

# Chapter 3: Community Development Policies and Strategies

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents area wide goals and policies for the redevelopment of the Southwest Side area. The term redevelopment in this Plan refers to investment in maintenance, rehabilitation, adaptive re-use, and new construction.

This chapter presents a vision statement, land use policies, building form policies, and redevelopment strategies for each of the following headings:

- Overall*
- Sustainability and Public Space*
- Residential*
- Commercial*
- Industrial*
- Open Space*
- Civic and Institutional*
- Transportation and Infrastructure*

The policies and strategies for the Southwest Side combine the input of area residents with on-going policy and regulatory approaches intended to conserve the historic fabric of the area's neighborhoods, while providing the basis for redeveloping areas that are underutilized and subject to change.

The Southwest Side Plan promotes the foundation of a sustainable and livable community that builds upon the positive physical aspects of the place. The planning process generated innovative ideas and creative outcomes that will fit into the community and support environmental, economic and social goals.

These solutions should be both functional and beautiful. The Plan should be realized by pursuing the goals and policies in this chapter and recommendations in following chapters.

The Southwest Side Plan recommends the following general principles:

<b>Southwest Side Plan General Principles</b>
Commitment to a diversity of housing types and price ranges to meet the needs of the population.
Encouragement of compact, contiguous development, and a preference for infill redevelopment.
Commitment to open space preservation and the consideration of its appropriate development in certain cases.
Provision of quality urban spaces, parks and recreation that serve all sectors of the community and trails and walkways that connect the community.
Commitment to the preservation of natural, cultural and historic features that contribute to defining the unique sense of place in the Southwest Side.
Recognition of the importance of the area's medical and educational facilities.
Commitment to a balanced multi-modal transportation system.

### 3.2 Overall

#### *Vision*

As older residents are gradually replaced by younger families over the course of time, the Southwest Side should remain an attractive community in which to live, work, play and raise a family.

Its character and assets should be maintained and improved so that it continues to be widely regarded as a unique and desirable place to live in southern Milwaukee County.

#### *Land Use Policies*

Land use should follow existing zoning except where land use changes are recommended by this Plan, in which case zoning should be amended to conform with the Plan.



The components of the overall vision for the Southwest Side are:

Foster distinctive, attractive public spaces such as parks, streets, squares and waterfronts with a strong sense of place.

Protect and maintain open space and recreation areas.

Protect and reclaim critical environmental areas.

Preserve attractive and distinctive traditional development patterns in the area's three primary residential districts, but do not limit architectural styles. As noted throughout chapters 1 and 2, the Southwest Side benefits from a consistently high quality housing supply and pleasing pattern of streets and blocks, lot sizes and building set backs. This overall framework should be continued, while accommodating the fact that specific building styles and technologies change over time.

Outside of existing residential locations, increase the amount of land designated for mixed use residential / commercial development to provide more vitality and variety in the area.

Provide and maintain affordable housing choices for all residents.

Provide for facilities that provide social services and day care. Encourage a dispersed distribution of these services throughout the area, rather than concentrating them in a district.

Provide a variety of commercial areas that provide convenient local access to goods and services.

Promote family-supporting jobs by providing location opportunities for new and growing businesses of all kinds.

Encourage educational facilities and institutions that meet the community's needs.

Reclaim critical brownfield areas.

Provide a variety of transportation choices.

Attract and maintain anchor institutions and destination commercial venues that will draw people from outside the area to the neighborhood for cultural, entertainment, and shopping activities.



## Form Policies

New development and redevelopment, in both the public and private sectors, should be designed in a manner that is sensitive to social and physical needs, including accessibility for those with limited mobility; provision of coordinated facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders; provision of functional landscaping and open space; and the appropriate scale and massing of buildings related to neighborhood context.

Public projects should promote design excellence and assure that new capital projects are positive additions to the community's architectural and urban design heritage.

### *Enhanced Design for the Built Environment*

Encourage quality architecture and urban design in private sector development that promotes the use of alternative modes of transportation, provides a livable environment, and addresses these elements:

#### *a) Context*

Development projects should become a coherent part of the neighborhood in which they are placed. For example, special attention will be given to protecting and enhancing the quality of established residential areas that are adjacent to business areas.

#### *b) Public realm*

Projects should relate positively to public streets, plazas, sidewalks and paths. Buildings and landscaped areas should present a

well-designed face to the public realm that does not block access to sunlight and is sensitive to important public view corridors.

#### *c) Human scale*

Projects should provide pedestrian interest along streets, sidewalks and public spaces.

#### *d) Permeability*

Projects should provide numerous opportunities for an individual to enter the site from adjacent pathways, thus presenting a street face that is permeable. In addition to points of entry, a project should be visual permeable, thus creating pedestrian interest.



