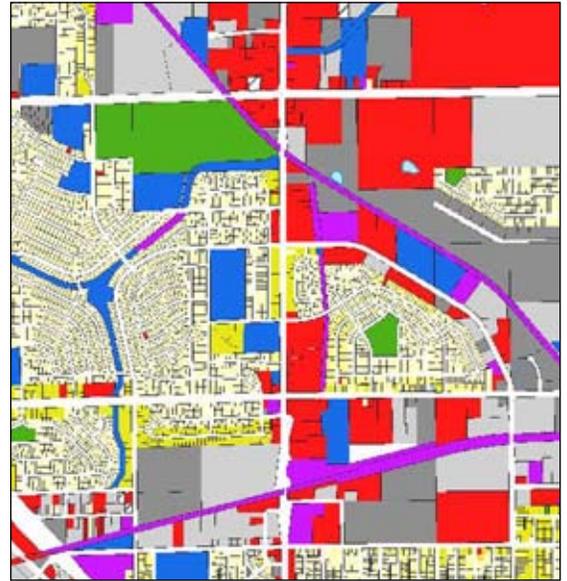


## CHAPTER 3: LAND USE POLICIES

This chapter provides the City of Milwaukee’s overall policies addressing land use, building form and redevelopment strategies in the Northwest Side Plan Area. General visions are outlined for the overall land use strategy and subsequent land uses to better define policy goals. Each section discusses use policies, form policies, and redevelopment strategies for the land use in consideration.

The policies are organized according to a set of land use categories including:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Open Space
- Civic and Institutional
- Transportation and Infrastructure



*An example of existing land uses on the Northwest Side*

### OVERALL LAND USE STRATEGY

#### **Vision: Overall**

The Overall Land Use Strategy for the Northwest Side combines the input of area residents with policy approaches intended to strengthen the neighborhood fabric. These tools will ultimately shape the physical character of the area by regulating streetscapes, land uses, and the design of the built environment. The Overall Land Use Strategy attempts to integrate the diverse needs of the Northwest Side by addressing its neighborhoods in a comprehensive manner.

#### **Use Policies: Overall**

- Encourage single-family owner-occupied development where appropriate.
- Increase the amount of land designated for mixed-use development in order to provide more variety in the area.
- Allow residential, or other compatible uses, along commercial corridors in areas where retail and commercial activity as the primary uses are no longer supported by the surrounding residential densities. Residential uses along commercial corridors should be owner-occupied residential with minimal curb cuts along the commercial corridor with parking in the rear or on the side.

- Avoid radical departures from existing densities (height, area, and/or placement).
- Discourage concentration of facilities that provide social services and concentration of daycare facilities.
- Lessen the presence of nuisance establishments that do not contribute to a positive quality of life. Work to encourage family-style evening entertainment opportunities.
- Reestablish “anchor” institutions in the Northwest Side that serve the population and attract people to the neighborhood. These establishments may be civic, commercial, or entertainment venues.

#### **Form Policies: Overall**

- Place buildings in such a way that they create meaningful formal and/or informal open spaces and reinforce the street edge.
- Employ designs that prevent the automobile from further encroaching into pedestrian-friendly areas and rights-of-way.
- Reinforce streetscapes that naturally slow traffic to enhance the safety and attractiveness of commercial corridors.
- Preserve and maintain natural landscaping in the area, and continue efforts to incorporate open space features in all developments.

#### **Redevelopment Strategies: Overall**

- Explore the possibility of using TIF monies on large-scale projects in the Northwest Side.
- Promote new taxable uses over additional non-taxable uses or encourage non-profit participation in ‘payment in lieu of taxes’ (PILOT) programs.
- Assure that residents and business owners adjacent to properties undergoing development are adequately notified in order to strengthen the development process and allow for greater coordination.
- Cluster new development to have the greatest positive impact on surrounding property values.
- Encourage area businesses to coordinate with nearby residential neighborhoods to enhance the local aesthetic.
- Encourage the incorporation of open space features in new development and redevelopment projects.
- Encourage the connection of open spaces between redevelopment projects and promote public connections to park lands.

## Residential

### Vision: Residential

The Residential Land Use Policies for the Northwest Side address local issues in housing such as owner-occupancy, placement of residential areas in relationship to other land uses, and lot layout / building placement. These policies aim to enhance the character and livability of existing and future residential developments.

### Use Policies: Residential

#### *Appropriate Types/Mix*

- Place an emphasis on the development of owner-occupied single-family housing and owner-occupied multi-family units.
- Discourage the concentration of large scale multi-family structures.
- Promote owner-occupancy.

