Layton Boulevard West Neighbors_Clarke Square Design Charette 2014

Repurposing Milwaukee’s Commercial Corridors for Today’s Market
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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Located in Milwaukee’s Near South Side, the study area includes Layton Boulevard West Neighbors (LBWN) and the Clarke Square neighborhood. LBWN is composed of historic Silver City, Burnham Park, and Layton Park neighborhoods and was one of the first regions to be built west of Milwaukee’s downtown.

With recent developments such as the Hank Aaron Trail, the restored Valley Passage, and Cesar Chavez Drive BID, the study area is poised to strengthen its connection and integration into the rest of the City of Milwaukee. Visitors and residents are already provided with attractions ranging from Miller Park to the Mitchell Park Conservatory. The neighborhoods are geared to enhance the area’s value by further improving its public spaces, housing market and reinvigorating its commercial districts to enhance the quality of life for neighborhood residents, businesses, and visitors. Building on the international shopping and dining identity, the community’s much valued diversity will be a fundamental asset. Additionally, the recent arrival of the Urban Ecology Center and the Wisconsin Bicycle Federation have set a precedent for the neighborhood to increase its focus on environmental, educational, and public health activities.
HISTORY

For thousands of years the Menomonee Valley was a wild rice marsh, home to American Indians. The settlement of the area by northern and central European immigrants began in the early 1700s. In 1795, at the site of what is now Mitchell Park. Jacques Vieau established the first permanent trading post in what would later become the city of Milwaukee. By the mid-1800s, settlers filled the Menomonee Valley’s marshes in order to create dry land for further development.

The area grew to become a beacon of manufacturing in the latter half of the 1800s. With the newly created land and the accessible shipping routes through the Menomonee River, it was an opportune place for the city’s stockyards, grain elevators, rail yards, and factories. Eventually known as the “Machine Shop of the World,” Milwaukee produced rail cars, farm machinery, cranes, cream city bricks, flour, ham and beer. Wisconsin’s densest industrial areas bordered the Layton Boulevard West and Clarke Square areas with development in the Menomonee River Valley to the north and along 43rd Street to the west.

It was during this century that “Clark’s Addition” was established. Drawn by the abundance of industrial jobs, newcomers from Germany, Scandinavia, the British Isles and the eastern United States moved into what is now known as Clarke Square. The area continued its westward development until reaching its western boundary of Layton Boulevard by 1900.

Development of Silver City started in the 1880s, with the origin of Silver City’s name rooted in the local economy. Most wage workers in the area were paid with silver dollars, resulting in the local saloons on National Avenue to flood with silver every payday. The makeup of Silver City was similar to that of the old Milwaukee communities to the east: Germans, Polish, Norwegians, Irish and, later, Italians, Serbs and Slovenes. Most of these workers got to work on foot, carrying their lunch pails at their side giving rise to the term, “bucket brigade.”

In the early 1900s, good factory jobs gave way to the demand for quality, affordable housing which led to the development of the Burnham Park neighborhood. Locating their businesses within this and surrounding neighborhoods, enterprising merchants and tradesmen added a commercial element to the mix. Usually found along streetcar lines.
like National Avenue, hardware dealers, barbers, butchers, grocers, pharmacists, doctors, retailers, bakers, and saloons, operating under the guise of soda shops, existed to provide services to the local residents.

The region’s economy radically changed during the Great Depression but picked up again during WWII. At this time, the Menomonee Valley became an important center of defense production and its growth continued throughout the early postwar decades. The decline of Milwaukee’s industry in the 1960s and 70s resulted in the flight of many of the neighborhood’s residents, area buildings becoming obsolete, and polluted sites left abandoned. The city began to buy up old properties for future industrial development.

With the industrial decline, the property uses were appropriated for more residential purposes. During this time, the neighborhood saw an influx of Hispanic families, many of which were connected to the Mexican tannery workers that were recruited during the 1920s. What was once primarily Polish, the now dominantly Hispanic neighborhood welcomed smaller numbers of Asian and African-American residents.

