

1. INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS ENVISION SOUTH 13TH STREET TOGETHER?

Envision South 13th Street Together is a strategic action plan to advance projects and investment along the South 13th Street and West Oklahoma Avenue Commercial corridors and surrounding neighborhoods. It amends two of the City's Comprehensive Area Plans – the Southwest Side Area Plan and the Near South Side Area Plan.

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

Through recommended projects, policies, and a vision, the Envision South 13th Street Together plan builds upon the initiatives and projects occurring in the area and sets actionable steps for reinvigorating the S. 13th Street and W. Oklahoma Avenue corridors and improving connections to the surrounding neighborhoods. The Plan is the result of a planning process that built consensus around priorities and built social connections between neighborhoods, the business corridors, and implementation partners.

VISION

The projects in this plan work toward achieving the community's vision. A vision statement is sort of like the "headline" for the plan. Through the outreach process, the following vision was developed:

The Envision South 13th Street Together plan builds upon the area's identity and imagines South 13th Street, West Oklahoma Avenue, and the surrounding neighborhoods as a diverse, welcoming, and vibrant community that honors the unique history of the area with places for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to walk, work, play, and shop.

WHY WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

Since the Southwest Side Area Plan's adoption in 2009, there have been a number of projects, plans, and initiatives in the area, including:

- The Kinnickinnic River Neighborhood Plan (2009), led by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) and the South Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers (SSCHC), created a vision for the river and the surrounding area. Community engagement has been ongoing since the plan's completion.
- Business Improvement District (BID) #50, also known as Crisol Corridor, was formed in 2015 to fund and organize projects that improve the economic vitality of the area. The BID runs north-south along S. 13th Street from W. Cleveland to W. Morgan Avenues, and east-west on W. Oklahoma Avenue from S. 15th Street to S. Chase Avenue.
- In 2018, Milwaukee joined a national initiative called Connect Capital. The initiative has brought together representatives from MMSD, the City, BID, and SSCHC to look at how to leverage MMSD's flood management investments in the area to catalyze the creation of community amenities, improve connectivity and safety through complete streets, and spur economic development.
- Through Connect Capital outreach, the BID's work, and SSCHC community projects, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders have brought forward concerns such as unsafe streets, underutilization of properties, and the need for a stronger identity for the S.13th Street and W. Oklahoma Avenue corridors.

With all of the activity occurring in the area, there was a need for a planning process to align the needs of the community with public and private partners to spur action and reinvigorate South 13th Street and West Oklahoma Avenue.

PROJECT THEMES

Envision South 13th Street Together calls for a set of coordinated projects that fall within one or more of the themes below. Projects are designed to build upon each other to achieve the plan's vision and guiding principles. More information on the Guiding Principles is on the next page and theme definitions are included in Chapter 4.



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**



**STREETS &
TRANSPORTATION**



**GENERAL
SAFETY**



**COMMUNITY
BUILDING**



**OUTDOOR
RECREATION**



**STORMWATER & FLOOD
MANAGEMENT**



**PLACEMAKING
& ART**

THE BIG IDEAS THAT GUIDE THE NEXT STEPS...

The guiding principles are based on the community's input during the planning process and previous planning efforts. They helped shape plan's project recommendations and inform implementation steps.

ECONOMY

The South 13th Street area has a thriving business corridor and long-term residents who are committed to the success of these businesses and their neighborhood. Projects and actions in this plan aim to support businesses, maintain affordability, encourage compatible and infill development that is family-friendly, and strengthen the identity and diversity of the area.

CULTURE & HISTORY

The history and culture of a neighborhood are a central piece to its identity. To strengthen residents' sense of place in their neighborhood, projects and actions aim to preserve, complement, and celebrate the area's historic character and evolving cultural character.

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE

The impacts of climate change, including increased flooding, are felt unevenly in Milwaukee, leading to long-lasting health consequences that disproportionately affect low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. Projects and actions recommended in this plan aim to take sustainability and resilience into account. Management of stormwater can reduce negative impacts to residents and businesses, improve water quality, and support natural ecosystems. Air quality is improved by investing in the natural environment like trees and green spaces, and by creating streets and a transportation system that encourages the use of transportation modes other than driving in a vehicle alone.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The projects in this plan aim to improve quality of life, build community cohesion, and increase community ownership and pride in the area. Authentic community engagement in planning processes is necessary to make this a reality and to ensure that projects are implemented in way that has the greatest positive impact for the community. Taking time to utilize varying methods to engage with the community in planning and designing projects ensures that the end product best serves the community.

EQUITY

Neighborhoods thrive when they are welcoming and provide accessible opportunities to all people. Different neighborhoods have different needs and what works to help the residents of one community thrive, may not be what is needed for another. Achieving equity means that everyone can reach their full potential, without barriers. The implementation of projects in this plan shall represent the needs of the diverse community in the South 13th Street area through collaboration with partners and engagement with the public to ensure equitable outreach and implementation.

HEALTH

Though health is often looked at in terms of access to healthcare, individual behaviors such as smoking or exercise, and genetic disease risk, it is also impacted by the Social Determinants of Health which are social, environmental, and economic factors. The projects and actions in this plan promote the improvement of overall health for all of its residents by promoting healthy behaviors, increasing social cohesion, improving and expanding access to the natural and street environments, and supporting the economic stability of the commercial corridors.

STREET SAFETY & MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION

Reckless driving in the city of Milwaukee is considered a significant risk to health and safety. Street design often enables dangerous driving, sometimes leading to negative health outcomes. Streets and public spaces are made safer for all users, especially the most vulnerable users, by applying complete streets elements, increasing connectivity between jobs and assets, applying Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, and building community cohesion. The projects in this plan recommend improvements to all aspects of the street environment, which will encourage residents of all ages and abilities to safely use multimodal transportation options.



Pulaski Park event, 2019; cr. SSCHC



Historic façade; cr. BID #50



W. Oklahoma Ave. near S. 6th St.

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Introduces the Plan's Vision, Purpose and Guiding Principles.

CHAPTER 2 – AREA SUMMARY

Provides brief summaries of related plans and initiatives in the area along with Data. It is split up into 8 sections: History; Business, Economy, & Land; Demographic Data; Neighborhoods & Community; Health & Safety; Transportation; Outdoor Recreation; and Resilience.

CHAPTER 3 – WHAT WE HEARD

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

CHAPTER 4 – PROJECTS

Contains all of the recommended Economic Development, Transportation & Streets, General Safety, Community Building, Outdoor Recreation, Stormwater & Flood Management, and Placemaking & Art projects.

CHAPTER 5 – PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHART

Contains a quick resource chart that lists all of the projects, leads, implementation partners, and time frames.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

Describes next steps and how stakeholders will advance the recommended projects. This chapter also provides residents, businesses, and other community members with suggestions on how they can help move these projects forward.