#### *e) On-site open spaces*

Projects should incorporate well-designed functional open spaces with quality landscaping, access to sunlight and shade, and places to sit comfortably. Where public parks or open spaces are not within close proximity, shared open spaces for a variety of activities should also be provided within developments.

#### *f) Buildings*

An individual building should have a cohesive design that is comfortable to the pedestrian with inviting entries that are visible from public rights-of-way.

Create and maintain walkable and bike-friendly neighborhoods.

Place buildings to create meaningful public space amenities and reinforce the street edge.

Along commercial corridors, residential streets and pedestrian parkways, design streetscapes that slow traffic to enhance attractiveness, public safety, and pedestrian use.

All walls visible from streets should contain architecturally significant materials and fenestration. Architecturally significant building materials include, but are not limited to decorative masonry, brick, cut stone, glass, architectural-finished metal cladding, and architectural precast concrete panels.

## Redevelopment Strategies

The use of newly developed materials and recycled materials that are of high quality is encouraged. Glazing at entrances to buildings must be transparent, vision glass. The use of reflective glass on any area of the building should be avoided.

Site buildings to take advantage of views of natural features, encourage the connection of open spaces between projects, and promote public pedestrian connections to parklands and waterways for either active or passive recreation.

Ensure that pedestrian movement and access points are well lit at night.



Promote conservation and conversion of existing structures. Renovation is preferred to demolition for new construction.

Create a marketing brand for each district such as Southpoint, Jackson Park, and Far Southwest Side, or the Garden District (see Chapter 4).

Explore Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as a strategy to implement public improvements in large-scale development initiatives.

Allow non-taxable developments, providing their use has a catalytic effect that will spur new economic activity or be a major jobs producer.

Encourage coordination and communication between area businesses and local residents to advance neighborhood safety and neighborhood enhancement programs.

Ensure that adjacent property owners are notified in a timely manner to provide for a fair and coordinated development process.

Support the goals of the Citywide Policy Plan.

Consider such tools as neighborhood design guidelines to work with neighborhoods to promote sensitive infill and redevelopment, and to enhance neighborhood character and livability. If done sensitively, infill and redevelopment may provide significant benefits to the community and the neighborhoods.

### **3.3 Sustainability and Public Space**

#### *Vision*

Good community planning and urban design are complementary to the principles of sustainability.

The Plan's recommendations identify characteristics that define well-designed urban places – places that are memorable and have a noteworthy quality or almost indescribable “feel” to them.

Successful places integrate an attractive and logical mix of streets and blocks; residential, commercial, and civic buildings; public spaces, natural areas, and human activity -- all of which add to our experience of desirable and successful places. The unique combination of cultural, economic, and natural forces provides us with visual cues that we are someplace special.

Many of these places are also inherently sustainable. Fundamentally, sustainable places reflect ecological limits – they meet current needs without compromising the ability to do so in the future.

To be truly sustainable, communities need to remain economically, socially, and environmentally competitive. To thrive, they need to continue to attract residents, visitors, investment, customers, and to remain places where people choose to go, where they willingly and enjoyably spend time, and ultimately where they live their lives.

This Plan recognizes the interdependence of the economy and the environment for mutual benefit – both now and in the future.

As Milwaukee's commitment to sustainability and the fostering of sustainable places grows, the recommendations in this Plan can be used to integrate the ethics and policies of sustainability into Milwaukee's overall urban form as well as into individual site and building designs.

## Land Use Policies

### Density

Balance density efficiencies with sociocultural needs and attitudes. Contextually appropriate urban density is crucial to the economic and environmental sustainability of Milwaukee's neighborhoods.

Development densities that are too low tend to incur high infrastructure and service costs, longer commutes, and environmental impacts associated with sprawl.

Development densities that are relatively high can minimize infrastructure, service costs, and environmental impacts.

### Location

Reinforce the center and edges of the Southwest Side. The arrival into the community and its discrete neighborhoods should be easily recognizable. Centers are places where the public feels welcome and encouraged to congregate and participate in public life in a compact, pedestrian-friendly and mixed use setting.

Major entryways into the community should be identified, protected, and enhanced in order to emphasize and preserve the appearance of the community.

Future strip commercial development will be discouraged.

Reuse underutilized or vacant buildings and sites for infill development. This sustainable practice has the advantages of using existing infrastructure and lowering the demand and costs for land, infrastructure, energy, and maintenance.

Preserve cultural resources that may exist near a development site, particularly when those resources are related to a neighborhood's identity.

Locate land uses so they will complement one another and provide for gradual land use transitions that respect sensitive land uses.

Provide opportunities for a mix of uses to provide balance and to meet the full range of community needs. Encourage well designed mixed use development that incorporates a balanced amount of affordable housing in appropriate locations, including some commercial centers, corridors, and industrial areas. In reviewing mixed use projects consider impacts to adjacent neighborhoods.