In the last decade, the Valley has experience a revitalization. The commercial districts are transforming to reflect the area’s diverse population and coalitions have worked to bring the old industrial stronghold back to life. The vision of green space and clean industry is being realized with reclaimed developments like Three Bridges Park, Valley Passage, Hank Aaron State Trail, and the Urban Ecology Center that reside in close proximity to sleek new factories. With the passion generated from the numerous local organizations and individuals, the neighborhood is poised to strengthen its connections throughout the Valley, the City of Milwaukee, and the environment.
ASSETS +
ATTRACTIONS

American System-Built Homes
Mitchell Park Conservatory
Packers Field
Burnham Park
Rogers Park
Clarke Square Park
Three Bridges Park
Arlington Heights Park

Hank Aaron State Trail
Urban Ecology Center
Milwaukee Christian Center
Buddhist Temple
Shea Garden
Journey House
The factory

Nearby:
Potawatomi Casino
Miller Park
Harley Davidson Museum
civic facility improvements
residential development
commercial development
streetscape improvements

$15 mil
$5 mil
$1 mil
$10,000

numbers indicate “Opportunity Sites”

w greenfield ave
w national ave
w burnham st
miller park way
w lincoln ave
w pierce st
w mitchell st
w layton blvd
s cesar chavez dr
s layton blvd
n 35th st

AREA INVESTMENTS
SCALE OF INVESTMENTS
TO OAK LEAF TRAIL

59,100 CARS
PER DAY

24,500 CARS
PER DAY

19,200 CARS
PER DAY

11,000 CARS
PER DAY

5,500 CARS
PER DAY

17

56

35 27 14

54

32

23

53

AREA
TRAFFIC

numbers indicate “Opportunity Sites”

BIKE ROUTES

BUS ROUTES

w greenfield ave

w national ave

w burnham st

w lincoln ave

miller park way

s layton blvd

s cesar chavez dr

t oak leaf trail

6,500 CARS
PER DAY

15,500 CARS
PER DAY
ECONOMIC CORRIDORS

National Avenue
This highly trafficked thoroughfare is home to a number of business clusters. The highlight of this corridor is Silver City (located west of 31st Street) that offers a wide selection of retail and dining options. The expansive variety available has led it to be branded as Milwaukee’s international dining destination.

Cesar Chavez Drive
The eastern border of Clarke Square is a hub for Latino dining, goods, and services. This thriving business community is supported by a business improvement district.

Greenfield Avenue
This secondary commercial corridor connects the south side to the western suburbs and provides small scale commercial and mixed-use residential amenities.

Pierce Street
This industrial corridor consists of a mix of housing and manufacturing sites. Given its proximity to the Menomonee Valley and its smaller lot sizes, this area is ripe for small scale manufacturing or start-up investment.
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

A | Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative
B | Journey House, Inc.
C | Layton Boulevard West Neighbors
D | Cesar E. Chavez Drive Business Improvement District
E | Menomonee Valley Partners Inc.
F | School Sisters of St. Francis
G | Seeds of Health WIC
H | Sixteenth Street Community Health Center
I | Southside Organizing Committee
J | Urban Ecology Center
K | Wisconsin Bike Fed
L | Zilber Family Foundation

numbers indicate “Opportunity Sites”
NEAR SOUTH SIDE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS (2009)

Build upon the strengths of the neighborhoods within the plan’s area.

Provide a predictable regulatory process.

Optimize the value of long term public and private investments.

Generate consensus among businesses, property owners, residents and associations.

NEAR SOUTH SIDE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2009)

MARKET ANALYSIS HIGHLIGHTS

$364 million dollar annual retail gap in the neighborhood. Every resident within the Near South Side Market Area, on average, spends $3,400 annually outside the neighborhood for goods that are not internally available.

While there is a substantial gap for grocery sales ($28 million) and full-service restaurants ($13 million), the gap is much smaller than urban neighborhoods with similar income levels.

The study area includes a surprising surplus for musical instrument stores ($3.4 million) and for books/news dealers ($2.8 million).

Residents are primed for retail within walking distance. Area residents spend less on transportation than the regional average and 27.1% of its households do not own a car. (compared to 16.3% in Milwaukee County).

