

# Chapter 3

## Land Use Policies and Plan

### Introduction

City of Milwaukee's overall policies addressing land use, building form and redevelopment strategies in the Washington Park area are stated in this chapter. A brief definition of overall land use policies is provided. A further discussion of goals and policies is provided for each land use, including recommended urban forms and standards. The chapter ends with policy statements regarding City transportation facilities and street infrastructure.

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

- Residential, Single-Family and Multi-Family
- Mixed Use Commercial and Residential
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Civic and Institutional
- Park and Open Space
- Transportation and Infrastructure

In regard to residential land uses, it is recognized that aspects of use, such as density, strongly correspond to issues of form, and are more readily understood as housing types. Policy in regard to residential land use is expressed by a discussion of the acceptable residential types in the Washington Park planning area, given in the two broad categories of single-family and multi-family types. Commercial uses are also discussed in relation to building types.

### Overall Land Use Policies

#### Overall Goal

The Overall Land Uses Strategy is intended to reinforce and reassert traditional patterns of development, characteristic of older Milwaukee neighborhoods. These patterns form the relationship of the public and private realms, the layout of streets and blocks, the physical character of sites and buildings, and those tangible and 'intangible' elements that create a sense of place. Where neighborhood character has been eroded, new development or redevelopment should return these areas to an improved state of health and well being, and in doing so, restore a sense of belonging and sense of place.

### **Overall Uses Policies**

- Traditional neighborhood use patterns should be preserved and adapted to changes in households, markets, lifestyles, etc.
- Follow current zoning unless a specific zoning change is identified in within the Districts and Corridors and/or Catalytic Projects Chapters of this Plan.
- Non-conforming uses and/or structures may remain if the use remains economically viable, if the structure is maintained in good condition, and if it is not detrimental to surrounding properties. The review process should include public input asserting that non-conforming uses and/or structures continue to make a positive contribution to the neighborhood.

### **Overall Form Policies**

- Preserve the overall neighborhood character as a compact, interconnected and walkable community. New development should adhere to traditional neighborhood building patterns and densities. Larger building mass and higher density is appropriate along major arterial streets.
- Make walking safe, attractive and convenient.
- Minimize conflict between uses by creating buffers or transitions. The transitions may be use, building typology, design (scale, massing, height, and area), or landscaping.
- Minimize the intrusion of the automobile into the public realm, and more specifically, that part of the public realm reserved for pedestrians.
- Maintain good visibility between buildings and their surroundings.

### **Overall Redevelopment Strategies**

- Increase home-ownership
- To strengthen the tax base, encourage additional taxable uses over additional non-taxable uses.
- Consider historic sites, buildings and districts as valuable irreplaceable assets to be used as key pieces of a larger redevelopment effort. For rehab or additions, maintain the historic character of the existing building wherever possible.
- Protect historic buildings so their eventual redevelopment potential can be realized. Support the creation of National Register Historic Districts or sites in order to make owners eligible for federal and state tax credits.
- Permit selective demolition of structures that serve as a blighting influence on the neighborhood, or can no longer be feasibly restored to contribute to the immediate surrounding area.
- Cluster new development to have the greatest positive impact on surrounding property values.
- Couple new construction with rehab, renovation and preservation of surrounding properties to maximize benefit to the neighborhood.

## Residential Policies

### Residential Uses Goal

Reinforce and build upon the historic development pattern and assets of Washington Park, while also improving the quality of the neighborhood's housing stock. Provide a greater diversity of housing types to meet the current and future needs of residents. Promote construction of new housing on vacant lots and rehabilitation of existing structures.

### Policy Context

The original housing stock in Washington Park was limited mainly to frame houses built as single dwellings or duplexes, most with an upper and lower unit in a two and a half story structure. Most of this stock is now over 100 years old and in need of renovation. The City of Milwaukee supports rehabilitation of this housing stock, especially through the use of "sweat equity" ownership arrangements. However, it also is recognized that many structures are beyond repair, and do not meet minimum building code requirements to allow use of public funding mechanisms. Therefore, a combined strategy of rehabilitation and new construction will be pursued.

Developers on North Avenue see a market for well-maintained rental units in new and renovated mixed-use structures and rental townhouses, bringing diversity to an area where most residents rent units in older single-family and duplex frame houses. New townhouses have also been under development on Vliet Street, while the City and developers of subsidized housing construct single-family houses in the Washington Park neighborhood.