*The street is the river  
of life of the city, the  
place where we come  
together, the pathway  
to the center.*

*William H. Whyte*

## Form Policies

### Streets and Sidewalks

Streets should be planned as welcome, active and interesting places that create the setting for the story of the community.

Streets should be interconnected to provide movement throughout the community and corridor.

Street rights-of-way should be allocated between a variety of purposes. On a case by case basis, streets can be narrowed for pedestrian safety; lanes for bikes and transit, and boulevards with planted medians may be added.

These actions will minimize impacts to air quality, conserve energy, reduce traffic congestion and contribute to an overall high quality of life.

The distance from the curb to the sidewalk may vary as necessary. The width of the sidewalk should be wide enough to accommodate outdoor cafes, sales, etc.

Introduce green alleys to extend the system of green infrastructure. Green alleys use a permeable pavement that allows stormwater to drain into the ground.

Using light colored paving will reduce the heat island effect. Green alleys use recycled materials such as concrete aggregate, slag, and recycled tire rubber.

## *Public Spaces*

Provide gathering places for social engagement, recreation and a sense of identity. The end result should be a human-scale, living environment where residents and visitors can live and learn, work and play.

Design the space as an expression of visual art, nature, history and social interaction. Include public art at prominent locations to engage users and complement the physical environment.

Whether formal or informal, public open spaces should be beautiful from the perspective of the external observer as well as engaging for those who are in the space. Visual and physical access to public space, environmental and cultural resources enhances the image and enjoyment of the place.

Define public spaces internal to the neighborhood by having building facades form a sense of enclosure.

Provide a feeling of security and safety to potential users with appropriate levels of lighting and visual access from surrounding streets and windows.

The size and use of each gathering place needs to be appropriate to its context.

Design and equip to provide accessibility and to support the needs of all users.

Offer an environment that is physiologically comfortable. Regard sun, wind, shade, and sound to make full use of environmental assets while minimizing adverse externalities.

Develop shared community green spaces inside residential blocks where possible. A safe, attractive space can build community and attract investment by residents.

Attempt to create pocket parks out of City-owned remnants. Involve neighbors in these efforts.

### Site and Building Design

New development should integrate the location of the building on the site with the surrounding landscape to optimize efficiency and reduce environmental impacts.

Where possible, locate buildings to take advantage of natural features and views. Screen sources of mechanical noise, odors and loading operations from public open space areas and adjacent properties.

Locate utility meters and exhaust vents on the side or rear of building. Screen or locate rooftop mechanical equipment so it is not visible from the street.

Encourage energy efficient building design. Where possible, orient buildings along an east-west axis for maximum day lighting benefits.

Buildings should be developed using sustainable construction methods, architectural design and building materials and finishes.

Utilize brick (reclaimed or new) and local materials when possible, and minimize the use of chemicals and synthetic compounds. The use of newly developed materials and

recycled materials that are of high quality is encouraged.

The integration of mechanical and natural systems for heating and cooling, energy-efficient equipment and stormwater management in the form of a “treatment train” should be incorporated to the highest level feasible.

Reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater run-off into waterways.

Incorporate open space into redevelopment projects.

Incorporate sustainable design elements, with the goal of achieving a basic LEED™ certification. This will generate a wide range of benefits for the facility owner, including *increased property value, improved facility performance and operational cost savings, international corporate recognition and marketing benefits.*

Employ site designs that prevent the automobile from further encroaching into pedestrian-friendly areas and rights-of-way.



Use zoning to require businesses to upgrade landscaping efforts.

Integrate sustainable stormwater management practices in new development that meet or exceed state and local requirements.

See the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewage District's stormwater reduction practices.



*Porous parkway*

### **Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewage District's Stormwater Reduction Practices**

These are the things you can do at home and work to reduce the risk of basement backups, sewer overflows and, at the same time, help protect Lake Michigan from polluted runoff, the biggest remaining threat to water quality in the country.

#### **Downspout Disconnection**

Every downspout on your home can deliver up to 12 gallons of rainwater a minute during a heavy storm. In the combined sewer area, many downspouts are connected directly to the sewer, potentially pumping millions of gallons of water into the sanitary sewers when it rains. MMSD is encouraging all property owners to disconnect downspouts from the sanitary sewer system where it can be done legally, safely and in a reasonable manner. Not everyone will be able to disconnect.

#### **Stormwater Trees**

A city's tree canopy can significantly reduce rainwater runoff and save millions of dollars in sewer infrastructure needs. Trees provide many other benefits. A healthy level of tree canopy is around 40 percent. A 2002 analysis of the older sections of Milwaukee found the tree canopy at around 10 percent.

#### **Rain Barrels**

A simple way to store the rain that runs off the roof of your home, rain barrels allow you to capture water that you can use later, during dry periods, to water plants, trees and gardens.

#### **Rain Gardens:**

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, rain gardens allow about 30 percent more water to soak into the ground compared to a conventional lawn. The gardens help keep water out of the sewer system while attracting birds and butterflies at the same time.