Between 2002 and 2006 sales price per building square foot rose from $39 per square foot to $61 per square foot.
NEAR SOUTH SIDE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2009)

ALLEY GATE PILOT PROGRAM

The near south side plan advocated for the gating and beautification of south side alleys as 1 of the area’s 10 most pressing catalytic projects.

The plan argued for this strategy in an attempt to deter criminal activity and illegal dumping.

City proposed zoning changes would allow for improved greening and socialization in these often overlooked spaces.
LAYTON BLVD WEST QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES
(2011)

Neighborhood Appearance
Engage the residents to enhance public and private property through clean-up efforts, maintenance and the creation of public art.

Community Safety Network
Create a safe and clean community by creating a network amongst neighbors and increasing communication between residents, organizations and law enforcement.

Social Engagement
Build community relationships, leadership opportunities and social events that allow for collaboration.
LAYTON BLVD WEST QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES (2011)

Youth Education and Leadership
Encourage youth to be healthy, strive for academic achievement, be leaders, serve their community, and pursue post-secondary education and employment.

Community Identity
Use marketing and artistic means to develop a distinct identity celebrating Layton Boulevard West.

Healthy Living
Promote, support and educate the community on health, wellness, nutrition, exercise, and environmental issues.

Economic Development
Support and foster the vitality of existing businesses, draw in new ones, and promote financial opportunities.

CLARKE SQUARE QUALITY OF LIFE
STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES (2009)

Community-School Partnership
Provide academic and athletic facilities for residents in the form of the Journey House Longfellow Center for Family Learning and Youth Athletics. The new facility will partner Journey House with Longfellow School in providing the community with programs, services and activities.

Lifelong Learning
Support academic excellence and continuing education by promoting innovation in neighborhood schools, expanding the Hmong American Peace Academy, increasing English Language Learner (ELL) skills, offering more college courses, and strengthening child-parent relationships.

Employment and Job Training
Develop employment opportunities for adults and teens by creating the Urban Careers Institute, increasing jobs in Menomonee Valley, and boost participation in Youth Build.

Youth, Parks and Recreation
Provide space for organized sports, family recreation programs and youth development programs. Revitalize Clarke Square Park and Mitchell Park to provide active components such as safe open spaces, i.e. NFL-quality football field, multipurpose sports and recreation complex, bicycle lanes, and access to healthy foods.

Health and Wellness
Also known as Project Ten (10) to advance the economic, physical, emotional, and spiritual prosperity of our neighbors.
CLARKE SQUARE QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Social Connections
Provide a sense of belonging by creating new connections and building on old relationships.

Public Safety
Ensure safety in the community by creating safe passageways, sustaining the Weed and Seed program, eliminating graffiti, providing public safety trainings, and supporting former prisoners working to reintegrate into the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Beautification
Attract families and businesses by enhancing the curb appeal and streetscapes of Clarke Square. Erect four gateway markers, improve residential buildings and yards, and increase and improve tree canopies and urban gardens.

Housing
Promote and preserve diverse housing types by ensuring residents have access to foreclosure prevention resources, provide services from a hired Housing Coordinator, preserve historic buildings, and support Milwaukee Christian Center’s effort to build a housing development and three Energy Star homes.

Economic Development
Sustain and grow businesses and employment by improving cooperation, enhancing aesthetics in commercial areas, and expanding market opportunities.

LAYTON BLVD WEST MARKET ANALYSIS
(2013)

Analysis

Commercial vacancy rate (measured in total square footage) is at 12.6 % compared to 9.3 % across Greater Milwaukee.
- A majority of vacant spaces are less than 2,000 sq ft which presents a challenge for attracting new commercial occupants.
- Over the past 40 years a significant number of commercial spaces have been converted to residential use.

The area’s major competitor is the Miller Park Way Shopping District
- Miller Park Way is dominated by chain retail and food establishments and there are few such businesses in the study area.
- This creates an optimal environment for local and small scale commercial activity to thrive in the LBWN area.

Nearly all of the employees who work within the study area commute in from the outside.
- Approximately 1,100 of the 14,000 workers in the study area live nearby.