The Plan recommends continued rehabilitation of older housing stock and construction of new single-family housing types throughout the residential portions of the neighborhood, and development of mixed-use and multi-family projects where appropriate on major arterials.

### Residential Use Policies

#### Appropriate Types/Mix

- Discourage the conversion of a purely residential structure in a residential zoning district into a non-residential use (such as day care centers, community living arrangements, etc.)
- Vary building types to include single-family homes, granny flats, rowhouses, townhouses, duplexes and multi-unit mid-rises. Transition building types to increase density from single-family residences in residential areas up to multi-unit buildings in mixed-use areas.
- Encourage residential above retail on commercial corridors and between intensively developed commercial nodes
- Encourage live/work units

## Density

- Maintain the broad range of dwelling unit diversity to allow for a mix of single-family homes, starter homes, townhouses condominiums and apartments.

## Location

- Locate residential land uses to ensure compatibility with adjacent non-residential land uses. Discourage locating single-family structures adjacent to commercial/industrial uses generating excessive noise, traffic, lighting or other incompatible characteristics. Encourage locating medium and high-density residential categories near commercial areas and public open spaces and on sites with good access to major arterial and transit routes.
- Encourage a range of housing types and opportunities in proximity to employment centers to achieve a balance between housing and job opportunities and to ease commuter travel.
- Encourage residential townhomes, rowhouses, and multi-unit midrises along commercial corridors where retail and commercial activities as the primary uses are no longer supported by the surrounding residential densities.

## **Residential Form Policies**

### Block Form

- Design typical residential blocks to be short and narrow with an alley in between.
- Infill development and new construction should be compatible in with the existing scale and massing design.
- Within predominantly residential neighborhoods, design streets after the existing Milwaukee neighborhood patterns including on street parking, limited curb-to-curb pavement widths, and off street parking to the rear of residential structures with access from an alley.

### Parcel Form

- Maintain original platted lot sizes for single family and duplex lots, typically 30 or 40 feet in width and 120 feet in depth. Any changes in platting should include lots that are compatible with the surrounding context.
- Size of structures in relationship to the lot size and placement of the building on the lot should be placed on appropriately sized parcels. For example, small lots are appropriate for small houses.
- 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 most compatible.
- Where alleys exist, access rear garage or parking area by means of the alley. In terms of infill development, if no alley exists, design the least obtrusive curb cut onto the front or side street.
- Limit driveways in number and minimize in width to the greatest extent possible. Driveways should cross at right angles so as to limit the impact on pedestrians.

## Housing Types (Building and Site Elements)

This section describes the housing types the Plan recommends and suggests locations, with specific projects or approaches highlighted in District Concept Plans in the next chapter. The types are organized in two broad categories of single-family types and multi-family types.

### Single-Family Types

#### Original Stock: Milwaukee Cottages and Bungalows

Most of Washington Park's housing stock is in the classic Milwaukee worker cottage and bungalows. This housing type gives the neighborhood its character: a gable-front vernacular form with front porches and stoops. These houses are appropriate along all residential blocks.

#### New Construction Single-Family Detached

Frame houses built on existing lots should blend with the older housing stock, specifically new construction should be two or two and a half stories. The vernacular elements of the typical gable-front house should be encouraged. Where a more modern style is desired, the massing and proportion of the building should be compatible with the surrounding buildings. Single-story or ranch houses are not recommended. In order to maintain the existing urban character and promote population density, the Plan recommends maintaining the traditional lot widths where possible, increasing the width only for larger homes of superior quality and detail.

#### New Construction Single-Family Attached

Attached housing types mimic the look of a single dwelling in a side-by-side arrangement of units in row house, or townhouse styles, or through stacked units. An individual exterior entrance must be provided for each unit to be considered a single-family type. The classic over and under duplex house is supported by the Plan, but is not a type favored by most contemporary developers. Rather, today's duplexes usually share a party wall; however, the stacked triplex is again gaining in popularity for new construction in many older urban areas, though it is not a common form in Milwaukee.

Economies of scale and shared land costs favor development of more townhouse units in Washington Park. Townhouse units are appropriate for many residential blocks in District A, especially those that have a large number of vacant lots and do not have a cohesive fabric of the original stock. See the District A Concept Plan and Catalytic Project for Garfield and Lloyd Blocks. Row house or townhouse units are also appropriate for blocks on Vliet Street in Districts B and C.



