional recommendations for the Silver City area are included to create bookends on both National Avenue and Pierce Street that develop a synergy between Silver City, the Menomonee Valley and Miller Park:

- Improve the public realm between the Silver City Main Street and the 37th Street tunnel to encourage foot traffic. Amenities could include public open space, public art, benches, way-finding signage and landscaping.
- Encourage mixed uses along Pierce Street and adjacent to the tunnel that serve and increase foot traffic. Developments surrounding the tunnel should utilize building facades and windows that are open to the public realm and provide ‘eyes on the street.’
- Promote Silver City’s proximity to Miller Park with the new 37th Street tunnel and build relationships with the Milwaukee Brewers and Brewers Enterprises.
- Encourage new mixed use developments between 38th and 36th streets on National Avenue that include first floor retail space and affordable housing units on the upper floors.

MITCHELL PARK DOMES BRIDGE

The Mitchell Park Domes Bike/Pedestrian Bridge, to be constructed in 2012, will connect the Menomonee Valley to the Layton Boulevard and Clark Square neighborhoods. It will also be a connection between the County’s Mitchell Park and the Hank Aaron State Trail, a recreational amenity and ecological corridor.

HANK AARON STATE TRAIL NATURAL AREA

The Hank Aaron State Trail Natural Area is being developed on 24 acres of land (historically known as Airline Yards) that runs beneath the 27th and 35th Street Viaducts between the Menomonee River and the railroad tracks along the Valley’s bluffs. This project will be a complete ecological restoration, creating a large public natural area that recreates mounds in characteristic historic glacial forms, prairie, oak savannah, and wetland ecosystems, provides river access for fishing and canoeing, and serves as the basis of an urban environmental education program serving neighborhood schools through the Urban Ecology Center branch.



Image courtesy of Menomonee Valley Partners

URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER

The Urban Ecology Center is a nationally recognized environmental education center and community center with two Milwaukee locations. The Center has been asked to open a branch in the Menomonee Valley in 2011. The Center will serve schools on the south side of Milwaukee and will use the Hank Aaron State Trail Natural Area as their outdoor science classroom. When fully established, the branch will have 22 south side schools participating in their science curriculum and will serve 10,000 youth annually.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Responsible parties for these catalytic projects include:

- City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works
- City of Milwaukee Department of City Development
- Milwaukee County Parks Department
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Menomonee Valley Partners
- Urban Ecology Center
- Private developers and property owners

TIMING

The design and engineering work for the Valley Passage is underway. The corresponding projects are expected to be finished in 2012. However, ongoing efforts will be required for the Silver City neighborhood to create a synergy between the area and the Valley.

CATALYTIC PROJECT #3 - CULTURAL, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

LOCATION

The proposed project is generally bounded by the 6th Street corridor to the west, Virginia Street to the north, South 4th Street to the east, and Washington Street to the south.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

The area has architecturally significant structures including some that are historic and is located within the Historic Walker's Point neighborhood. The area already contains a concentration of ethnic restaurants, entertainment establishments and other businesses that draw people from the greater metropolitan area. Some of those establishments include: ethnic restaurants such as; La Perla, La Fuente, Botana's and Conejito's Place; the Council for Spanish Speaking, a Milwaukee Ballet school branch, and Bern Office Systems. Redevelopment is occurring to the north and east of this area. Additional development and redevelopment opportunities within this area exist on vacant and underutilized parcels.