#### **Green Roofs:**

A waterproof membrane, soil and vegetation placed on flat roofs combine to capture rain that would otherwise flow off your roof, down a downspout and possibly into a sewer. Rain that falls on the green roof is typically retained in the soil and used by plants or evaporated. Excess rain flows off of the green roof and drains into downspouts. An engineering analysis is required to make sure your building can handle the extra weight of a green roof.

#### **Porous Pavement:**

Pavement systems for roads, parking lots or trails can be designed to absorb water by using porous asphalt or concrete, modular block systems or pavers. Porous pavement systems work best in low-traffic areas such as parking lots, driveways, sidewalks, trails or the shoulder of a road. They can be very effective for reducing stormwater runoff.

### Parking

Create a balanced circulation system that accommodates mobility choices and meets ADA requirements.

Incorporate green spaces with tree canopy into parking areas to break up large expanses of concrete and hold and infiltrate stormwater.

Use porous paving systems to extend the life of the pavement, allow for stormwater infiltration, reduce maintenance costs, and reduce the urban heat island effect in summer.

Use high quality masonry, metal, architectural fencing and green plantings, or combination of these to define the perimeter and edges of parking areas.



*Porous pavement at Milwaukee School of Engineering  
Source: Milwaukee Department of Public Works website*



*Green curbs*

Ensure parking lots are graded to drain away from area waterways, so polluted runoff does not directly enter waterways.

When placing plant materials near parking stalls, allow space for car fronts and doors to open. Ensure care when selecting tree species – choosing a diverse mix of species, while avoiding species that drop seed pods or fruits which may impede mobility.

Strive for parking maximums rather than minimum requirements. Consider shared parking arrangements where feasible.



*Linear rain gardens*

### ***Linear Rain Gardens***

Rain gardens are suggested to complement designated pedestrian areas where large amounts of paving are planned. These gardens should be planned to separate pedestrian areas from the nuisances caused by high traffic volumes traveling along adjacent streets. These rain gardens will typically need to adopt a linear configuration running parallel with the streets where they are located. These rain gardens have the following benefits:

Rain gardens collect, clean, and infiltrate stormwater runoff from paved pedestrian areas.

Rain gardens help protect water quality in the waterways by using vegetation to clean stormwater and allowing the infiltration of water directly into the ground.

Rain gardens also help reduce the severity of floods.

Rain gardens create a physical separation between vehicular traffic and pedestrian designated areas. These vegetative barriers or screens help protect pedestrian areas from traffic noise, pollution, and create a visual buffer between these two environments. This separation is particularly important when pedestrian areas are located adjacent to high traffic areas.

### *Lighting*

Encourage the use of reflective-type lighting fixtures to eliminate glare and provide safer, more human scaled nightscapes.

Encourage the use of lighting to enhance unique features of building facades and landscaped areas to create a dramatic visual highlight at night.

Use high efficiency lighting with low cut off angles and down-lighting for landscaping.

Encourage the use of light colored or reflective edges along driveways or walkways to reduce dependence on high wattage electrical lighting at night.

### *Landscaping*

Protect natural environmental corridors, such as the Kinnickinnic River corridor, when planning and implementing new development.

Encourage natural landscaping.

Augment landscaping efforts to increase the tree canopy and beautify the area. Increase the City's urban tree canopy from 16% to between 25% and 40% to meet American Forest's guidelines, and avoid using species prone to disease or pests, such as the ash tree.



Tree cover is directly related to environmental quality. Maintaining a robust tree cover to function as green infrastructure reduces the need and expense of building infrastructure to manage air and water resources.

A greater tree canopy represents tremendous energy savings for an urban area. Trees improve air quality, reduce stormwater flow, and conserve energy.

Maximize tree density.

Plant trees with a minimum caliper of 3 inches.

Landscaping should be of high quality design reflecting a variety of species, materials, textures, and sculptural qualities.

Avoid the use of contaminated railroad ties or timbers as landscape elements.

Use drought resistant plantings, eliminating irrigation other than collected rainwater. Design the site to use/reuse rainwater as part of a green infrastructure system when possible rather than sending rainwater offsite to more expensive gray infrastructure systems. Treat rainwater as a natural and aesthetic asset rather than as a nuisance.

Design landscape planting materials, soils, and sub-soils for infiltration and evapotranspiration of rainwater.

Consider using green roof systems to collect and evapotranspire rainwater, thus reducing runoff as well as heating and cooling loads.

## *Redevelopment Strategies*

Ensure that all aspects of major new development planning have occurred to anticipate traffic impacts, environmental impacts, etc. before construction occurs.

Expand and apply the greening MPS neighborhood schools program.

