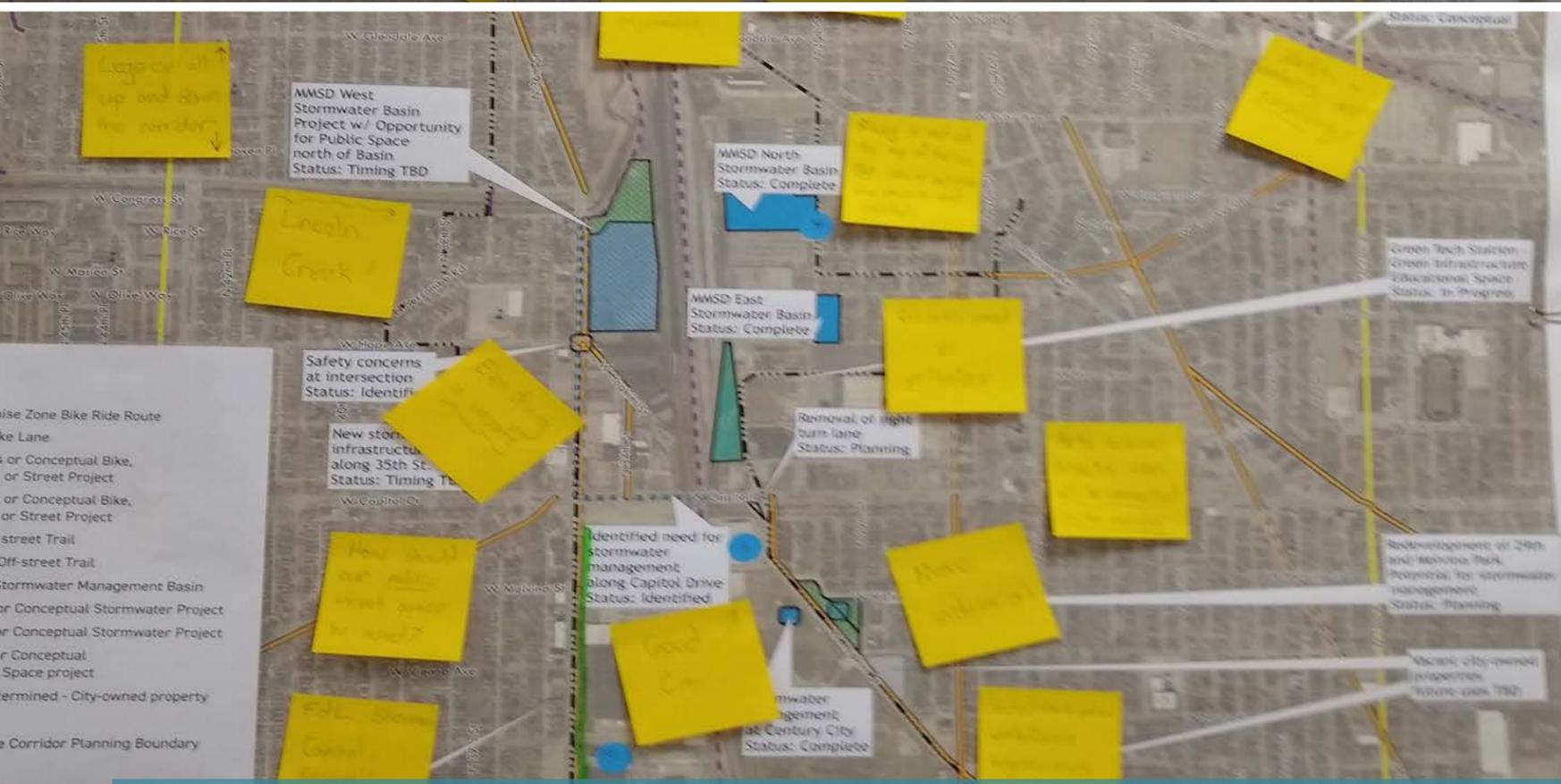


1. Introduction



Much of the planning process and public engagement that was used to develop Connecting the Corridor took place before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The negative health and economic impacts of COVID-19 are being disproportionately felt by communities of color, including those in the Corridor. The COVID-19 crisis has brought renewed attention and focus on addressing the root causes of public health disparities impacting Milwaukee residents. At the same time, recent killings of unarmed Black men and women by police officers and the resulting marches and protests across the country have further reinforced the need for government to take proactive actions to advance racial equity and reduce disparities not just in law enforcement, but in all aspects of government activities.

What is Connecting the Corridor?

Connecting the Corridor is an action plan to advance projects and investment in the neighborhoods surrounding the 30th Street Corridor. The plan recommends 45+ projects that will result in improved off-street trails, stormwater management, parks and public space, and better mobility in 30th Street Corridor neighborhoods.