Illustration by BMR Design Group

VISION

Create a cultural, arts and entertainment district that would promote Hispanic and other ethnic group businesses and cultural facilities within a concentrated area. The district would include a mixture of uses including arts, entertainment venues, retailers, restaurants, museums, cultural attractions, office space, public squares and limited residential uses. The creation of a dedicated nonprofit organization or business improvement district would be required to promote the development of the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for this area include:

- Encourage the creation of a dedicated nonprofit organization to promote the development of this area and consider the creation of a Business Improvement District. The organization should confirm the area's identity, undertake marketing initiatives, promote business development, and develop a detailed redevelopment strategy.
- Fifth Street should be the main focal point of the district with a grouping of intense uses that activate the street front and enhance the pedestrian realm.
- Sidewalks along 5th Street should be extra wide where feasible to accommodate pedestrian traffic and store fronts should activate the street.
- Encourage a mixture of uses that bring people to the area all days of the week and during the day and night.
- The scale of new infill development should be compatible with the existing development. Building and storefront rehabilitation for 5th Street is also highly encouraged.
- Encourage signature redevelopment projects at the intersections of 5th and 6th streets with National Avenue through rehabilitation of the existing buildings with façade grants and other tools.
- Encourage a signature redevelopment project to the east of the 6th Street roundabout if the Coakley property becomes available for redevelopment.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

For the cultural/entertainment district to succeed a new nonprofit organization should form to oversee the revitalization of the area and to promote a desired mixture of uses within the district. A local organization such as the Hispanic Chamber of

Commerce in conjunction with local businesses and property owners could spearhead the formation of this group. Other responsible parties could include:

- City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission
- City of Milwaukee Department of City Development
- United Community Center (UCC), Latino Performing Arts, Hispanic Chamber, Council for Spanish Speaking
- Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
- Private property owners, business owners and developers

TIMING

The momentum for a cultural, arts and entertainment district in this area already exists and efforts are underway to look at the formation of a potential business improvement district. As a result, efforts to formalize this area as a cultural, arts and entertainment district could begin immediately. This effort will require the coordination and involvement among multiple responsible parties to implement this project.

CATALYTIC PROJECT #4 - RIVERFRONT NODE PARKS AND RIVERWALK EXTENSION



NEAR SOUTH SIDE
AREA PLAN

LOCATION

This catalytic project extends along the Menomonee, Milwaukee and Kinnickinnic rivers and canals.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The northeast side of the planning area abuts the Menomonee, Milwaukee and Kinnickinnic rivers and canals. The Riverwalk has been extended into the Fifth Ward where new developments have occurred. However, a large portion of the waterways in this area do not contain Riverwalk. Also, there is no current mechanism in place to preserve any areas along the river for public access or open space and there are limited parks and open spaces within the neighborhood.