Clarke Square has a large concentration of companies oriented toward a Hispanic Market.

Silver City, Burnham Park, and Layton Park have crime rates that fall far below the City’s average (70.29 per thousand versus 102.13 per thousand).

The study area is one of the few places in the Milwaukee region where food trucks can be regularly seen.
LAYTON BLVD WEST MARKET ANALYSIS
(2013)

Development Strategies

National Avenue | Greenfield Avenue | Lincoln Avenue | Burnham Street may support:
1. Convenience stores
2. Specialty food stores
3. Health and personal care stores
4. Used merchandise stores
5. Full service restaurants (international)
6. Limited Service Restaurants
7. Laundry Services
8. Pet Care Services
9. Automotive Repair

Pierce Street:
Its proximity to the Menomonee Valley and its smaller lot sizes could attract smaller scale manufacturing and industry.

Indoor or Outdoor Markets | Food Trucks might be means to attract and grow new businesses until they can afford brick and mortar facilities.

If possible, avoid converting the remaining commercial facilities to residential uses.

Consider cooperatives within the sectors which the local market does not match the neighborhood needs.
PIERCE STREET CHARETTE (2011)

The Pierce Street Charette was held on July 14, 2011. Participants included a mix of residents and business owners who had lived in the neighborhood anywhere from 3 to 40 years. The Charette focused on the history, existing conditions, and case studies of possible solutions for the area. When participants were asked to describe Pierce Street in its current state, overall, the comments included words such as abandoned, unsafe, and a target for high speed traffic; however, many saw the potential for an inviting, artistic, and pedestrian friendly corridor to serve as the gateway into the neighborhood. The charette focused on 4 main areas:

1. Catalytic Projects
2. Programming
3. Connections
4. Design

CATALYTIC PROJECTS

This area focused on breaking down the negative stigma attached to Pierce Street and introducing projects that would encourage development in the area and create a safer and more inviting neighborhood.

- Build on the Urban Ecology center as a catalyst for the area by introducing more community based and health oriented establishments.

- Build necessary infrastructure to support further development such as: parking structures, speed bumps to control traffic, surveillance cameras, resident patrols, and additional bicycle cops.

- Create a 39th Street gateway - create a visible, inviting entryway onto Pierce Street with information kiosks, signage, and adequate way-finding.
PROGRAMMING

This area focused on what types of buildings and activities Pierce Street needed. The participants encouraged more community based programming that offered educational opportunities and promoted healthy living. Many suggested taking advantage of the Urban Ecology Center and using that to extend its program throughout the neighborhood. Suggestions included the following:

- Community Gardens
- Farmer’s Markets
- Health related businesses such as Fitness centers, indoor/outdoor athletic fields, organized bike races.

CONNECTIONS

Pierce Street is located within close proximity to rich amenities such as the Hank Aaron State Trail, Menomonee River, and Miller Park; however, it severely lacks way-finding and connections to such amenities. Participants suggested the following:

- Create a connection from Valley Passage to National Avenue
- Include directional signage and key points for information kiosks
- Slow traffic with speed bumps
- Provide a canoe/kayak connection from Pierce Street side
- Design signage so it’s visible from the Valley and highways
- Capitalize on proximity to Miller Park

DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

Creating a safe environment with a cultural identity for the area was one of the most important priorities. The participants suggested the following:

- Develop iconic murals
- Integrate planters
- Install bicycle racks and lanes along Pierce Street
- Install fencing to discourage graffiti and beautify the industrial side
PRECEDENT | BOUDIN BAKERY & CAFE_San Francisco, CA
Adaptive reuse_bakery with street view of production, destination and local amenity
PRECEDENT | OUR DAILY SALT_LBWN

Adaptive reuse_local retail
PRECEDENT | SMITH BLOCK, Port Hope, Canada
Facade preservation with new construction behind
PRECEDEENT | THE WATERHOUSE BOUTIQUE HOTEL Shanghai, China
Facade preservation with new construction behind
PRECEDENT | CITY ROW APARTMENTS_Madison

Traditional urban townhome design
PRECEDENT | COLTMAN TOWNHOUSES _Cleveland
Modern urban townhome design
Adaptive Reuse