In 2009, the City of Milwaukee adopted the Near North Area Plan as an element of the City of Milwaukee Comprehensive Plan after significant community input and engagement. The Near North Area Plan covered a wide range of topics including economic development, housing, neighborhood development, transportation, and parks and open space, and serves as the City's overarching guiding vision for land use, development, and public improvements in the Near North Side.

After the adoption of the Near North Area Plan and the acquisition of the former A.O. Smith/Tower Automotive site in 2009, the City adopted the 30th Street Corridor Economic Development Master Plan in 2012 to chart a vision for the economic revitalization of the 30th Street Corridor.

Neighborhoods adjacent to the Corridor including the Century City Tri-Angle Neighborhood and the Historic Garden Homes Neighborhood have carried out and are implementing their own community-led neighborhood quality of life plans.

Complementing these ongoing neighborhood and economic development efforts, the Near North Area Plan calls for the creation of a series of public amenities, street improvements, trails, and stormwater management projects to tie together neighborhoods within the Near North Plan Area. Connecting the Corridor advances this recommendation and provides a detailed roadmap that unifies upcoming and conceptual projects into a larger comprehensive vision and lays out an action plan to advance the projects to implementation. All of the projects in Connecting the Corridor are supported by the Near North Area Plan.

Connecting the Corridor proposes a series of coordinated projects to support and reinforce ongoing economic and neighborhood development efforts. Projects fall into one or more of the following themes:



Mobility & Streets



Off-Street Trails



Parks & Public Spaces



Stormwater Management



Community Informed

Why Now?

There are a number of ongoing efforts and proposed projects in the Near North Plan Area that align with the Connecting the Corridor themes. These include the on-going development of the Century City business park and the Hopkins Street Greenway, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District's construction of stormwater basins in the area, the Route of the Badger effort to develop an on and off-street recreational trail network, planned park improvements, street improvements focused on pedestrian safety, and more.

While much progress is ongoing on these various initiatives, Connecting the Corridor utilized neighborhood engagement to ensure these efforts are aligned, to build consensus around priorities, and recommend additional projects.

Connecting the Corridor recommendations are grounded in public health and racial equity goals, and provide actionable projects and strategies to respond to community priorities in a way that will have meaningful impacts on health, safety, opportunity and access for residents of Connecting the Corridor neighborhoods.

Project Themes

Connecting the Corridor projects fall within one or more of the themes below. Projects are designed to support and reinforce the ongoing community and economic development activities being carried out by government agencies, community based organizations, and residents.

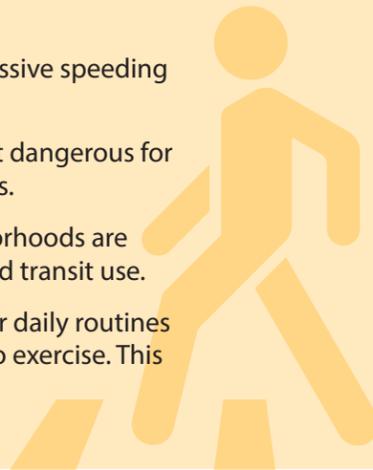


Mobility and Streets

A safe, connected, and reliable transportation system is a right for everyone. This includes providing options for people to travel around the city by foot, on bike, on public transit, or driving. The City of Milwaukee is working to ensure that streets are designed for all users - no matter their age or ability - with a focus on prioritizing the safety and health of residents.

Why is this theme included in the plan?

- Serious injury and fatal crashes are increasing on our streets, and excessive speeding and reckless driving are major problems.
- Four of the street segments within the city of Milwaukee that are most dangerous for people walking are located in Connecting the Corridor neighborhoods.
- Residents and community groups in Connecting the Corridor neighborhoods are demanding safer streets that better accommodate walking, biking, and transit use.
- Inclusive streets allow people to incorporate physical activity into their daily routines (like walking to the store) instead of having to plan out specific time to exercise. This improves physical health.

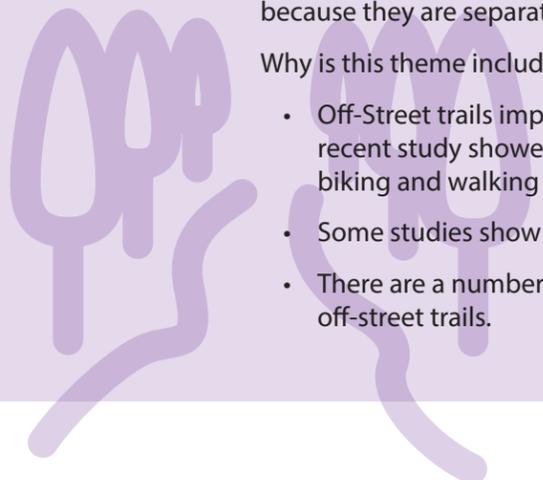


Off-Street Trails

Off-street trails are paths primarily intended for people walking or biking and can be used for recreational trips, or getting to work, school, shopping or other destinations. Off-street trails are important because people of all ages and abilities can comfortably and safely use them because they are separated from motor vehicle traffic.