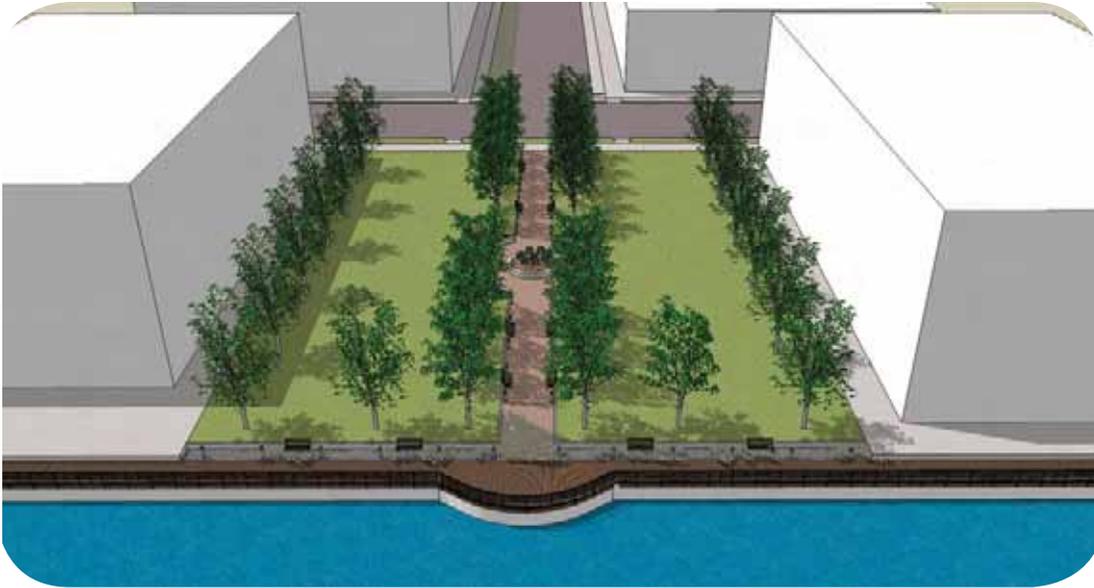
VISION

This catalytic project is envisioned as a system of fingerlike park space nodes along the rivers and canals that are connected by Riverwalk. The nodes would generally be located where existing and future roadways terminate at the rivers and canals and at other designated places along the waterways. The nodes would provide new green space opportunities and provide public access to the water. They would also maintain and create view sheds to the waterways.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for this catalytic project include:

- Develop a mechanism to preserve the space for river node parks prior to development occurring. When necessary, designated roadway stubs should be utilized for public open space purposes and maintained in a conservation easement.
- River node parks should be primarily landscaped areas that contain vegetation, grass and other natural plantings; hardscape should be limited. Other public amenities that activate the public realm such as benches, fountains, activity areas, outdoor recreational areas play equipment, public art and educational activities related to the natural environment are encouraged.



Illustrations by BMR Design Group

- Riverfront node parks should be located in the following general areas: Water and Bruce streets; Water and Florida streets; Water and Oregon streets; 1st and Seebth streets; 3rd and Seebth streets. (See graphic for more specific locations.) Additional locations for river node parks are also encouraged. An extension of the system is also encouraged to the west along the Burnham Canal and to the south to Greenfield Avenue along the Kinnickinnic River as those areas redevelop.
- Focus preservation efforts for river node parks in areas that are likely to see development in the short term.

- Encourage development around the river node parks, but do not allow vehicular access into the park to serve the buildings. Pedestrian access to the buildings is encouraged as well as businesses that promote pedestrian activity along the river node parks.
- Each river node park should have a special character that reflects the surrounding natural and built environments.
- Space for river nodes parks and Riverwalk should be preserved and implemented regardless of the adjacent land uses.
- A funding mechanism for the river node parks and Riverwalk extension should be identified.
- Create design guidelines for the Riverfront Node Parks and Riverwalk extension and incorporate them into the existing Riverwalk Overlay District.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

The responsible parties for this catalytic project include:

- Property owners, businesses and developers adjacent to waterways
- City of Milwaukee Department of City Development
- City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works
- The 5th Ward Development Association
- Department of Natural Resources

TIMING

The city's current system for implementing Riverwalk should be continued along all rivers and canals in this area as development occurs. Preserving space for the river node parks should begin immediately to prevent spaces from being developed or roadways from being improved. Construction of the river node parks would likely occur at the time adjacent parcels are redeveloped.

CATALYTIC PROJECT #5 - ALLEY GATE PILOT PROGRAM

LOCATION

This catalytic project applies to the entire Near South Side planning area.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Criminal activity in many alleys in the Near South Side is an increasing problem. As problems persist, residents avoid the area, creating a haven for nuisance behavior and criminal activity. The alleys become dumping grounds for garbage and pose a threat to public health and safety.



Images courtesy of Community Greens/Ashoka



Images courtesy of Community Greens/Ashoka

VISION

The vision for this catalytic project is to create a pilot program in the Near South Side that allows the gating and greening of alleys. The primary purpose of this program is to empower residents to reclaim their neighborhood space and achieve the goals they have for safety and beautification, while creating shared social space. Residents would determine how the program is implemented on their block. The treatment of the alley should reflect its configuration and use, the need for emergency vehicle and sanitation access, and the degree to which residents wish to beautify or green the alley.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to implement this project include:

- Begin a community outreach program to educate and build public support for the program.
- Based on resident support, identify three locations to pilot the project.
- Require residents to be responsible for the cost of gates and other alley amenities. However, grants and other funding mechanism should be explored to reduce the cost to residents.
- Create an ordinance that enables alley gating and greening and sets the parameters for the program.
- Incorporate a resident-based and local public involvement strategy to provide ongoing resources and support.
- Track police statistics and self-reporting of criminal activity to determine the quantitative results of the program and determine where improvements can be made.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Responsible parties and resources to provide support and assistance for this project include:

- City of Milwaukee
- City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works
- City of Milwaukee Police Department
- City of Milwaukee Office of Sustainability
- Local community organizations
- www.communitygreens.org
- Residential property owners

TIMING

Work on this catalytic project could begin immediately.



Illustration by BMR Design Group

CATALYTIC PROJECT #6 - HISTORIC MITCHELL STREET GATEWAY

LOCATION

The project area is located at the eastern end of the Historic Mitchell Street commercial corridor and is highly visible from I-94 / I-43, which runs next to and parallel to 5th Street. The block is bounded by 6th Street to the west, Historic Mitchell Street to the north, 5th Street to the east and Maple Street to the south.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project area was identified through the public involvement process and planning analysis as an area that could improve the residential and business environment on and around Historic Mitchell Street.

Currently, several commercial properties front the south side of Historic Mitchell Street with residential uses predominately filling the remainder of the block. The block has a disjointed street and alley pattern with a lack of through streets in the central and southern portion of the block. Several small cottage homes are also located within interior alley areas and have limited street access. New investment has occurred in close proximity to this site including new mid-sized mixed use development to the west along Historic Mitchell Street. However, Mitchell St. does not currently have much commercial presence facing I-94 / I-43.

VISION

Create a master plan that builds upon the historic corridor's current revitalization efforts and acts as an eastern gateway for Historic Mitchell Street. The master plan should call for the staged preservation and rehabilitation of some of the existing buildings as well as new in-fill or replacement buildings, depending on specific conditions and locations.

This high visibility Historic Mitchell Street gateway should attract visitors to the shopping district from a regional trade area. A gateway building on 5th Street, possibly housing a new fresh produce market, would help identify Mitchell St. as a unique shopping district. In addition, the platting and internal circulation pattern should be redesigned to create a more cohesive development pattern and provide quality housing for local residents at price levels appropriate for current residents in the neighborhood.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a master plan for the block that:

- Includes a mixed use gateway development along 5th Street that could include a market place.
- Improves the platting and internal circulation pattern.
- Provides a variety of residential uses including duplexes, town homes or row houses that include a mixture of market rate and subsidized housing options.
- Maintains a continuous and consistent street frontage along Historic Mitchell Street that supports pedestrian activity.

Where possible, respect existing historic structures and reflect traditional patterns of development in the Historic Street Historic District.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Responsible parties for this catalytic project include:

- Private property owners, businesses, and developers
- Mitchell Street Business Improvement District
- City of Milwaukee Department of City Development
- City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works

TIMING

The majority of the commercial parcels facing the south side of Mitchell Street have a single owner, which provides opportunity to advance potential development along the street. However, the remaining portion of the block consists of multiple property owners and will require long term strategies for redevelopment.

CATALYTIC PROJECT #7 - CESAR CHAVEZ DRIVE SIGNATURE REDEVELOPMENT

LOCATION

The project is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Cesar Chavez Drive and Mineral Street.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Several underutilized buildings, a grocery store and a surface parking lot are currently located along Cesar Chavez Drive. This site is toward the north end of the Cesar Chavez business district which has been experiencing new development and redevelopment. Specifically, a new El Rey grocery store was developed across the street which acts as major draw and anchor to this area.