Tech companies, creative agencies, galleries, artists and civic space

Hide House Lofts provide low-income housing
PRECEDENT | wework
Adaptive reuse_co-offices

Warehouse converted into offices
PRECEDENT | GLOBE INTERNATIONAL (SKATE BOARDS)
Adaptive reuse_fabric converted into creative hub
PRECEDENT | SOUTHERN PACIFIC BREWING
Adaptive reuse_factory converted into Brewery

PRECEDENT | ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART PAINTING STUDIOS
Adaptive reuse_factory converted into painting studios
PRECEDEnt | CARRIAGEWORKS
Adaptive reuse_factory converted into shared performance spaces
OPPORTUNITY SITES

City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Map Milwaukee: Property Information

Disclaimer

City limits

national ave

greenfield ave

35th st

layton blvd

21st st

1

2

3

4

5

6
The Layton Boulevard West Neighbors and Clarke Square design charette took place on December 16, 2014 at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, School of Architecture and Urban Planning. The day began with a brief overview of the Layton Boulevard West and Clarke Square neighborhoods, focus areas, background, and goals, which led into a full day of design_development ideas and discussions regarding each site.

Architects, developers, lenders, city officials, property owners and numerous friends of the area collaborated to develop concepts that focused on repurposing Milwaukee’s commercial corridors for today’s market. Each group presented their initial design/development proposals for feedback and revised their concepts based on group feedback. The day concluded with the architects presenting their final proposal for revitalizing the neighborhood.
site 1_
3514, 3516, 3522, 3524, 3528 National Avenue

focus group input
3500 block of National Avenue could be a destination for both area residents and visitors to the neighborhood
3524 has tin ceiling and cream city brick, like the historic character
Open up the street level with glazing
Parking is a perceived issue on National Avenue
Currently few options for breakfast or evening entertainment in the area

program
Ground floor potential uses – retail, restaurants, work/sell, studio space, education, co-offices if the ground floor is activated
Upper floors potential uses – housing or offices
Public plaza
Parking should be integrated on site or sharing opportunities identified

design context issues
Reuse two western buildings
Build on National Avenue international identity
Consider site topography for alley parking
site 1
3514, 3516, 3522, 3524, 3528 National Avenue

- **(3528)**
  - Current assessment: $232,000
  - Building area: 2,820 sq ft
  - Zoning code: LB2
  - Lot area: 4500 sq ft
  - Privately owned

- **(3522)**
  - Current assessment: $71,100
  - Year built: 1895
  - Zoning code: LB2
  - Lot area: 4500 sq ft
  - Privately owned

- **(3514)**
  - Zoning code: LB2
  - Lot area: 4500 sq ft
  - City owned

- **(3524)**
  - Current assessment: $122,000
  - Building area: 3,240 sq ft
  - Zoning code: LB2
  - Lot area: 4500 sq ft
  - Privately owned

- **(3516)**
  - Current assessment: $155,000
  - Building area: 3,840 sq ft
  - Zoning code: LB2
  - Lot area: 4500 sq ft
  - Privately owned

Total Site = .5 acre
Located on a prominent corner of National Avenue and 36th Street, site one boasts an opportunity for a neighborhood hub. American Design focused on creating a social and commercial hub that would fit in with both the residential neighborhood and the commercial district of National Avenue. Using the existing structure, they proposed a mixed use scheme involving an indoor/outdoor cafe and coffee house, townhomes, and commercial space along National Avenue.

The proposed design includes townhomes along the alley, adjacent to the residential neighborhood. The housing and commercial portions are separated by a courtyard that serves as a greenspace buffer with parking underneath. Having this open space feature allows for natural lighting for both the townhomes and commercial buildings while providing usable, outdoor space.
**Housing Square Footage**

6 units, approximately 45'-8" x 17’ on two stories with garage below

1,552 gross square feet per unit – either large 2 bedroom or 3 bedroom rowhouse

Total housing square footage approx: 9,312 without basement parking, (12 cars).
site 1_National Avenue
American Design

looking northeast from National Avenue

precedent images
The cafe/coffee house is the social element that holds the corner of the site. Being near the 35th Street viaduct, it has the potential to attract patrons from all over the city. Designed to be an indoor/outdoor cafe, the space includes an outdoor courtyard, a three season room, and indoor coffee shop. Located along National Avenue, as well as the adjacent residential neighborhood, the cafe is designed to attract pedestrians, bikers, and all vehicular traffic.