#### *Location*

- Encourage owner-occupied residential developments along commercial corridors in areas where retail and commercial activities are no longer supported by the existing residential areas.
- Locate residential land uses to ensure compatibility with adjacent non-residential land uses. Discourage locating single-family structures adjacent to commercial and industrial uses generating excessive noise, traffic, lighting, or other incompatible characteristics. Encourage locating owner-occupied multi-family units near commercial areas and on sites with good access to major arterials and transit routes.
- Capitalize on recreational trail systems by encouraging residential development near access points.
- Design new housing subdivisions with public connections to park lands or trails.

### Form Policies: Residential

#### *Parcel*

- Blend infill development and new construction with the existing scale and massing design.
- Design the size and placement of structures (in relationship to lot size) to complement the existing scale of other structures on the block face.



*An example of a residential neighborhood.*

- Keep building setbacks consistent with the existing conditions of the block and/or area. Make front yard build-to lines and rear yard setbacks for all construction equal to the average of the adjacent, block, or neighborhood structures, whichever is the most compatible.

#### *Building and Site Elements*

- Reduce the building density, where feasible, in existing large-scale multi-family developments.
- Reconfigure and add landscaping to large parking lots that serve sizeable multi-family developments to soften the scale of the lots.
- Keep building heights within two to three stories of what is typical for the area unless the building is being utilized to transition a residential area into a more intense non-residential area.
- Locate garages so that they are not the dominant feature on the front façade. Where possible, encourage side- or rear-loaded garages.
- Ensure that exterior entrances and walkways are well lit at night.

#### **Redevelopment Strategies: Residential**

- Encourage renovation of multi-family rental units to multi-family owner-occupied units where feasible.
- Promote conservation of existing structures along with infill housing. Renovation is preferred over demolition, but it is not always economically feasible.
- Support existing programs (and encourage additional ones) that grant dollars or provide tax breaks to homeowners for rehabilitation.
- Explore alternate methods for notifying neighbors about development proposals to include a greater “impact area” so neighborhood opinions are carefully considered.
- Continue efforts to establish block watch programs in some areas of the Northwest Side where there are currently no programs in place.
- Encourage continued landlord compacts in areas of the Northwest Side with high concentration of multi-family units to eliminate nuisance properties and encourage responsible landlords to invest in the area.

## Commercial

### Vision

The Commercial Land Use Policies aim to strengthen economic development in commercial areas throughout the Northwest Side. Commercial corridors should effectively serve area residents and business owners in addition to attracting regional customers. The policies focus on corridor design and building access, aesthetic improvements, and the establishment of anchor locations in the area.

### Use Policies: Commercial

#### *Appropriate Types/Mix*

- Cluster redeveloped commercial uses at key nodes along commercial corridors.
- Encourage residential uses along commercial corridors in areas where retail and commercial activity as the primary uses are no longer supported by the surrounding residential densities. Residential uses along commercial corridors should be owner-occupied with minimal curb cuts along the commercial corridor.
- Ensure that Granville Station includes a mix of uses to create a sustainable neighborhood that is supported by the market.
- Promote the development of entertainment and dining establishments that offer evening activities for families and youth.
- Discourage further development of currency exchanges, pay day loan, title loan, and installment loan establishments.
- Avoid concentration of daycare facilities within commercial corridors.

#### *Location*

- Incorporate retailers in commercial corridors that add to the commercial/retail mix by providing a greater range of goods, services, and pricing than already exists.
- Promote “anchor” developments in the southern portion of the Northwest Side that supplement Granville Station and Park Place as neighborhood destinations.
- Focus improvement efforts on 76th Street, Brown Deer Road, Good Hope Road, Silver Spring Drive, Lovers Lane, and Teutonia Avenue as they are critical commercial



*An example of a small-scale commercial development.*

corridors that influence the perception of the Northwest Side.

- Concentrate retail at nodes for all commercial corridors.

### **Form Policies: Commercial**

#### *Block*

- Promote stronger connections between commercial buildings and the street edge by bringing buildings closer to the right-of-way. Buildings on a block should work together to define the edges of commercial corridors.
- Design commercial districts and corridors with minimal curb cuts.
- Encourage streetscape elements that unify the area including benches, lighting, signage, plantings, and/or paving patterns as proposed in Havenwoods.
- Make walking attractive, easier, and convenient within commercial developments.
- Encourage connections between parking lots.