Redevelop brownfield sites. Despite the challenges of Federal guidelines, financing, developer buy in and political will, the benefits of brownfield development include:

- a) Land reclaimed for productive use;
- b) Removal of hazardous materials; and
- c) Contribution to a healthy, efficient environment.

Promote community gardens and urban orchards for an environmental, economic and social reasons.



### 3.4 Residential

#### *Vision*

Residents of the Southwest Side have a strong sense of community cohesiveness desire to preserve the traditional physical characteristics of the neighborhoods. Quality of life is also of major importance to Southwest Side residents. To preserve these qualities new development must respond to its context and add to the neighborhood's livability.

#### *Land Use Policies*

##### *Appropriate Types / Mix*

Provide a variety of affordable housing types for all households.

Encourage the conservation of the existing single-family and duplex owner-occupied housing units and types.

Promote the development of infill sites along existing neighborhood residential streets with single family and duplex homes. Allow for multi-family residential development where appropriate as indicated in the "location" recommendations in the next section.

Encourage adaptive reuse of commercial and industrial loft structures for residential and mixed uses.

Consider selective demolition of surplus apartments for new single- and two-family development sites.

#### *Location*

Ensure the compatibility of new residential land uses with adjacent land uses.

Capitalize on public park and recreational trail systems by encouraging residential developments on neighboring parcels.

Encourage owner-occupied multifamily residential mixed use developments along commercial corridors in infill locations where retail and commercial activities are being revitalized.

Conversely, where a multi-family, high density residential district is recommended in this Plan, allow for neighborhood-serving commercial establishments.

Encourage elderly housing and supportive housing near neighborhood commercial land uses and bus routes. Supportive housing provides on-site services for individuals who might otherwise be homeless. This approach has been found to be most successful in meeting needs for the residents and the surrounding community.

Locate new residential units near workplaces to promote walking to work..



## Form Policies

### Parcel

For infill and existing single-family and duplex development, maintain original platted lot dimensions and sizes.

Locate the garage with access from the alley where available. Whether a garage is attached or detached, it shall not be the front most building or portion of a building.

On primary streets, avoid vehicular curb cut access by providing access from alleys or side streets.

Protect the integrity of existing residential streets with new construction setbacks consistent with, but no greater than, the average existing neighborhood conditions.

New, large residential developments, should employ urban development patterns that define the street edge. Setbacks should be minimized, but courtyards, porches and planting zones are recommended. Smaller developments should respect the context.

Design connections and transitions of residential uses to adjacent public and commercial uses.

Consider including small lanes to be used as shared space for pedestrians and automobiles within major developments.

Retrofit landscaping in residential areas, especially tree borders which could be planted with perennials in addition to trees. This would complement the Garden District landscaping.

### Building and Site Elements

On existing neighborhood residential streets, new buildings should be compatible in setbacks, height and character with the neighboring structures.

Where a multi-family, high density residential district is recommended in this Plan, allow for a wide range of lot sizes, smaller setbacks, a high percentage of lot coverage, and greater building heights.

All new residential buildings should respect and enhance the street as an integral part of the place by fronting the street with windows, entries and entrance transition elements.

Indoor parking is preferred. Surface parking lots accommodating more than 24 cars are discouraged.

Access to outdoor private or communal space is desirable for each dwelling unit.



*Redevelopment Strategies*

Retain (or increase) the high owner occupancy rate in the area while assuring there are rental opportunities for elderly, young, and lower income families.

Include affordable rate units in new mixed use developments. By utilizing housing tax credits to leverage financing, these units are more competitive than traditional market rate developments.

Renovation is preferred to demolition for new construction, where economically feasible. Promote conservation and rehabilitation of existing structures

Use existing programs, such as the Targeted Investment Neighborhood program, where applicable and seek additional programs that provide economic incentives for housing rehabilitation.

Assist residents in establishing block watch programs where neighbors see a need for such programs.

Residents should continue their efforts to maintain the many viable, productive and effective neighborhood organizations throughout the Southwest Side. Organization and knowledge create change..

Encourage continuing landlord compacts to eliminate nuisance properties and responsible landlords to invest in the area.

Encourage landlords to enroll in the Landlord Training program by the City of Milwaukee's Neighborhood Housing and Services Division.

Consider using conservation overlay districts selectively as a tool to prevent unwanted intensification and to preserve neighborhood character.

Support programs that seek to develop affordable housing. Subsidized, tax credit, and supportive housing need to be part of the housing mix in the area.

<p><b>Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative</b></p>
<p>What can a neighborhood do to make sure that the stability and desirability remain so in the future, and draw new resources to the area?</p>
<p>The Healthy Neighborhood approach focuses on neighborhood strengths and works to engage residents to invest in their neighborhoods and promote them as good places to live.</p> <p>Each neighborhood designs its own program. Some of the events that have been successful include house tours for prospective home-owners, plantings and gardens, and renovation assistance. Nationally, this program has increased both the home improvement rate and the home ownership rate.</p> <p>For more information on Milwaukee's Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative, contact The Department of City Development's Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation (NIDC) at 414.286.5626.</p>

### 3.5 Commercial

#### *Vision*

Commercial corridors have long been the life of healthy neighborhoods. They help to sustain neighborhoods by promoting local investment, boosting property values, and preserving the urban context of neighborhoods. To succeed in today's retail environment, commercial corridors must incorporate new retail formats, find new market niches, and make strategic capital investments. Infill development will be an essential part of remaining competitive.