The commercial space is new construction that would add a more contemporary style to the historic surrounding buildings.

**Commercial Square Footage**

New building commercial:
- 9,726 sqft excluding the coffee shop outdoor courtyard
- (10,611 sqft including the coffee shop outdoor courtyard)

Existing building commercial: 1,416sqft

Total commercial:
- 11,142sqft
- (12,027sqft including the outdoor courtyard)
site 2_
3733 and 3737 National Avenue

adaptive reuse

focus group input

- Facades have nice character and are part of the street identity
- Street parking is very limited - consider sharing nearby lot
- Wide sidewalks provide the potential for outdoor dining, public art, or signage
- Given the location, activated ground floor uses could attract visitors to the area

program

- Ground floor potential uses – retail, work/sell, active office space, laundry, dry-cleaner, restaurant, working kitchen
- Upper floor potential uses – residential or offices
- Parking should be integrated on site or sharing opportunities identified

design context issues

- Adaptive reuse, buildings could be connected
- Gateway site into Silver City from the west
- Activate the ground floor of each building
- Build on National Avenue international identity
site 2_
3733 and 3737 National Avenue

(3737)
current assessment: $197,000
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 4200 sq ft

(3733)
current assessment: $200,000
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 4469 sq ft

Total Site = 8,669 sq ft (.2 acres)
site 2_National Avenue
Korb Tredo

Site 2 includes two distinct buildings that are mostly vacant. The design team utilized an adaptive reuse strategy that incorporates minimal architectural maneuvers, but a dramatic impact on livability and aesthetics. Features improve the building, walkability, and neighborhood integration.

Programmatically, the design capitalizes on individuals’ embedded talent in the adjacent communities. Entrepreneurship is a way for individuals and families to become self-sustaining, but it is often a confusing and difficult road. The design concept hinges on the desire of community members to create a food product in a commercially viable kitchen and sell that product to the public.
The space incorporates a 2,000 sq ft commercial kitchen and approximately 2,500 sq ft of retail space / tasting room, and coffee bar that can be used to host cooking performances or classes open to the general public. The 2nd level has four two-bedroom, one bath residences that are approximately 1,100 sq feet each.

The sidewalk is wider directly in front of the properties. This allows for public activity to flow from the inside to the outside and for a more pedestrian friendly environment.

The building facades are left in historical condition with new windows at the upper levels and new storefront entry conditions at the street level. Rotating doors showing local artists give these buildings an identity that corresponds to the existing multicultural community. The updated façade acts as a gateway to the neighborhood from the west, celebrating the historical roots of the neighborhood while embracing the evolution of the community into the future. Greenspace and bike racks connect the site to the recreational trails in the valley. The alley incorporates parking for tenants and delivery access to the public.
site 3_
3220, 3238 W Pierce Street

focus group input
Highly visible site - could act as a billboard from the north
Impressive views, possible back patio
Bicycle Cluster, Bike Federation, Fyxation Bicycles, Hank Aaron Trail and Urban Ecology Center are all nearby
No bike shop in the immediate neighborhood, could build on bike cluster concept for funding
Consider additional youth programs and activities
Existing building has a steel structure with large spans
Consider housing to fund other uses

design context issues
Build on momentum of Pierce Street redevelopment – Urban Ecology Center, Bike Fed, new housing adjacent to Pierce
Build on visibility from the Valley and I-94
Full or partial adaptive reuse of existing buildings
Sustainability is a strong focus in the area

program
Potential uses – Work/sell, banquet space, residential on part of the site, food prep or kitchens, urban agriculture, non-profit
“Upper trail” along properties on north side of Pierce Street
Parking should be accommodated on site
site 3_
3220 W Pierce Street

(3238)
current assessment: 225,000
building area: 22,431 sq ft
zoning code: IL2
lot area: 48,264
Privately owned