#### *Building/Site Elements*

- Improve the street appeal of existing strip mall developments by encouraging the construction of additional buildings along the street edge.
- Provide a primary entrance into commercial and mixed-use areas.
- Require all large parking lots to include landscaping and pedestrian-friendly connections.
- Entrances should be designed for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as automobiles.
- Use landscaping to screen the perimeter of surface parking and service areas where visible from the street. Provide pedestrian paths where possible.
- Encourage outdoor seating areas for restaurants in commercial corridors and districts.
- Include large windows along all street facades of a building.
- Prohibit blank walls along street facades.
- Use a landscaped setback buffer for parking that must be along a street frontage to maintain the definition of the street edge.
- Restrict parking to the minimum number of spaces required to accommodate customers/visitors to the commercial corridor.
- Encourage shared parking among retailers.

- When adjacent to natural features, site buildings to take advantage of views and provide pedestrian connections to natural areas for either active or passive recreation.

### **Redevelopment Strategies: Commercial**

- Promote the reuse of vacant buildings and lots in commercial areas with uses that are appropriate to the corridor.
- Focus aesthetic improvements on commercial corridors experiencing the most prevalent economic hardship in the Northwest Side.
- Ensure that all aspects of new development or redevelopment (e.g. traffic impacts, environmental impact, etc.) have been carefully considered before construction occurs.
- Improve the perception of crime in specific commercial locations to attract customers and building tenants.
- Encourage Business Improvement Districts, where appropriate, to improve safety and enhance the streetscape.
- Encourage new taxable over new non-taxable uses, unless a strong case can be made that the non-taxable use supports the surrounding tax base or spurs economic development.
- Consider requiring redevelopment sites that are reusing existing buildings to adhere to stricter landscape and storm water management requirements.
- Establish 'Master Sign Overlays' along major commercial districts and within catalytic project areas to promote higher quality signage.

## Light Industrial

### Vision

The Industrial Land Use Policies seek to preserve and improve existing industrial parks within the Northwest Side, and allow room for new industrial growth. These policies regulate the screening of industrial parks and parking lots, encourage an increase of supporting commercial development, and address the preferred framework and infrastructure for future development.



*An example of a suburban industrial campus.*

### Use Policies: Industrial

- Find a balance between preserving industrial land and allowing commercial development that complements the needs of nearby employees.
- Encourage commercial uses along major corridors within and nearby the industrial parks.
- Allow light industrial and business uses to be located in industrial parks.
- Discourage re-use of industrial land and buildings for uses such as religious assemblies and schools unless the property has been aggressively marketed and can no longer support productive industrial uses.

### Form Policies: Industrial

- Provide landscape buffers between industrial buildings/ parking lots and adjacent land uses.
- Discourage buildings with blank walls that lack articulation.
- Ensure that all industrial and business parks have appropriate, uniform signage that identifies the park at each gateway.
- Encourage loading areas to be located at the rear of buildings and not along primary facade.
- Encourage use of “green building” techniques and methods in both building and site design.
- Encourage the inclusion of meaningful greenspace within industrial and business park developments.

### Redevelopment Strategies: Industrial

- Encourage the reuse of vacant industrial buildings with new businesses that are appropriate for the neighborhood. Adaptive reuse is preferred over new construction.

- Promote streetscape enhancements along boulevards and major corridors within and surrounding all industrial and business parks.
- Consider land assembly assistance for significant redevelopment projects in areas with smaller industrial parcels.

## **Open Space**

### **Vision**

The Northwest Side contains a unique amount of open space in comparison to other parts of Milwaukee. The Open Space Land Use Policies address the need to sustain the landscaped character of the area, and ensure that future growth does not detract from the current quality of open space. The following policies aim to regulate the placement, design, linkages, and accessibility associated with community open space.

### **Use Policies: Open Space**

- Create safe public access points to all trails and parkways.
- Locate public plazas or spaces in the most intensely planned/developed districts and corridors.
- Promote the Oak Leaf trail extension as an important contributor to the Northwest Side.
- Promote the development of Kohl Park as an important regional asset.
- Promote creating connections to and between large open spaces.

### **Form Policies: Open Space**

- Include parks or plazas that meet the need of area residents, visitors, and workers as part of the site design for new construction and/or renovation.
- Maintain and improve visibility to and within the parkways and open spaces in addition to critical access points.
- Create pedestrian and bike paths through park space that connect to the surrounding street and block system.
- Encourage signage and way-finding elements that identify public access to parks, parkways, and trails.
- Ensure institutional public spaces (such as school recreational areas) are green and visibly accessible to the public. Fencing should be minimal in height.