Classic Milwaukee 'cottages' in the local vernacular gable-front form, these along Galena St.



Three new construction single-family houses along 35th St., flanked by older houses, show preferred forms that mimic existing context.



Attention to proportion and details, such as front porches, helps new construction fit on neighborhood blocks.



The first row house units built in the study area, on 42nd St. on land cleared for the Park West freeway; each of the three units shares party walls, yet has an individual entrance.



Dwelling units above commercial space on Lisbon Ave.



Renovated apartment units over commercial space on North Ave., with new townhouses along 35th St.



Apartments in the mixed-use Columbia Square project completed in 2005 on the 3300 block of North Ave.



The Glen View Apartments facing Washington Park and Lisbon Ave., offer a local example of a 'brownstone' type of masonry construction.



United Methodist provides housing at the corner of 40th St. and Lisbon facing the park, in an attractive brick apartment building, which is the largest multi-unit building in the area.

## Multi-Family Types

Originally Washington Park had very few multi-family dwelling units, and those that were built were typically on the main arterial streets on the upper floors of small commercial buildings. In the past, Lisbon Avenue had a number of large apartment buildings, however they have all been torn down. The Plan does not support division of single-family houses or duplexes to apartments with more than three units.

### Renovated Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential

A number of upper floor residential units in commercial buildings have been rehabilitated in recent years, particularly along North Avenue. The Plan supports this type of renovation.

### New Mixed-Use Commercial and Residential Buildings

This type of structure usually has a shared exterior entrance and shared corridors leading to upper level dwelling units, and is therefore a type of multi-family housing.

The Plan recommends construction of new units in multi-family arrangements in mixed-use buildings, primarily along North Avenue.

### New Four and Six Unit Multi-unit Buildings

Washington Park has very few multi-unit buildings with four or six units. This type of housing is desirable for that part of the rental market that seeks space, but does not want to live in a large building. Careful attention must be paid to locating and managing these types of buildings. New construction is appropriate on Park View Blocks in District A and along Lisbon Avenue in Districts B and C.

### New Construction Multi-unit Buildings, Over Seven Units

A search of City data bases showed only five apartment buildings in the planning area with over seven units. These are true apartment buildings, originally constructed as multi-family structures. Although buildings with a large number of units require on-site management, these buildings can also be attractive and should only be built as masonry structures. Careful attention must be paid to locating and managing bigger apartment buildings, yet sites on the Park View Blocks in District A and along Lisbon Avenue in Districts B and C may be appropriate.

## Residential Redevelopment Strategies

### Acquisition/Demolition/Rehab

- Encourage conservation of existing structures along with infill housing. Renovation is preferred over demolition.
- Discourage demolition of residential units for the purpose of building surface parking lots.
- Use spot acquisition when code enforcement actions accumulate or

a property is deemed a nuisance to the neighborhood.

- Support existing and encourage additional programs that grant dollars or provide tax breaks to home owners for rehabilitation.

#### Concentration

- Avoid concentrating residential special uses, as defined in the zoning code, within individual neighborhoods.

#### Public/Private Housing Mix

- Increase owner occupancy.
- Undesirable or undersized vacant city-owned lots shall be offered for sale to adjacent owners, except when there is a greater priority for the land, such as creating infill development that adds to the tax base, or land assembly for a project that will benefit the surrounding neighborhood.
- Develop mixed income housing throughout the neighborhood.
- Place subsidized family housing on scattered sites; design should conform to the existing neighborhood character.

## Commercial Uses: Corridors And Nodes

### Commercial Uses Overall Goal

Concentrate commercial uses at corridors and nodes along Washington Park's main arterial streets. Plan for a marketable amount of commercial land use as supported by neighborhood residents and those traveling along the main arterials from outside the area.

### Policy Context

The Washington Park planning area has three commercial corridors:

North Avenue  
Lisbon Avenue  
Vliet Street.

Within each of the three corridors there are concentrations of commercial activity that can be thought of as commercial nodes, most prominently at each street's intersection with 35th Street, the main north-south arterial. Given different sub-regional roles and markets for commercial uses on each of the arterials, including varying levels of vehicular traffic, the Plan recommends an approach tailored for each of the three corridors so that together the commercial areas meet the needs of area residents and business owners. In addition to policy statements provided here, specific strategies and projects along corridors are discussed in Chapter 4.