(3220)
zoning code: RM1
lot area: 9,735 sq ft
City owned
Total Site = 1.3 acres
Site 3 is located in an area of tension between industrial warehouses and residential neighborhoods. Its best feature is the northern view of the Menomonee River Valley and Milwaukee skyline, along with its adjacency to the Hank Aaron Trail. The existing building on the site is an industrial warehouse. The team proposed a design that would highlight the views, attract trail users, and appeal to both residents and manufacturers in the area. The original design proposal included two options. The first option called for a rentable, commercial kitchen that would support the food truck industry. The second option repurposed the existing building into a gymnasium and fieldhouse. Both options included a housing component with onsite parking.
After feedback from the group, the design team proceeded with the gymnasium option. The design is a mixed use development containing a fitness gymnasium/sports complex with housing above. The fitness facility occupies the existing building on the ground floor with housing above that wraps around to the north side of the site. The arrangement of the spaces allow both gym users and residents to benefit from the views.

Due to the location on the edge of the Menomonee River Valley, the gym is visible from the freeway, encouraging the team to design signage that would highlight its location and attract users from all over the city and surrounding area. Its proximity to the trail helps define its identity as a fitness hub while also blending into the residential neighborhood.

**Housing Square Footage:** approximately 7,000 GSF per floor
8 units per floor at 650 SF for a total of 24 units
site 4_
2110, 2130, 2134 W National Avenue

focus group input
Consider large footprint user for the new construction, not many spaces this size available along the corridor
More owner occupied housing needed in Clarke Square
Currently no gyms or exercise facilities nearby
Veteran housing could be considered if the ground floor had an active use

design context issues
Potential reuse of the western building, demo remaining part of site for new construction
Building height could be 3 to 4 stories depending on uses
Build on National Avenue international identity with a public space, building design, or public art

program
Ground floor potential uses – retail that needs large footprint, fitness, food market, work/sell, restaurants, performance spaces
Upper floor potential uses – housing, office, extension of the ground floor use
Public space or plaza
Parking should be accommodated on site for the proposed uses
site 4_
2110, 2130, 2134  W National Avenue

(2134)  
current assessment: $132,000  
building area: 5,497 sq ft  
zoning code: LB2  
lot area: 5,022 sq ft

(2130)  
current assessment: $368,500  
zoning code: LB2  
lot area: 13,512 sq ft

(2110)  
current assessment: $246,000  
zoning code: LB2  
lot area: 11,440 sq ft

All buildings under same private ownership

Total Site = .68 acres
Site 4 is located along the bustling street of National Avenue. It has cultural, transit, and recreational connections that are integral to the neighborhood. The majority of the site is south facing and is currently used for housing and commercial. With so many opportunities, the team proposed 5 different options all containing housing, commercial, and green space. The goal for each design was to maximize natural daylighting, outdoor space, and improve the safety for pedestrians along National Avenue.

The options included ground floor commercial space and/or maker-spaces with upper floor housing. The design options offer a variety of site footprints that look to maximize use of the site as a long-term, financially sustainable development.
After feedback, the group expressed concern about financial sustainability and suggested housing a clinic on the ground floor, a service that is lacking in the neighborhood.

The design team proposed a 16,000 square foot health clinic/wellness center that could be divided into smaller offices. Upper floors would be housing, mostly 2 bedroom units and townhomes.

They finalized three of the original options with each offering onsite parking and public open space.

**Option 3 - 1st Floor**
Commercial and Townhouses

**Option 3 - 2nd Floor**
7 apts and 10 townhouses

**Option 3 - 3rd and 4th floors**
10 apts_1 and 2 bedroom units
Option 4 - 1st Floor
Commercial and Parking

Option 4 - 2nd and 3rd Floors
13 apartment units

Option 4 - exterior renderings
Option 5 - 1st Floor
Commercial and Parking

Option 5 - 2nd and 3rd Floors
15 apartment units per floor

Option 5 - 4th Floor
15 apartment units per floor
site 5_
2127 W National Avenue

**focus group input**
- Landmark opportunity along National Avenue
- Reuse of the building offers a variety of opportunities
- Parking should be directed to the back, away from National Avenue
- Existing corner parking could be a public plaza or combined parking/plaza