*An example of a passive open space.*

- Encourage significant and formal public spaces in the design and development of new institutional buildings.
- Design boulevards that create value and require minimal maintenance.

### **Redevelopment Strategies: Open Space**

- Provide appropriate funding for the maintenance of public spaces, boulevards, and streetscapes.
- Use open space to create value or add value to districts and corridors.
- Use open space to add balance to densely developed blocks.
- Encourage connections between open spaces, both existing and new open spaces.
- Promote wayfinding signage and other techniques to encourage use of open spaces.



*An example of a neighborhood library.*

## **Civic and Institutional**

### **Vision**

The Civic and Institutional Land Use Policies focus on civic, health care, educational, and training facilities in the Northwest Side. There is a great need for an expansion of these services for area residents and employers. The following policies aim to establish specific considerations for existing and future civic/institutional uses that will ensure an adequate supply is accessible to the general public.

### **Use Policies: Civic and Institutional**

- Locate institutional uses with high traffic generation at the intersections/nodes of commercial corridors rather than in stable residential areas.
- Encourage school/library/park connections that allow for children to walk between places.
- Consider parking as an accessory use that should not exceed what is necessary to accommodate visitors and employees.
- Explore the need for additional health care facilities, urgent care facilities, and clinics.
- Attract higher-education facilities within the neighborhood to serve the local and outlying population.

### **Form Policies: Civic and Institutional**

- Locate civic buildings and uses in visible areas to encourage a sense of identity.
- Include a significant public open space as part of any new major facility.

### **Redevelopment Strategies: Civic and Institutional**

- Encourage new taxable uses over new non-taxable uses, unless a strong case can be made that the non-taxable use supports the surrounding tax base or spurs economic development.
- Locate tax-exempt uses in buildings previously occupied by tax-exempt uses whenever feasible.
- Discourage concentration in number and intensity of social service providers in the neighborhood.
- Review and recommend site changes for the Job Corps development to identify problems and solutions early in the planning process.

## **Transportation and Infrastructure**

### **Vision**

As the Northwest Side continues to grow, adequate planning for transportation and infrastructure will become increasingly important. Transit options between the Northwest Side and Milwaukee's Central Business District are critical and best achieved via rapid transit that utilizes existing rail lines. This planning area is well served by existing rail lines that could be used for this purpose. The Transportation and Infrastructure Land Use Policies highlight the needs of area residents and business owners, and point to specific areas where transportation and infrastructure can be improved.

### **Use Policies: Transportation and Infrastructure**

- Create a public right-of-way that includes space for pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and mass transit on major arterials.
- Improve transit service in all areas of the Northwest Side. Increased routes and increased frequency should be investigated, particularly on Brown Deer Road and Good Hope Road.
- Encourage porous pavement, where feasible, in large parking lots for all types of development (e.g. commercial, industrial, multi-family).



*An example of a dedicated bike lane on a major road.*

- Increase runway and light jet capacity for Timmerman Field to attract more business to the Northwest Side.
- Reserve existing rail corridors until future commuter rail options can be studied.

#### **Form Policies: Transportation and Infrastructure**

- Design cross sections and dedicate right-of-way for mass transit, automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians based upon the needs, character, and intensity of adjacent land uses.
- Provide pedestrian connections between local neighborhood workplaces, shopping areas, recreational/open space, civic/institutional sites, and other lands.
- Require continuous sidewalks and adequate sidewalk connections on all major corridors.
- Encourage shared parking lots that include adequate linkages between them.

#### **Redevelopment Strategies: Transportation and Infrastructure**

- Prohibit increasing the traffic capacity within right-of-ways if expansion would negatively impact the majority of adjacent land uses. Use infrastructure dollars wisely by prioritizing reinvestment over expansion.
- Include Brown Deer Road in any TIF that incorporates Granville Station as the primary entrance to the site.
- Design arterials to allow for aesthetic appeal, not simply traffic flow, by implementing streetscape enhancements.
- Emphasize the movement of more people, rather than the movement of more vehicles, when making investment decisions.
- Maintain and promote two-way travel.
- Encourage all proposed development projects near an existing or planned major transit corridor to incorporate site design measures that enhance access to the transit system.
- Explore the possibility of installing express transit stops at Granville Station, 76th and Good Hope Road, and 76th and Mill Road.
- Encourage Intelligent Transportation System Technology to be placed in bus stations along key transit routes. This technology includes monitors that identify the time of arrival of the next bus.
- Encourage transit hubs and Transit Oriented Developments (TOD) especially where rail lines and existing Milwaukee County Transit bus lines converge.