

A Partnership For Change: A Strategy and Vision for the UWM Neighborhoods
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Prepared for: The City of Milwaukee, UWM, and the UWM neighborhood
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1.0 Vision

The vision of this plan is to advance the UWM campus and surrounding environs as a Great University Neighborhood. A Great University Neighborhood is defined as having desirable quality of life that stems from a diverse population, pleasing physical character, cultural and commercial amenities and venues for ongoing communication and collaboration.

2.0 Plan

Various groups contributed to the development of this plan including the organizations that make up the University Neighborhood Association (UNA). These groups include seven neighborhood associations and special interest groups, two BID's, the City of Milwaukee, Village of Shorewood, Milwaukee County and University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. The plan addresses four areas:

- Parking
- Transit and Accessibility
- Housing
- Quality of Life

3.0 Great University Neighborhood

The following are elements defined as contributing to a Great University Neighborhood:

- Densely populated, well served by transit, and well designed for access
- Diverse commercial districts with a rich mix of uses
- Residential neighborhoods that are animated and pedestrian friendly
- Relatively stable economic market for housing, goods and services
- Diverse mixture of urban amenities
- Ethnically diverse, multi-generational and educated population of residents, workers and visitors
- Population that supports a rich neighborhood culture
- Convenient and open access to university resources
- Resident population with high degree of concern for built and natural environment and design aesthetics

4.0 Strategy Development

Parking

The goal is to provide a balanced multi-modal system so that the amount of land dedicated to automobile parking lots and structures does not unduly or negatively affect the character of the campus and adjacent neighborhoods. Parking demand frequently exceeds supply causing traffic congestion as drivers keep searching for a convenient space. Current parking options include on-street parking spaces, on-campus parking lots, off-campus remote parking linked to transit and off-street parking garages. Each option must be assessed so that benefits outweigh costs in terms of both monetary value and environmental impacts.

The following are priorities for the stakeholders:

- Increase on-street parking for neighborhood

- Adopt a Residential Parking Permit program (RPP) for the commuter impacted area
- Simplify parking regulations throughout the UWM neighborhood
- Increase on-campus parking supply
 - Build additional structured parking
 - Acquire the Columbia Hospital campus
- Increase remote parking supply
 - Identify additional remote lot options
- Minimize peak parking demand periods
 - Adjust class schedules
- Mitigate negative impacts to neighboring properties and streetscapes.
 - Integrate active ground floor uses into parking structures
 - Properly screen and landscape surface lots

Transit and Accessibility

Milwaukee County Transit Service (MCTS) is the only large-scale transit provider for the student commuter population that effectively links off-campus housing districts, downtown and neighborhood employment centers, entertainment districts, cultural amenities, and parking facilities. The plan states that it is in UWM's interest to offer political support for the proposed Milwaukee Connector project because it would offer faster, more convenient, and more streamlined service from UWM to downtown. In addition, enhancing the University's shuttle bus system will encourage increased utilization of remote parking. Providing amenities for bikers and safe walkways for pedestrians will also encourage these two modes of transportation. UPASS, UBUS, UPARK, B.O.S.S, Bike Task Force, Free Bike Loan Program, and Regional Bike Path Linkages all support alternatives to private transportation vehicles in the neighborhood.

The following are priorities of the initiative for the stakeholders:

- Increase alternatives to driving to campus
 - Create a transit route that connects remote UWM Satellite locations and existing centers including student residential districts
 - Support the Milwaukee Connector proposal
 - Create marketing strategies and incentives to increase transit use to campus
 - Improve the comfort, appearance, and location of U-Park shuttles and shuttle stops
 - Improve pedestrian streetscape on major pedestrian corridors to the UWM neighborhood
 - Promote bike routes to UWM that are safe, pleasant, convenient and attractive to both commuters and recreational users

Housing

Within the past ten years, there has been a documented nationwide trend among college students to seek a more traditional university or college experience meaning that students want to live on or near campus. On-campus sites have been exhausted, causing a large demand for neighborhood rental units far beyond what the neighborhood can sustain or accommodate without undergoing a significant change in character. This plan identifies that it is in the long-term interest of the city and University to preserve property values and community character.

The following are priorities of the initiative for the stakeholders:

- Increase on-campus housing
 - Identify sites on-campus that would be appropriate for construction of new student residence halls
- Stabilize home ownership in and near campus neighborhoods
 - Homebuyer assistance program
 - Employer-assisted home purchase program
- Create a community development corporation (CDC)
 - Initiate joint venture between UWM, City, neighborhood and others to implement homeowner assistance programs
 - Provide student tenant and advocacy assistance; organize community clean-ups and UWM neighborhood landlord training program
- Preserve Architectural and Historic Character
 - Develop programs to assist property owners to better maintain historic residential properties
 - Seek designation for the UWM neighborhood as a National Register District, Local Landmark District, and/or Neighborhood Conservation District as means of protecting architectural character
- Develop Student Housing Districts/Projects
 - Establish public/private partnerships to develop student housing through the metro area
 - Establish improved transit linkages between UWM and target neighborhoods
 - Promote commercial development adjacent to remote student housing
 - Facilitate Kenilworth building redevelopment
 - Investigate redevelopment of Oakland Avenue retail to include housing

Quality of Life

University neighborhoods are well known for their lively and colorful commercial areas, they can offer a mix of uses not often found in a typical neighborhood shopping area. Current and previous accomplishments that have been reached include the development of University Neighborhoods Association (UNA), quality of life initiatives, UWM Student Handbook, code enforcement, Milwaukee Police Department patrolling, UWM Drink responsibly Program, Community Design Solutions (CDS), City Design Studio Project, UWM Neighborhood Liaison Position, landlord Compact, neighborhood clean-ups and the Oakland Avenue BID.

The following are priorities of the stakeholders:

- Improve quality of life for student tenants
 - Provide handbook and student tenant advocate assistance
 - Continue DNS campus area liaison position
 - Continue “Drink Responsibly” program
- Improve neighborhood peace and quiet
 - Continue aggressive code enforcement
 - Establish new enforcement tools
 - Develop model lease
 - Continue landlord training customized to issues relevant to student tenants
 - Explore UWM code-of-conduct penalties for student off-campus offenses
 - Create off-campus security patrols
- Create UWM programs and facilities to add to community life

- Increase neighborhood access and use of UWM programs and cultural offerings
 - Find ways to make the campus into a neighborhood amenity
 - Improve Downer Woods as a park for the neighborhood and University
- Support attractive and viable commercial/entertainment areas
 - Strengthen the existing Oakland Avenue BID
 - Develop a plan for physical improvement and amenities in the Oakland Avenue BID
 - Intensify use within the commercial districts near UWM Campus
- Create cleaner neighborhoods
 - Continue to organize regular neighborhood clean up efforts
- Create a forum for strategic change
 - Continue regular periodic meeting between UWM, the neighborhood and the City to monitor progress on the strategy's objectives
- Update UWM Campus Plan
 - The University should update its campus plan to include improved access for the community.