### North Avenue

The Plan recognizes that North Avenue is the primary commercial corridor for the Washington Park area, and that the future land use plan, zoning, and City development programs should reinforce the on-going revitalization of North Avenue. The Plan heartily recommends a concerted effort to sustain the momentum for revitalizing North Avenue, as supported by policies, urban design guides, and catalytic projects.



### Lisbon Avenue

A major recommendation of the Plan is to change City policy in regard to land use and zoning along Lisbon Avenue to reflect a new vision for the corridor between 40th Street and the railroad tracks. With North Avenue only three blocks to the north, the market for retail and other services in Washington Park does not support a large amount of commercial space along Lisbon. Therefore the strategy for Lisbon Avenue is to work to develop new residential uses, in multi-unit developments.



### Vliet Street

With lower traffic levels and a more diverse mix of residential, commercial, and small industrial uses than either North Avenue or Lisbon Avenue, Vliet Street is in good position for continued infill and renovation. A relatively vibrant node of restaurants and small groceries is located at the intersection with 35th Street, and a solid commercial area is also on 35th Street at the Westside Marketplace just south of the railroad corridor. Small industrial uses are more numerous east of the tracks. The Plan recommends continued infill and redevelopment along Vliet Street, with a focus on supporting the 35th Street commercial node, and developing residential uses in single-family types, primarily row houses or townhouse development on other blocks.



## Commercial Use Policies

### Appropriate Types/Mix

- Encourage street level, pedestrian-oriented commercial uses. Encourage offices to locate on the second floor above retail, and allow at street level in areas where there is no negative impact on the street vitality. Encourage residential apartments and condominiums above retail uses.
- Allow residential uses along commercial corridors in areas where retail and commercial activity as the primary use are no longer supported by the surrounding residential densities. Residential uses along commercial corridors should be multi-story, densely developed, with minimal curb cuts along the commercial corridor.

### Location

- Existing corner commercial uses within residential blocks are permitted as long as they are economically viable and physically well

maintained, and as long as their use does not become automobile-oriented or otherwise detrimental to the neighborhood.

- Incorporate large scale tenant uses in commercial corridors when the use supports smaller uses by acting as an anchor or draw for the corridor. These uses should add to the commercial/retail mix in a positive way, providing a greater range of goods and services or better price structure than already exists, similar to the way a large department store anchors a mall of boutiques and smaller specialty shops.
- Discourage the expansion of commercial uses into surrounding residential neighborhoods. Permit limited commercial expansions if the uses are compatible in scale and intensity with residential neighborhoods, if they provide a service to adjacent residents, and the traffic, noise, hours of operation, lighting and building mass are compatible. Locate commercial uses within residential neighborhoods on street corners and not within a neighborhood block.
- Commercial day care facilities are encouraged to locate in existing commercial buildings that have land adjacent to them for the purpose of outdoor play areas.

### **Commercial Form Policies**

#### **Block Form**

- On vacant lots along commercial facades, discourage surface parking and rather promote buildings. Locate off-street parking behind the building where possible.
- Maintain the existing street wall of commercial buildings. Buildings should be built-out to the street so that, collectively, the buildings on a block work together to define the pedestrian area and the street itself.
- Encourage streetscape elements that unify the area: benches, lighting, entry markers, planters, and/or paving patterns.
- Design commercial districts and corridors with on-street parallel parking, two-way traffic, and a maximum speed limit of 30 miles per hour. Keep curb cuts to a minimum and shared when possible.
- Maintain the traditional street grid pattern of the area, and provide alleys for off-street deliveries.
- Make walking attractive, easier, and convenient.

#### **Parcel Form**

- Promote development of commercial and office center with shared road access rather than linear patterns with individual driveways.
- Encourage connections between parking lots.

### **Commercial Types (Building and Site Elements)**

Retail commercial uses are perhaps the most dynamic in terms of urban form in the American landscape. Perceived “market forces”

continue to bring evolutions to retail business models, and subsequent development of new building types. At present, the “superstore” marketing and “big box” forms dominate retailing, replacing earlier models of the single-proprietor “mom and pop” shop and downtown department store. For decades, the commercial areas of Washington Park have struggled to maintain a share of the overall retail market, for residents and the potential market along heavily trafficked arterials. Many of the multi-tenant storefront buildings along North, Lisbon, and Vliet are vacant, which creates an atmosphere of abandonment even if adjacent residential blocks are well maintained.