Illustration by BMR Design Group

VISION

This signature redevelopment project would create a powerful indication of revival for the Cesar Chavez corridor. The project would enhance Cesar Chavez Drive with architecture and uses that relate to the existing corridor and would compliment the new El Rey grocery store. It would also act as a model for other mixed use developments and would provide new affordable housing opportunities and first floor commercial space. In addition, the perimeter of the site would be designed to accommodate local vendors selling local products.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for this catalytic project include:

- Develop a new mixed use signature redevelopment that includes first floor retail and residential on the upper floors. Residential units should be a mixture of market rate and subsidized units.
- The design, architecture and uses should relate to the Cesar Chavez Drive corridor and serve as a model mixed-use redevelopment project.
- A mixture of market rate and subsidized housing units are encouraged.

- The development should be compatible with the urban format and have buildings at the street edge with limited setbacks from the property lines. Surface parking (if any) should be limited to the west side of the site and drive thru uses should be discouraged. Underground parking is preferred.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Responsible parties for this catalytic project include:

- Private property owners, businesses, and developers
- Cesar Chavez Business Improvement District
- City of Milwaukee Department of City Development

TIMING

Currently most of the parcels within the catalytic project boundaries are owned by a single owner, which could expedite the opportunity for the development of this catalytic project in the short term.

CATALYTIC PROJECT #8 - REED STREET YARDS REDEVELOPMENT

LOCATION

The project is generally bounded by the 6th Street Viaduct on the west, the Menomonee Canal to the north, 3rd Street to the east and the railroad tracks to the south.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project is located on the single largest developable parcel on the Near South Side, an 18-acre site that contains mostly vacant land, ideally located to become the next wave of downtown-oriented development that has been occurring in the Fifth Ward. The site has excellent proximity to downtown Milwaukee and is at the junction

of the Historic Walker's Point neighborhood and the Fifth Ward. In addition, the site is adjacent to and surrounded by many new and existing developments such as the Harley-Davidson Museum, Iron Horse Hotel and The Tannery office complex. The site also fronts a portion of the Menomonee Canal that provides unique waterfront opportunities. Despite the site's assets, it has several challenges including potential contaminated soils, poor soil conditions, lack of roadway access and limited visibility from arterial roadways.

VISION

Redevelopment of the Reed St. Yards should catalyze the revitalization of the entire Reed Street District and give it a whole new image that combines old and new Milwaukee. Rather than an isolated project, this redevelopment is meant to tie into and contribute to existing and potential developments on the streets around it: 6th Street, Florida Street, and especially 2nd Street (Historic Reed Street), which should serve as the district's main street. The redevelopment of this site should incorporate a mixture of high quality development potentially focused on research with taller building configurations that are designed to maximize value and open space and create access to the water. The concept could be similar to the Lakeshore East project in Chicago, IL, but at a smaller scale.