Recommendations for commercial land uses in the Southwest Side are intended to support opportunities for community economic development. Commercial corridors and streets should serve and support local shoppers and draw from a larger regional base. Corner stores, neighborhood retail streets, and larger scaled centers should fit into the local context while promoting human-scaled environments.

#### *Land Use Policies*

As older shopping centers become economically unviable, out-moded or obsolete, retrofit or replace vacant buildings with mixed use centers that include housing, public space, connections to recreation areas and bike trails.

Cluster commercial redevelopment at key nodes along commercial corridors. Allow taller buildings at these nodes.

Allow infill commercial/residential mixed-use in commercial areas.

Encourage multifamily residential developments in commercial corridors where retail and commercial activities are no longer viable.

Encourage owner-occupied multifamily residential above commercial in mixed use developments along commercial corridors where retail and commercial activities are being revitalized.

Discourage new auto-oriented and drive-thru uses in or adjacent to residential areas.

Consider prohibiting drive-thru establishments, stand alone gas stations, and stand alone fast food services.

## Form Policies

### *Block and Parcel*

Promote stronger connections between commercial buildings and the street edge by bringing buildings closer to the right-of-way. Buildings on the block should work together to define the edges of commercial corridors at or near the property line.

New commercial buildings should avoid curb cuts on primary street frontages.

Make walking an attractive and safe experience.

Improve connectivity to and within commercial areas, especially 27th St. Improve pedestrian crossings across 27th St.

Encourage street parking, except on major highways.

Ensure that pedestrian movement and access points are well lit at night.

### *Building and Site Elements*

Preserve the historic character of older commercial areas.

All buildings along neighborhood shopping streets should be a minimum of 2 stories in height. Corner buildings or elements of them may be of greater height.

The maximum height of new buildings should not exceed the street right-of-way width.

Promote the transformation of strip commercial development into street edge commercial development by encouraging the construction new commercial structures along the street edge.

Provide primary business entrances along the public sidewalk at the street edge.

The front of commercial buildings should actively contribute to the street, engage pedestrians, and complement the overall architecture of the building.

Provide for 75% of street façade surface to be transparent to encourage window shopping. Avoid blank walls along street facades.

Encourage outdoor sidewalk seating for eating and drinking venues in commercial corridors.

Encourage streetscape initiatives that will provide benches, lighting, plantings, paving treatments and other design elements to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Restrict parking to the minimum number of spaces required to accommodate customers/visitors to the commercial corridor. Require all large parking lots to be subdivided into smaller lots by generous landscaping and pedestrian-friendly connections. Large uninterrupted parking lots should be prohibited.

Do not place parking lots in front of buildings. Parking access should be restricted to alley or side street approaches. Encourage shared parking among businesses.

Use landscaping, masonry walls or metal fencing and generous plantings to buffer parking lots and service entries that occur along shopping streets.

## Redevelopment Strategies

Sustain traditional neighborhood shopping streets by attracting a variety of basic and distinctive goods and services.

Provide opportunities and elements for daytime and nighttime activities. Outdoor cafes, book sales, art walks, benches and planters add interest to the area and into the area. The farm market at St. Luke's is a popular example.

Focus improvement efforts on key commercial corridors that influence the perception of the Southwest Side as specified in Chapter 4, Districts and Corridors.

Propose changes to zoning requirements to allow for Bed & Breakfast establishments. Allow conversion of residential units for these uses.

Promote the development of hotels in this area.

Utilize or form local business associations, business improvement districts, Main Street programs, or tax increment financing to finance and support local and regional commercial areas. These tools can be used to promote aesthetic improvements, crime prevention, and business district promotion.

Focus aesthetic improvements to build on commercial corridors with strong business association activities.

Provide access for locally grown produce and promote the formation of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) organizations.

*Business owners can access information on economic development resources at [www.mkedcd.org/business](http://www.mkedcd.org/business)*



Retail on 13th St.



Farmer's market at St. Luke's

### 3.6 Industrial

#### *Vision*

Like many areas in the City, the history of the Southwest Side reveals how industry and residential grew side by side. Now, market research indicates that manufacturing will continue to decline, and that growth in the industrial sector is not likely to occur in this area. Therefore, the vision of the industrial areas of the Southwest Side is to allow the them to transform into commercially viable job creating businesses centers and not allow them to decline into low value land uses.