It is interesting to note that the current revitalization along North Avenue, especially near 35th Street was spurred by the development of a new full service grocery and drugstore on a large site just north of the older North Avenue commercial corridor. In this case, the introduction of a popular “big box” retailer has helped to revitalize the area, including the renovation of older storefronts and the construction of a new mixed use building. However, it took the halted Park West freeway project to provide a site big enough for this supermarket, while most of the parcels along North Avenue remain too shallow to locate other major retailers. This example shows the close relationship between issues of commercial land use, market demand, and urban form in regard to available lots and site layout. The section below provides a brief outline of common commercial types and locations where these types of urban forms should be encouraged.



#### Single-Tenant, Single-Story Buildings

This commercial type is the current champion in terms of providing the space that fits the dominant retailing model, which focuses on development of national and local brand name retailers, or franchise restaurants and convenience stores. Washington Park examples include the relatively new “Jewel-Osco” near the intersection of North and 35th, and an adjacent “Subway” sandwich shop on the northeast corner of the intersection. These structures reflect not only their business model, but also a focused financing that must account only for the potential of a retail market for a specific type of business. The Future Land Use Plan maps appropriate locations for this type of use along the three main commercial corridors, under the basic “commercial” category. Commercial nodes along 35th Street are good locations for single-tenant buildings, where the market has enough potential to attract major retailers or franchise restaurants.



#### Traditional Storefront Buildings

Because traditional storefront buildings frequently include upper level residential or office space, existing or potential locations for this type of building are indicated under the “mixed use commercial and residential” category. However, some of these building types may also be found in the basic “commercial” category. It is the traditional storefront building that enlivens urban commercial corridors, opening

directly onto the sidewalk, and in many cases built without any on-site parking. However, due to a declining population base in Washington Park and competition from the big box retailers, who provide easy parking, the traditional storefront is a celebrated, but endangered building type. This building type is appropriate along the three main commercial corridors, but the Plan encourages concentrations along North Avenue, and at the commercial nodes at 35th Street.

#### New Mixed-Use Buildings

Perhaps the best hope for bringing back urban commercial corridors is the construction of new mixed use buildings that include new storefronts and new dwelling units. The inclusion of new apartments and condominiums help to build in a ready market for storefront shops and services. Columbia Square, just east of the study area on North Avenue is an example of this development type. Mixed use projects are becoming increasingly popular across all market segments and are finding more financiers willing to undertake the project, which in many cases is actually led by the marketing of the residential units. This building type is most appropriate along North Avenue, with some potential along Lisbon Avenue if a market for new storefront space is anticipated.

#### Automobile-Oriented Businesses and Forms

Businesses such as gas stations, automobile repair, automobile sales, and drive-through fast food restaurants and banks have their own particular urban form that is shaped by the desire to circulate cars through a site. A relatively new gas station along North Avenue is a welcome development, and fast food franchises near 35th and Vliet also bring vitality to a challenged commercial corridor; however, the City should discourage too great of a concentration of this type of development. Although a necessity, especially in terms of servicing automobiles, this form is antithetical to the urban commercial corridor, where the pedestrian environment is supported by continuous building frontage. Gas stations and businesses with drive-through lanes create large curb cuts and usually set the building back from the street, opening a hole in the street wall. These uses should be precluded at the main commercial nodes at 35th Street, where pedestrian access and transit usage should be favored.

#### **Site Layout and Development Guide**

Washington Park is an urban neighborhood and the City is interested in encouraging the development of urban commercial forms, some aspects of which are summarized in the following set of site development guides. The City of Milwaukee Zoning Ordinance provides details on specific required design standards for commercial districts, with North Avenue and Vliet zoned Local Business 2 and Lisbon currently zoned for Commercial Service. The crucial issues for site layout addressed in the zoning code include: front setback, side setback, minimum glazed area along the street frontage

(storefront windows), and off-street parking mandates. Nothing in this report is intended to contradict or supersede the requirements of the zoning code. There are no required front or side setbacks in the LB2 or CS districts, and maximum setbacks at an average of the block, which in many cases will be no setbacks. Minimum front glazed area in the LB2 district is 60 percent, showing a desire for traditional storefronts, and 10 percent in the CS district, showing less of a pedestrian orientation.