Illustration by BMR Design Group

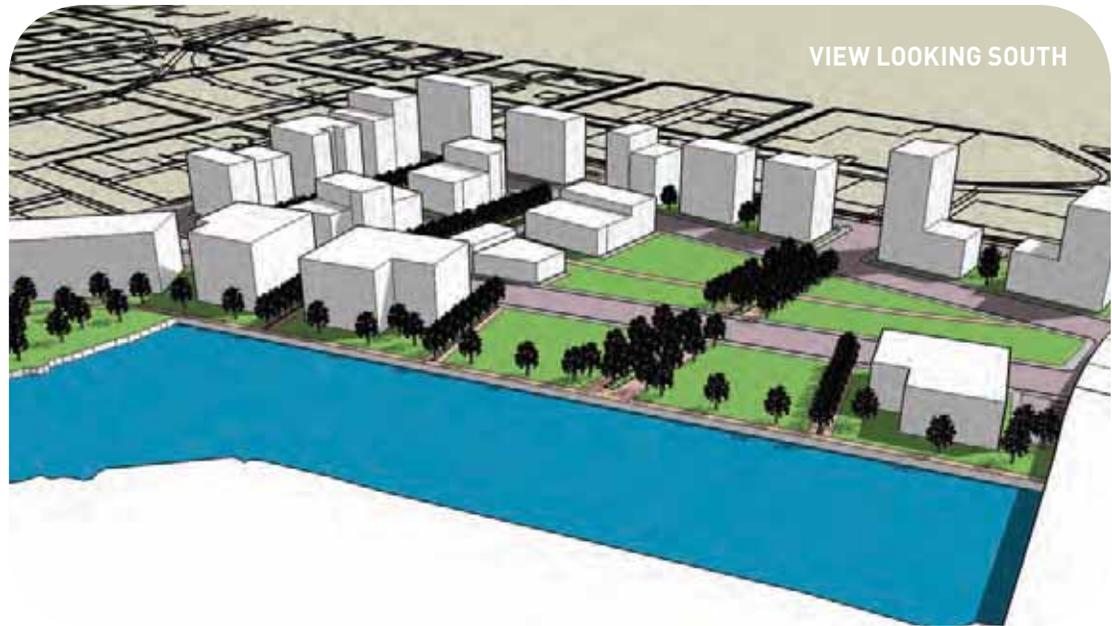


Illustration by BMR Design Group

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for this catalytic project include:

- Create a master planned development that creates opportunities for tall buildings, uniquely incorporates a large park area, and preserves public access to the water.
- The uses could include a high density research/business park with supporting residential and retail uses.
- Organize the site so its layout and buildings are visually and physically linked to the Menomonee Canal and are sensitive to the character of the surrounding area.
- The buildings should be tall and narrow structures as to not block the views of existing buildings of downtown and the waterways. Building footprints and floor plates could be larger at the base and lower levels of the buildings.
- Evaluate the opportunity to incorporate a pedestrian bridge that connects the site with the eastern end of the Menomonee Valley.
- A critical component of the plan is to overcome the visual and transportation barriers created by railroads to the south and especially to the east of the site. Increase and improve the following roadway and pedestrian connections to surrounding areas and improve railroad bridges over Seeboth Street, Pittsburgh Avenue, Oregon Street, and 2nd, 3rd and 4th Streets to create new block forms and knit the area together

into a cohesive district. These efforts should be coordinated with planned future projects to improve the railroads.

- The site should connect to the new Riverfront Node Parks and Riverwalk extensions.
- Evaluate the potential to create pedestrian linkages from the site to the 6th Street Bridge and to the cultural, arts and entertainment district to the south.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Responsible parties for this catalytic project include:

- Private property owners and developers
- The Fifth Ward Development Association
- City of Milwaukee Department of City Development
- City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works
- Department of Natural Resources
- Canadian Pacific Railroad
- U.S. Department of Transportation

TIMING

Currently all of the parcels within the proposed project boundary are owned by a single owner, which could expedite the opportunity for the development of this catalytic project.



CATALYTIC PROJECT #9 - 13TH AND LINCOLN VILLAGE CENTER

LOCATION

The project focuses on 13th Street between its intersection with Windlake Avenue and Grant Street on the north, extending south one block to its intersection with Lincoln Avenue on the south. In addition, the project area extends for one city block in every direction from these intersections.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

13th Street and Lincoln Avenue is located near the heart of the Lincoln Avenue business district. Currently, there are a few underutilized buildings near the intersection of 13th Street, Windlake Avenue and Grant Street. Also, along a stretch of 13th Street there are a few suburban style retail centers with surface parking in front of the buildings and large building setbacks that break up the neighborhoods urban format. The area is also home to some long standing business anchors such as Harris Bank, Tres Hermanos restaurant and Mi Super Mecado grocery store.

VISION

Create an attractive village center or neighborhood center anchored by a multi-million dollar rehab of the historic former Johnston Hospital on the north, Harris Bank on the south, and Tres Hermanos on the west.