Why is this theme included in the plan?

- Off-Street trails improve public health by providing opportunities for physical activity. A recent study showed that neighborhoods around the 30th Street Corridor lack access to biking and walking trails when compared to other parts of the city.
- Some studies show that off-street trails can help economic development.
- There are a number of corridors in the area that have been identified as potential future off-street trails.



Parks and Public Space

Parks and public spaces come in a variety of sizes and serve a variety of functions, including improving neighborhood health. Smaller parks can serve the surrounding neighborhood while larger parks with features like playfields draw people in from a wider geographical area. Some parks provide structured play spaces like playgrounds and sports courts, while others provide opportunities for more passive recreation in the form of walkways and benches.

Why is this theme included in the plan?

- The City of Milwaukee aims to provide all residents with access to recreation facilities and has established a goal that all residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park. Currently there are gaps in this area (see map in Chapter 3)
- Visiting parks improves mental health and can lead to increased social interactions. Parks often serve as a gathering place for communities to make connections with their neighbors.
- Parks provide opportunities for physical activity for people of all abilities and ages.



Stormwater Management

The term Stormwater Management includes a variety of strategies and systems to handle rainwater and snowmelt during storm events. This is done to cut down on flooding and keep pollution out of the water in streams, rivers, and lakes. Stormwater management includes detention ponds, culverts and ditches, bioswales, rain barrels, pervious pavement, green roofs, underground storage vaults, and more.

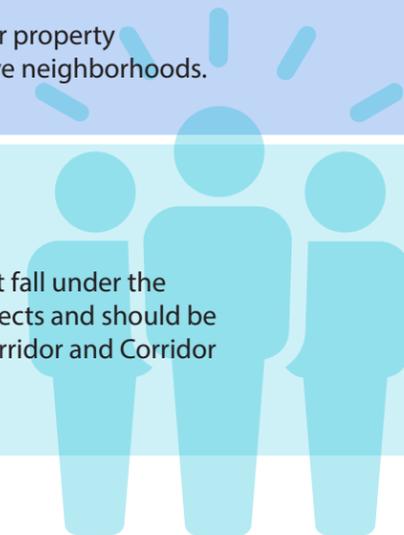
Why is this theme included in the plan?

- 30th Street Corridor neighborhoods have experienced significant flood events in past years. Stormwater management is needed to protect homes and businesses by reducing surface flooding and basement backups.
- Stormwater management helps with water quality by reducing the impacts of pollution into waterways such as the Milwaukee River & Lincoln Creek.
- Green infrastructure projects provide additional benefits such as lower property maintenance costs, new jobs in green career paths, and more attractive neighborhoods.



Community Informed Projects

The projects in this category arose during the planning process and did not fall under the other themes. They are included in this plan as they relate to the other projects and should be considered as projects are implemented. The two projects are Art in the Corridor and Corridor Clean-up.





Plan discussion at a West Basin Resident Group meeting, July 2019; NWSCDC

How to Use the Plan

Connecting the Corridor is a strategic action plan that amends the Near North Area Plan and the City of Milwaukee Comprehensive Plan. As a formally adopted plan, its recommendations will be used by the City of Milwaukee and its partners to inform future decision making and guide resource allocation.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Introduces the plan purpose and themes.

Chapter 2 - The 30th Street Corridor

Provides background on the history of the 30th Street Corridor and the complementary planning efforts that served as a foundation for this plan.

Chapter 3 - Area Summary

Provides additional information and data about the Connecting the Corridor neighborhoods.

Chapter 4 - What We Heard

Summarizes the engagement process and the key themes and community needs that emerged throughout the planning process.

Chapter 5 - Guiding Principles

Provides guiding principles and illustrates the connections between the plan's themes, the triple bottom line, health, and equity.

Chapter 6 - Projects

Contains all of the recommended mobility and streets, off-street trails, parks and public space, stormwater management, and community-identified projects.

Chapter 7 - Next Steps & Conclusion

Describes next steps and how planning stakeholders and other partners will advance these recommended projects to connect the Corridor. This chapter also provides residents, businesses, and other community members with suggestions on how they can help move these projects forward and keep equity and community involvement at the forefront.