Desired approaches to commercial site layout are summarized with the following concepts:

- Commercial buildings should front on the sidewalk and adhere to the traditional build-to line that brings storefronts and entrances to meet the sidewalk.
- On typical commercial lots, required off-street parking should be placed to the side of a lot or behind the principal structure. Exceptions may be accepted for “big box” retail types, however, the preference will still be to bring a portion of the structure up to meet the sidewalk of principal street frontage. Exceptions may also be accepted for automobile-oriented businesses, such as gas stations.
- Street fronting facades should have glazing covering a majority of the façade, creating traditional storefronts.

### **Commercial Redevelopment Strategies**

#### Demolition/Rehab/Infill

- Discourage residential demolition for building commercial surface parking lots.
- Preservation, adaptive reuse, and infill of context-compatible buildings (in that order) are preferred approaches to vacant buildings and lots on commercial corridors.

#### Concentration

- Avoid over concentration of commercial uses such as gas stations, daycares, and check cashing/pay day loan establishments.

#### Taxable/Non-Taxable Uses

- Encourage new taxable over new non-taxable uses, unless a strong case is made that the non-taxable use supports the surrounding tax base and spurs economic development.

## **Civic and Institutional**

### **Overall Goal**

Maintain public facilities, including public schools and the Washington Park Library, as centers of community life and activity

in Washington Park. Provide land for the provision of necessary City services, including fire and police facilities. Support institutional uses, including churches, private schools, health clinics, and social service providers.

### **Policy Context**

Three elementary schools are among the most prominent public facilities in the Washington Park neighborhood. These schools are:

West Side Academy I  
West Side Academy II  
Mary McLeod Bethune Academy.

In addition to these schools, the new public Washington Park Library is an important resource and neighborhood asset. Just outside the planning area is the new District 3 police headquarters near 49th Street and Lisbon Avenue. Investments in new public facilities are an important indication of City policy and support to neighborhood revitalization efforts. The construction of the new elementary school at 35th and Galena Street, completed in 2005 and named the Bethune Academy, is a very important project undertaken by the City. The school provides new educational facilities for neighborhood residents, and is also a major catalyst for new housing construction on the surrounding blocks. Proposals for the old 37th Street School have included conversion to residential units and using the school for private social service agencies and training programs. In either case, consideration should be given to compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

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

- Continue to support neighborhood revitalization through the maintenance of existing public facilities owned by the City of Milwaukee, and coordinate with the Milwaukee Public Schools and Milwaukee Public Library systems in regard to facilities planning.
- Support creation and expansion of job training centers.
- Locate institutional uses with high traffic generation at the intersections/nodes of commercial corridors rather than in stable residential areas.
- Encourage decentralized institutional uses rather than large centralized uses that require customers (users of the service) to drive and park.
- Create school/library/park connections that make it easier for children to walk between places.
- Consider parking as an accessory use that should not exceed what is necessary to accommodate visitors and employees.

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

- 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 building previously occupied by tax-exempt tenants or on the upper floors of buildings along commercial corridors. Discourage tax-exempt tenants on the first floor along commercial corridors.
- Discourage concentration in number and intensity of social service providers in the neighborhood in proportion to the county/region.
- Support expanded primary care capacity delivered by target area facilities (such as community health centers)

## **Industrial**

### **Industrial Overall Goal**

Consolidate industrial uses in the 30th Street corridor and along Vliet Street east of 30th Street. Encourage remediation of soil contamination and reuse of industrial lands.

### **Industrial Policy Context**

The amount of industrial land use in the Washington Park study area is less than a hundred acres and available sites are small by historic and current standards. These sites are surrounded by residential uses, making access to these sites difficult and often disruptive to the residential neighborhood. The main industrial areas are to the north and south of Washington Park. The Plan recommends retention of important industrial businesses, but also foresees a gradual transition of remaining lands to other uses, primarily open space or residential, provided that issues related to soil contamination are addressed.