**design context issues**
- Reuse of the building to activate the block
- Opportunity for public art on the site
- Build on National Avenue international identity with a public space, building design, or public art

**program**
- Ground floor potential uses – maker space that is visible from the street, food market, performance spaces, light manufacturing
- Upper floor potential uses – continuation of ground floor use or office
- Public space or plaza
- Parking should be accommodated on site for the proposed use
site 5_
2127 W National Avenue

(2127)
current assessment: $389,000
building area: 30,094 sq ft
zoning code: IO2
lot area: 48,727 sq ft
Privately owned
Site 5 has a large, uninviting building currently occupying the site. With excellent structural bones, the team proposed an adaptive reuse of the building. Currently the building is large, solid, and lacks glazing on multiple sides. Located along a major commercial and retail corridor, it has potential to become a food hub for the neighborhood. The team proposed opening up the facade and allowing direct visibility to the functions within. This connection allows pedestrians to actively engage with the space, giving it a smaller scale feel within a large scale building.

The initial design includes a rentable commercial kitchen, small food incubator, banquet space, and office space. It provides a variety of functions to serve business owners and residents in the neighborhood.
concept floor plan 1

concept floor plan 2
site 5_National Avenue
Quorum Architects
Overall, the group responded positively to the team’s design proposal. The group suggested dividing the space for multiple tenants, utilizing the basement for a makerspace that could directly serve the functions above, and incorporate a permanent structure to activate the roof. The team further developed their idea of creating a food hub and market.

The ground floor breaks up the large building footprint into smaller spaces for artisan shops and a few larger anchor tenants. A large commercial kitchen, centrally located, is visible from the exterior so pedestrians can visually interact and engage with the activities within.

An urban agricultural space with seating and event areas for the public is located on the roof.

Design and programming recommendations focus on the artisan and celebrate the neighborhood’s food culture.
site 6

focus group input
Consider townhome units with individual entrances, as well as shared hallway apartments
Concern tax credit calculation may not support smaller project with individual entrances
Crime is perceived to be a problem on this block
Property owner has considered veterans housing and senior housing as options
Properties across the street pose may impact housing market

design context issues
Home ownership options desired in the Clarke Square area
Townhome units with individual entrances would blend with the residential context
Site could potentially extend east to include the entire block
Overall streetscape improvements would contribute to the area

program
Housing with potential for a corner commercial use
Public space or plaza
Integrate parking on site
site 6_

(2008)
current assessment: $42,800
year built: 1892
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 3,600 sq ft

(2012)
current assessment: $118,000
building area: 3,050 sq ft
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 3,600 sq ft

(2016)
current assessment: $85,900
year built: 1907
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 7,200 sq ft

(2026)
current assessment: $43,600
year built: 1882
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 3,600 sq ft

(2028)
current assessment: $138,000
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 3,600 sq ft

(2034)
current assessment: City of MKE
zoning code: LB2
lot area: 7,275 sq ft

One private owner for the site
Total Site = .66 acres
site 6_Greenfield Avenue
Engberg Anderson

Located on Greenfield Avenue, site 6 is part of a unique area that has many pockets of retail within a predominantly residential neighborhood. With soccer being very popular in the area, the team proposed an indoor and outdoor soccer complex with housing above and townhouses around the perimeter.

The program includes 13 townhomes, 20 elderly or veteran units, 1,800 square feet of retail, 5,400 square feet of recreational flex space, and onsite parking for 24 spaces.
Feedback from the group included more contemporary designs for the townhomes, incorporating green space for the tenants, and finding a way to make the recreational and residential components of this plan work together to provide a safe, inviting area for the residents.

The team revised the site plan to include an indoor soccer complex with housing above that anchors the west side of the site and provides a barrier that helps control the outdoor space. A cluster of townhomes flanks the eastern side of the site, creating a more secure, controlled courtyard for the outdoor field and additional green space for the residents.

A more contemporary design contains both large scale and small scale components that blend with the surrounding neighborhood.