The village center will create a cohesively landscaped setting for businesses that provide the day-to-day needs of residents who live nearby and people who drive and park once. Neighbors and visitors will be able to walk to a grocery store, restaurants, a laundromat, banking, a convenience store, etc. in an attractive urban setting with a system of small, but cohesive green spaces.

The village center, if done well, could serve as a model for other neighborhood level commercial streets on the Near South Side that are seeking the right mix of businesses to be viable and an attractive setting that provides some relief from the hardscape environments common in the area.



Image courtesy of Mercy Housing and Korb Tredo Architects

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A private, non-profit entity should rehab the former Johnston hospital, a local traditional architectural landmark, preferably for residents who would benefit from permanent supportive housing.
- New market rate apartment developments are difficult to accomplish on much of the Near South Side because of relatively low incomes and attendant low rents. Furthermore, a segment of the population has special needs that make obtaining decent housing even more challenging. The proposed development could involve investment of upwards of \$10 million with a round-the-clock staff serving up to 100 residents. A restored building at a high visibility location in Lincoln Village could serve as an example of the potential of the area's buildings' high quality construction and architecture, while filling an important social and economic need. Residents would patronize the village center businesses.
- Work with private property owners to provide a landscaped edge along both sides of 13th St. Use larger plantings and taller ornamental fences to help create a sense of defined space.
- Convert used car lots, salvage yards, and car storage lots to uses that are compatible with residential and commercial uses.



- Vacate the vacant south point of the intersection of Wind Lake and 13th St. for green space.
- Try to institute a shared parking program so that customers can park once and visit multiple businesses. Sign all the parking lots in the program. Consider providing a shared or city-owned parking lot.

TIMING

Three businesses along Lincoln Ave. have already taken steps toward this vision. Additional steps should continue to improve the aesthetics of the area, provide improvements to parking, undergo code enforcement efforts and create green space.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Responsible parties for this catalytic project include:

- Mercy Housing (Developer of the former Johnston Hospital)
- Harris Bank
- Property owners in the catalytic project area
- City of Milwaukee
- Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee

CATALYTIC PROJECT #10 - MODJESKA THEATRE DISTRICT

LOCATION

The Modjeska Theatre is located on the northeast corner of 12th and Mitchell St. The Theatre District extends one block to the east of the theater



Image courtesy of the Mitchell Street Business Improvement District and the Modjeska Theatre

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Modjeska Theatre is a venue that is recognized and valued within the Mitchell Street neighborhood and throughout Milwaukee for its history and architecture. The theater, built in 1920, was once one of eight theaters situated on Historic Mitchell Street, but now is the only one remaining.