### **Industrial Redevelopment Strategies**

- Support established industrial businesses that add to the local employment base, but plan for a reduction of industrial use and transition to open space and residential uses.
- Discourage new industrial developments within the Washington Park planning area.
- Work with the responsible parties to remediate soil contamination on industrial sites.
- Relocate small repair shops and other industrial uses along the east side of 31st Street, along the railroad viaduct, between Garfield and Brown streets, across from the proposed West Side Park. Plan for new residential and open spaces uses that will complement the park development project.
- Plan for new open space on former industrial sites along the 30th Street viaduct, as part of a greenway development project.

## **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

### **Overall Goal**

Provide for public parks and open space within easy and safe pedestrian access from all residential blocks. Maintain safe park facilities and equipment and provide a secure environment for public enjoyment of neighborhood parks. Promote the use of existing parks through recreational programming provided by the Park District and private athletic clubs and programs. Seek to maximize the value enhancing influence of open space on surrounding property, and undertake projects to create new open space amenities as a catalyst for private investment.

### **Policy Context**

Milwaukee County owns and maintains Washington Park, which, at 138 acres, is one of the system's large regional parks. The County prepared a master plan for renovating Washington Park in 2000, with an expected investment of over \$10 million in new facilities and needed maintenance to the grounds. A renovation of the band shell has been undertaken with private funds, however, other park improvements have not proceeded and the park is underutilized by neighborhood residents.

While large regional parks can serve some needs, the neighborhood needs additional neighborhood park space that is more easily claimed and secured by residents. The northeast and southeast parts of the study area have less greenspace than other areas, especially the areas east of 35th Street and west of the railroad tracks. The planning process identified the block directly north of West Side Academy I as a potential greenspace site in combination with infill development/redevelopment. The block has a concentration of vacant lots, nine of ten already owned by the City, and a number of boarded and homes in need of major repair. The project is mapped on the District C Concept Plan and is further explored as a catalytic project.

The Plan also identifies the 30th Street railroad viaduct as a potential greenway with a recreational trail. The railroad has very sparse traffic, however is unlikely to be abandoned, and the best approach may be to seek an easement for construction of a trail on part of the viaduct. A trail could link to the Hank Aaron Trail, a short distance south in the Menomonee Valley and other bicycle lanes through Washington Park and on Highland Boulevard. Open space uses are also proposed for parcels along the railroad viaduct, particularly where parcels are too shallow for development and as an approach to land with known soil contamination.

### **Park and Open Space Use Policies**

- Encourage public spaces within a comfortable walking distance of every residential home.

- Locate public plazas or spaces in the most intensely planned/developed districts and corridors.
- Allow conversion of environmentally remediated or unremediated sites as neighborhood open space, provided that they have been certified as safe for all residents.

#### **Park and Open Space Form Policies**

- Include parks or plazas that meet the needs of area residents, visitors, and workers as part of the site design for new construction and/or renovation.
- Maintain and improve visibility between parks and surrounding properties.
- Create pedestrian and bike paths through park space that connect to the surrounding street and block system.
- Encourage identity signage, landscape, art sculptures, and way-finding elements to create community gateways at appropriate locations.
- Ensure institutional public spaces (such as school recreational areas) are green and visibly accessible to the public. Fencing should be minimal in height.

#### **Park and Open Space Redevelopment Strategies**

- Support and encourage Milwaukee County to implement the Washington Park renovation plan.
- Include significant greenspace within any major residential development/redevelopment projects.
- Enter into discussions with representatives of Canadian Pacific Railway and the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Association about creation of a shared railroad and recreational greenway in the 30th Street railroad viaduct.
- Encourage developers of new multi-family housing to provide secure, on-site playgrounds and courtyards.
- Public open space is not appropriate unless a formal administration and financing structure can be created to support maintenance of such space.
- Use open space to create value and add value to districts and corridors.
- Use open space to add balance to densely developed blocks.

## Transportation and Infrastructure

### Overall Goals

To provide for efficient and safe travel along local streets and arterial roadways in Washington Park. Upgrade transit facilities, especially at major transit transfer points, maintain facilities for pedestrians, and plan for new bicycle lanes and trails. Improve streetscapes along major arterials.