#### *Land Use Policies*

For existing industrial loft buildings subject to change, find a balance between preserving industrial and manufacturing uses and allowing adaptive reuse of buildings for new commercial and residential uses.

Core industrial areas should remain industrial. On edges of industrial edges, identify opportunities to transition to other uses such as modern light industrial business parks and mixed use developments.

Discourage industrial areas from converting to big box commercial.

Encourage environmental “green” river corridor development on industrial parcels that border rivers.

## Form Policies

Promote the public image of industrial and business parks by ensuring appropriate and uniform signage identifying the park at all gateway entries. Signage shall be integrated into the façade design rather than free standing.

Ensure that lighting, noise, odors, and heavy traffic does not negatively impact residential areas.

Provide landscape buffers between industrial buildings / parking lots and adjacent land uses.

Wherever possible place buildings at the street edge with public entries facing the street.

All facades that are visible from the street should be designed to provide a dignified image for the business and sensitive to any other adjacent uses.

Service loading docks should be located at the side or rear of the building.

Parking lots should be located at the side or rear of the building. Include on-street and shared parking resources in parking requirement calculations. Also, minimize parking stall dimensions to decrease the parking lot size and allow for a larger building footprint. Use landscape walls and generous plantings to buffer parking that occurs along streets.

Prohibit outdoor industrial activities that are a nuisance and screen any outdoor Industrial uses from surrounding areas.

Do not locate parking or waste facilities within 10 feet of the front line of the property, and screen these areas from view. Contain all refuse in an appropriate receptacle further

enclosed by a 6-foot fence of solid material.

Provide no more than two drive openings, and provide appropriate traffic control measures at all entrances to public rights-of-way.

Encourage transportation alternatives for employees and visitors by providing:

*Bicycle racks and employee shower/changing facilities. Free bike racks are available from the City of Milwaukee.*

*Covered bus shelters or waiting areas.*

*Pleasant, safe and accessible walkways.*

*Preferred parking for car-pools.*

### *Redevelopment Strategies*

Promote the reuse of vacant industrial buildings and lots with new businesses. Reuse is preferred over new construction.

Encourage business associations in industrial corridors to promote aesthetic improvements, crime prevention and business development.

Consider a green industry business park.

### 3.7 Open Space

#### Vision

The Southwest Side contains high quality green spaces, many of which are linked by waterways.

The open space recommendations seek to promote sociability and civic engagement, and guide placement, design, linkages and accessibility to achieve a balance between the natural and built environment.

Open space in this section refers to public green space, green infrastructure, parks, playfields, “third places”, plazas, sidewalks, paths, and bike trails.

#### Land Use Policies

Provide places where people connect and interact in a shared safe environment.

Develop an interconnected system of parks, natural areas, and bike / pedestrian paths.

Add public places (plazas, squares, and courtyard) in the most intensely planned / developed locations within districts and corridors.

Support the restoration and naturalization of rivers and creeks to provide an environmental corridor with public access integrated with larger development master plans. Plant trees along waterways, and include stormwater facilities to filter runoff before it reaches waterways.

Extend and connect bicycle trails.

Create safe public access points to all trails and parkways.

#### Attributes of Successful Open Space

New developments should include a variety of public and private green spaces. It is important that they achieve the following purposes:

#### Access and Linkages

A successful space is easy to get to and get through: it is visible both from a distance and up close. Clearly defining the edges is important. Accessible places are ideally convenient to pedestrians and public transit.

#### Comfort and Image

Public space ought to be clean, safe and attractive. Giving people choices about where they'd like to sit is important.

#### Uses and Activities

Different activities can take place in a public place at the same or different times. Ideally, the space should be used for passive and active activities throughout the day. People of different ages should be attracted to the space.

#### Sociability and Civic Engagement

Places where people connect and interact in a shared environment contribute to the life of a neighborhood.

*Source: Project for Public Spaces*

*“Beyond helping to define a street, separating the pedestrian realm from vehicles, and providing shade, what makes trees so special is their movement; the constant movement of their branches and leaves, and the ever changing light that plays on, through, and around them.”*

*A.B. Jacobs  
Great Streets*

### *Form Policies*

Provide places where people connect and interact in a shared environment. Encourage significant and formal public spaces in the design and development of new institutional buildings.

Ensure institutional public spaces (school playgrounds) are green and visibly accessible to the public with any fencing minimal in height.

Maintain and improve visibility to and within the parks, parkways and open spaces to promote public surveillance and improve safety. Design with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

Create pedestrian and bike paths through park spaces that connect to the surrounding street and block system.

Encourage signage and way-finding elements that identify public access to parks, parkways, and trails.

Design boulevards that create value and require minimal maintenance.

Landscape existing traffic triangles.

Screen the back of business and commercial buildings that face waterways and parks.

### *Redevelopment Strategies*

Use open space to create value or add value to districts and corridors and new development.