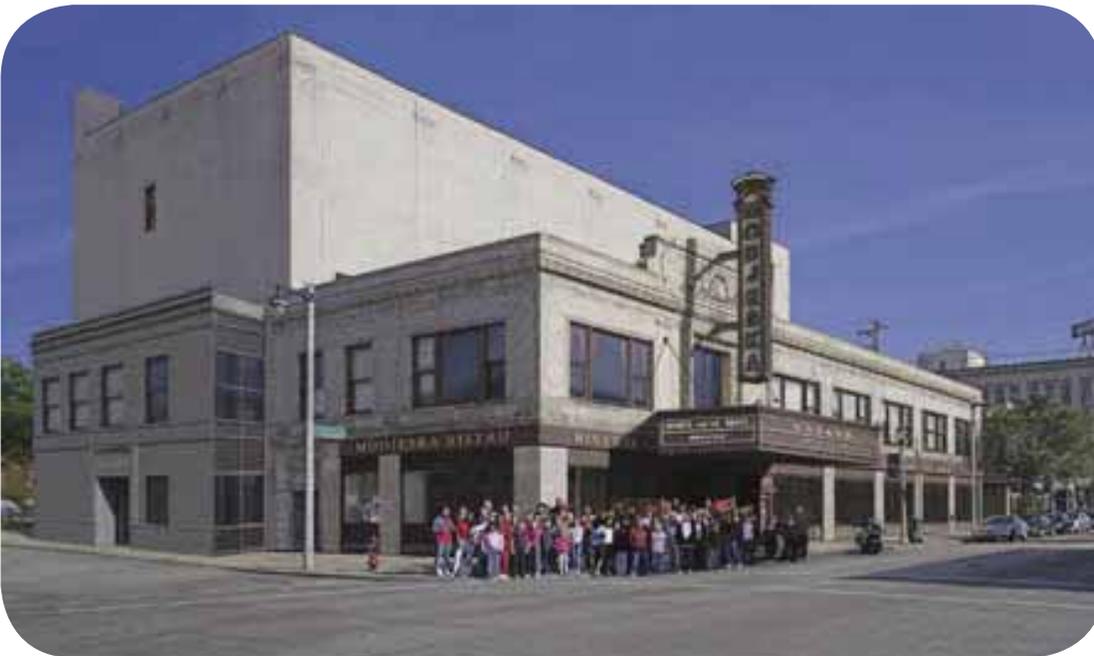


Image courtesy of the Mitchell Street Business Improvement District and the Modjeska Theatre

A market analysis review of the Modjeska Theatre's competitive situation found:

- The Modjeska is positioned to focus on its local community.
- Facility improvements will be necessary for the Modjeska to effectively compete for rental activity.
- Improved programming such as food service and physical adaptability will be advantageous features.
- A number of programming components would be unique to Milwaukee's South Side, including second-run, independent and ethnically-specific films.

VISION

A renovated Modjeska Theatre certainly has potential to support the revitalization and development of Mitchell Street and the surrounding areas by serving as an important economic driver. National research on the economic impact of the arts, supports this conclusion. In addition, the Modjeska Theatre has potential to serve as an effective community development tool. Research has shown that

community arts programs have expanded and improved community development. The arts enable individuals and groups to express themselves, and in the process, become more involved in contributing to the development of their neighborhoods. Programs across the country that have had particular success in this regard have first focused on local youth—and youth are already a focus at the Modjeska. In addition, other important population segments include:

- Young children.
- Young families.
- Latino residents.
- Young singles and couples, specifically the large concentration of 18 to 24 year olds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, this demand shows potential for the Modjeska Theatre renovation, its audiences and the surrounding community to benefit from the following types of programs:

- Education, outreach and participatory programs.
- Local arts organizations.
- Incubator programs for local artists.
- Meeting and special event rentals.
- Live arts and entertainment presenting.
- Film presentation.
- Youth and community development programs.

The make-up of the population suggests an opportunity for the Modjeska to provide hands-on offerings, particularly those focused on Latino culture, to serve neighborhood youth, families and other residents.

Local facility and program inventories suggest that the Modjeska should focus on serving the local community and South Side with affordable and accessible programs.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Mitchell Street Development Opportunities Corporation
- Modjeska Theatre Company
- City of Milwaukee

TIMING

The analysis, funding and recruitment for the Modjeska Theatre, the Theatre District and supporting services were begun by MSDOC in 2008.

Project updates for the Plan Area will be posted on the DCD website.

Planning decisions will be made over time as projects are developed, refined, and considered by boards and commissions.

Citizen input on plan implementation and public decision making that affects the neighborhood should be part of approvals for planning, zoning and special districts (for example, National Historic Register Districts, Local Landmark Districts, neighborhood Conservation Districts, Tax Increment Finance Districts and Business Improvement Districts).

The majority of these approvals are based on:

- Design standards set to protect architectural character,
- Physical design features,
- History and community values,
- Staff recommendations,
- Input of citizens and elected officials.

There are also a number of development-related decisions, such as street changes and zoning changes, which cumulatively have a strong impact on neighborhood character.

Neighborhood residents should make their voices heard on all matters that affect their property, livelihood, neighborhood and quality of life.