

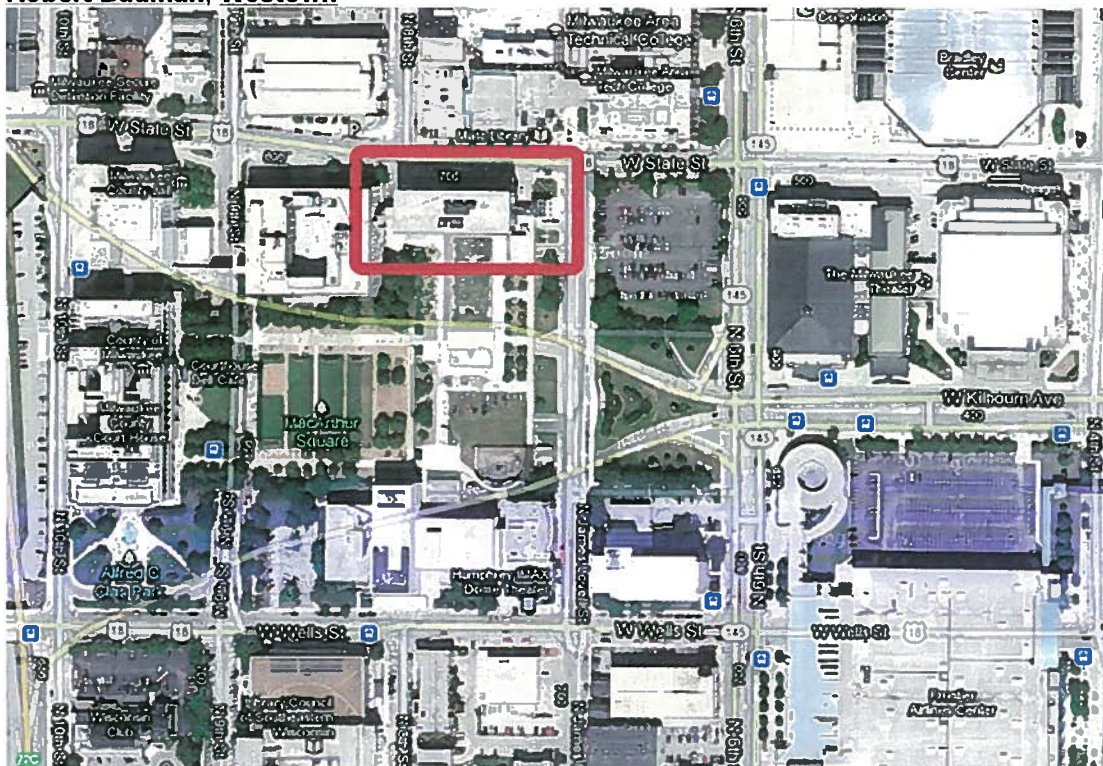


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Alderman Bauman's Milwaukee Police Department – MacArthur Square Plan Worth Exploring

Feb 15th, 2012 | By **Jeramey Jannene** | Category: **Avenues West, Feature, Milwaukee Police Department, Robert Bauman, Westown**



An aerial image of the neighborhood where the Milwaukee Police Department Administration Building currently sits (Image from Google Maps)

Alderman Bob Bauman, who represents downtown and the near west side, **has put forth a proposal** to relocate the Milwaukee Police Department headquarters and municipal courts to southeast corner of 27th Street and Wisconsin Avenue. As part of that proposal the MPD District 1 station would be relocated to W. Wisconsin Avenue between 6th Street and the Milwaukee River and the former MPD headquarters would be redeveloped. Under Alderman Bauman's plan, a single request for proposals (RFP) would be issued by the City for the development of the new headquarters facility, the new District One station, and for the redevelopment of the existing facility. The City would then lease back the new facility at 27th and Wisconsin. The lease back provision would allow the City to avoid the up-front capital costs of developing a new facility. Given that the current facility used by MPD has a looming maintenance and renovation bill of \$58 million, all ideas should be on the table. This one in particular seems worth exploring, as it would go a long way to improving other problems.

Replaces one part of over-bearing government presence in neighborhood with potential additional, taxable use

Much of the western edge of downtown Milwaukee is plagued by single-use, **superblock-style** buildings. Starting at 4th Street and moving west, there are multiple 10,000+ seat arenas, a 5,000+ seat theater, the convention center, a large library, a large technical college, a large museum, multiple detention facilities, multiple law enforcement facilities, two different courthouse facilities, and an extremely under-utilized public square. In short, a number of vital buildings arranged in one of the least attractive layouts possible. The sum of all of the parts is not greater than the whole.

Removing the Milwaukee Police Department Administration Building, and having it replaced with a taxable, likely mixed-use facility is good for injecting activity into the neighborhood.

Adds additional investment along W. Wisconsin Ave

This project would involve significant investment at two points along W. Wisconsin Avenue. The downtown core would see investment as the new MPD District One station is developed. More importantly, the visible investment that Marquette and others (Ambassador Hotel, 2040 Lofts, etc., etc.) have made along W. Wisconsin Avenue would be extended westward to 27th Street. This would hopefully attract more investment to the area, which has struggled to generate activity west of 24th Street.

Adds active use at major city intersection (27th and Wisconsin Ave)

This point piggybacks on the one above, but it still is worth mentioning. The 27th and Wisconsin intersection has long been **a sore spot for the City, with a struggling TIF district** and a controversial gas station. Moving MPD administration and the municipal courts to the intersection would create an active use at an otherwise empty site.

Reduces potential long-term liabilities for the City of Milwaukee

With the city leasing the new facility at 27th and Wisconsin, they shouldn't have to worry about

long-term maintenance costs and could more easily relocate given future department needs changing.

It's only an RFP

The City could elect not to go forward with the received proposals if they're not satisfactory. Issuing the RFP isn't a commitment to anything other than to evaluate the RFPs.

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