### Policy Context

Until recent changes, City policy had recommended continuation of the parkway boulevard treatment found on Lisbon Avenue east of the 30th Street railroad viaduct to the west. Creation of this boulevard, with landscaped medians, would have required new right of way and to create this space the City required deeper than normal building setbacks along Lisbon Avenue in Washington Park, which reduced the viability of already shallow parcels. City policy no longer recommends extension of the parkway boulevard and required setbacks along Lisbon Avenue are again standard. However, Lisbon Avenue remains a busy thoroughfare connecting from the City's west side to downtown, and issues remain regarding the right of way. Specifically, it is difficult to discern whether the road is meant to be driven as four lanes or two lanes, with few cars parked along the street. Speeding is an issue, given that there is only one traffic signal between 40th Street and 27th Street, at 35th Street, and the lack of fronting development creates an impression of neglect. The level of service at Lisbon and 35th Street intersection may warrant turn lanes.

Recent streetscape improvements along North Avenue have improved the pedestrian environment and the overall aesthetics of the commercial area. Similar improvements along Vliet Street and Lisbon Avenue are a potential means of City support to revitalization efforts.

Washington Park is well served by bus transit routes. Major transfer points coincide with commercial nodes along 35th Street, and transit facilities at these locations should support the overall revitalization efforts. Shelters should be provided at major transfer points and should include rider amenities, including route information, with the potential for real-time information on bus arrival times as this technology is developed by Milwaukee County Transit.

The intersection of 40th Street and Vliet Street is under study by Public Works. This study will result in a redesign of the intersection with increased safety for both automobiles and pedestrians.

Upgrades to the streetscape on the bridges crossing over Highway 41 into Washington Park would help to connect Washington Heights to the park.

## **Policies**

City of Milwaukee policies in regard to streets and transportation infrastructure are to:

- Study traffic issues along Lisbon Avenue and recommend methods for controlling traffic movements, including marking drive lanes and parking zones, reducing speeds, and improving the level of service at the intersection with 35th Street.
- Promote and support revitalization efforts along Lisbon Avenue with a set of streetscape elements to be constructed in conjunction with major redevelopment projects.
- Designate commercial nodes at 35th and Lisbon and 35th and Vliet as streetscape improvement areas, with a package of streetscape and transit facility elements to be applied to the four block faces at each intersection.
- Work with Milwaukee County Transit to install bus shelters at major transfer points, especially along 35th Street.
- Maintain sidewalks in the Washington Park neighborhood.
- Designate Lisbon Avenue, 35th Street, as bicycle routes, and stripe bicycle lanes.

## **Transportation and Infrastructure Use Policies**

- On major and minor arterials, create an effective multi-modal public right of way including space for pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and mass-transit.
- Maintain the street system based on the one-mile grid, clearly differentiated into major and minor arterials supported by collector and access streets.

## **Transportation and Infrastructure Form Policies**

- Design cross sections and dedicate right-of-way for mass transit, automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians based on 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.

## Urban Form: Streetscapes

The aesthetics of public rights of way are important indicators of the economic vitality of a corridor and its adjoining neighborhood. Maintaining sidewalks, curbs, and gutters in good condition and the presence of pedestrian level street lamps help to sustain private investment. Including special elements, such as decorative banners, trash receptacles, and benches are useful along commercial corridors and nodes. Recent streetscape improvements along North Avenue complement investments in private property.

### Sidewalks

On residential streets, the standard five foot sidewalk and grass parkway should be maintained. Wider sidewalks should be provided on the commercial corridors, especially along North Avenue where 10 to 12 foot walks are appropriate.

### Street Lamps

The standard Milwaukee “harp” lamp should be installed on all commercial corridors.

### Banners

Decorative banners should be used to indicate special commercial districts, such as those installed on North Avenue.

### Street furniture

Installation of new street furniture, including transit shelters, benches, and trash receptacles, may be appropriate along North Avenue and at the commercial nodes along 35th Street at Lisbon and Vliet, Lisbon and Sherman, and Lisbon and North.

### On-street parking

On-street parallel parking should be provided along the three commercial corridors.



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

- Prohibit increasing traffic capacity of right-of-ways if expansion would negatively impact the majority of adjacent land uses. Use scarce infrastructure dollars wisely by prioritizing reinvestment over expansion.
- Emphasize the movement of more people, rather than the movement of more vehicles, when making investment decisions.
- Maintain and promote two-way travel.
- Development or redevelopment should maintain the existing street grid, where present, and restore any disrupted street grid where feasible.
- 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.
- 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.