Use open space to balance dense development.

Landscape businesses uniformly to give them an identity and to reinforce the street right of way as a public open space.

Consider creating a residential improvement district to fund park improvements and programs.



### 3.8 Civic and Institutional

#### Vision

The Southwest Side has a thriving civic, institutional, and cultural fabric. The vision is to simply continue and support these great institutional traditions.

Aurora St. Luke's and Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare-St. Francis hospitals are among the area's leading employers.

Alverno College is a nationally recognized institute of higher education and St. Sava is a cultural center for Serbian-Americans.

Finally, Zablocki library is one of the top three libraries in patron use in the City and leads all neighborhood libraries in the City in circulation.

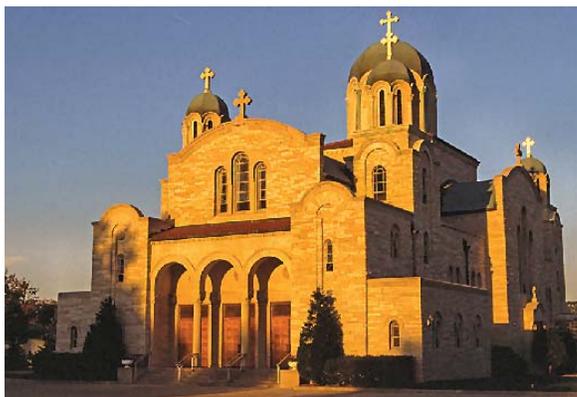
All of these institutions contribute greatly to the economic development of the area.



Aurora St. Luke's



Alverno College



St. Sava



Zablocki Library'

*"What a great library should be"*  
Neighborhood resident

*In 2003, St. Luke's developed a detailed plan for growth that utilized existing buildings to the north for expansion*

### *Land Use Policies*

Locate new institutional uses in prominent locations to encourage a sense of identity and to be a catalyst for added economic growth and development in the surrounding area.

Locate institutional uses with high traffic generation with good access to major arterials and transit routes.

Attract and retain higher education institutions within the area to serve local and outlying populations and broaden the neighborhood jobs base.

Consider parking as an accessory use that should not exceed what is necessary to accommodate visitors and employees.

While nonprofit organizations are vital to the community, discourage non-profits from underutilizing land, especially by holding underutilized parking lots.

Permit industrial areas adjacent to residential areas to be converted to institutional uses that require a large parcel.

### *Form Policies*

Link new institutional uses to the neighborhood with attractive pedestrian connections to promote walking and bicycling as a primary means of access.

Include public open space and/or art as part of any new major facility.

### *Redevelopment Strategies*

Support institutional development master plans to meet their needs and obligations as growing facilities require adjacent or local expansion areas.

Locate tax-exempt uses in buildings previously occupied by tax exempt uses whenever feasible.

Discourage concentration in number and intensity of social services providers in any one part of the planning area.

### **3.9 Transportation and Infrastructure**

#### *Vision*

One of the strengths of the Southwest Side is that it is well served by a wide variety of transportation modes.

This advantage should be continued, enhanced, and exploited.

The area is currently served by a complete street grid, highways, sidewalks, bikeways, and public transit.

#### *Land Use Policies*

Maintain transit service along routes in all currently served neighborhoods in the area.

Extend the network of bicycle routes within the area.

Direct truck traffic to truck routes and away from residential areas.

Encourage major transit lines and stations near existing and planned development projects and incorporate site design measures that enhance access to the transit system (transit oriented development).

*Form Policies*

Design cross sections and dedicated rights-of-way for mass transit, automobiles, bicycles and pedestrians based upon the needs, character and intensity of adjacent land uses.

Provide continuous tree parkways, planting strips between sidewalk and street.

Enhance pedestrian connections between local neighborhood workplaces, shopping areas, recreational / open space, civic/institutional sites and other land uses.

Require continuous sidewalks and adequate sidewalk connections on all major corridors.

Encourage shared parking areas that include adequate pedestrian and vehicular linkages between them.

Install curb cuts on frontage streets and side streets to channel stormwater runoff to swale areas or rain gardens and provide landscape improvements.



*Redevelopment Strategies*

Use infrastructure dollars wisely by prioritizing reinvestment over expansion.

Emphasize the movement of more people, (multi-modal) rather than the movement of more vehicles, when making investment decisions.

Prohibit increasing the traffic capacity within rights-of-way if expansion would negatively impact the majority of adjacent land uses.

Improve the aesthetic appeal and traffic flow of arterials, not just the traffic flow, by implementing streetscape enhancements.

Maintain and promote two-way traffic on streets.

Don't permit cul-de-sacs and street closures unless they are otherwise necessary to improve public safety or respond to a platting issue.

Encourage Intelligent Transit System technologies to be placed in bus stops shelters along key transit routes. This technology includes monitors that identify the time of arrival of the next bus.