

6E - PROSPECT AVENUE CORRIDOR

CORRIDOR ISSUES AND OVERVIEW

Prospect Avenue is a predominantly multifamily residential corridor with many former mansions reinvented as professional offices, museums, schools, lecture halls, etc., and a mix of lowrise, midrise and highrise apartment / condo buildings. It includes some commercial / retail uses closer to North Avenue. The demand for high rise apartments and condos with views to the lakefront has increased development pressures on this corridor. This has become an issue especially along the corridor's two historic districts, the Prospect Avenue Apartment Buildings and the Prospect Avenue Mansions Historic Districts. The first one is roughly located between Kane Place and Windsor Street, and includes apartments buildings constructed between 1900 and 1949 that include architectural styles such as art deco and late 19th / 20th century revivals. The Prospect Avenue Mansions Historic District is located mostly to the west side of Prospect Avenue between Ogden Avenue and just north of Albion Street. There are fifteen historic buildings in this district, including the Goll House (the only historic property located to the east of Prospect Avenue), the Elizabeth Black House and Carriage House, the Andrew Story Goodrich House, and the Willard Merrill House and Carriage House. This district used to be known as Milwaukee's "Gold Coast".

Approaches to development along the Prospect Avenue Corridor must address and respect historic resources in the area and seek a balance between historic and noteworthy buildings and new highrise construction. New highrise towers should by their design (building envelope, transparency, and placement) optimize their locations. New highrise towers should have a principal façade on both the Prospect Avenue and the Oak Leaf Trail side, one more formal and one less formal. In addition, for large highrise buildings, a porte cochere that allows for off-street loading, pick-up and drop-off, may be desirable. Traffic problems arising from the lack of individual property loading areas, and pedestrian safety issues due to traffic speeds, need to be addressed.

VISION

Enhance this predominantly residential historic and highrise district with carefully designed buildings, a compatible mix of uses and a well landscaped streetscape with pedestrian friendly amenities.

AREA BOUNDARIES

Prospect Avenue between Ogden Avenue and North Avenue.

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Promote high quality mixed use development that encourages street level activity for commercial, residential, recreational and other uses.

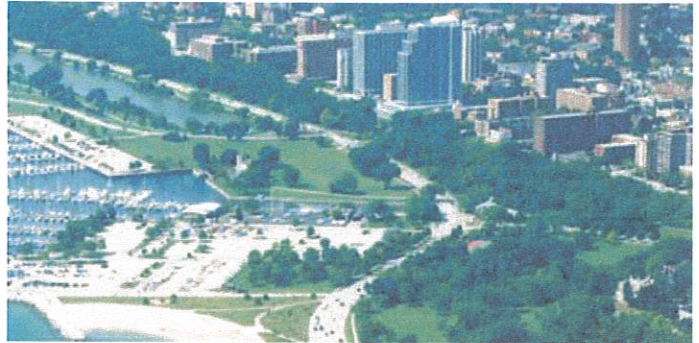


Figure 10.19: Existing View of Lakefront Towers

* Image Source: Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Website



Figure 10.20: Prospect Avenue Corridor



Figure 10.21: Prospect Avenue historic and highrise district

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1. Identify sites along Prospect Avenue where future development should occur.
 - Consider context sensitive ways of building on the east side of Prospect (e.g. taller more slender towers that allow more light and air, rooftop gardens that create green space in an urban setting, and hillside units that terrace down to the Oak Leaf Trail).
2. Improve the relationship between building entrances and the street as a way to enhance pedestrian and commercial activity.
 - Integrate commercial activities with new construction.
3. Consider density bonuses for urban design and pedestrian friendly amenities (such as plazas, terraces and urban gardens) that go above and beyond the established requirements.
4. Support more streamlined and efficient transit for the two densely developed transit corridors of Farwell Avenue (mixed use commercial) and Prospect Avenue (high-density residential)
5. Consider requiring building materials that are both more energy-efficient and "transparent" in nature to reduce massiveness of highrise towers.
6. Consider for new highrises, the combination of a more massive base with a taller more slender tower to allow greater space, i.e., view corridors, between the towers to the lake.
7. Require a high quality of architectural design for all new developments on Prospect Avenue.

TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION STRATEGIES

Address traffic circulation issues while improving pedestrian circulation and safety.

1. Evaluate potential benefits to the pedestrian environment on Prospect Avenue that could result from reverting back to two-way traffic on both Farwell and Prospect Avenues. Currently a one-way coupler is used for commuter traffic from Downtown to the Upper East Side.
 - Conduct a transit study on Prospect Avenue to address traffic issues and impact on service needs, particularly on large apartment complexes.
2. Address speeding and conflicts that arise from lack of service alleys and on-street loading and unloading.
3. Develop guidelines for streetscape improvements

that promote pedestrian enjoyment, safety and street activity.

- Promote the use of traffic calming measures.
- Address needs of people with disabilities.

4. Consider traffic impacts of prospective development over time and potential negative impacts on the area's quality of life.

PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

Preserve the existing historic districts while allowing new context sensitive development to occur.

1. Consider an overlay district for Prospect Avenue to protect and enhance the urban and historic neighborhood character. The overlay district guidelines should take into consideration: preservation of historic and noteworthy buildings; green building standards for new construction; tower design and setbacks; street frontage on Prospect (particularly the "base" or the first three building stories that have the greatest impact on the street) as well as Oak Leaf Trail frontage.
 - Establish standards for new construction that address preservation of historic districts and structures.
 - Include bulk (building envelope and massing) requirements and design guidelines that address densities and setbacks.
 - Consider establishing an architectural review process triggered by square footage of new development in addition to City Plan Commission review.
2. Identify additional sites as well as historic and noteworthy buildings to be preserved. Apply appropriate designations, such as National Register, local landmark, or both to identified properties utilizing proper procedures.
3. Analyze existing zoning regulations related to building setbacks and floor area ratios (FAR) to promote higher quality architecture and more context sensitive residential development.

CATALYTIC PROJECT ISSUES AND OVERVIEW

This portion of the North Avenue Corridor between the Milwaukee River and Oakland Avenue contains a large number of sites and buildings that are susceptible to change. If developed, these sites present an opportunity to link commercial areas on both sides of the river, transform and fill in gaps on the west end of the East Side BID, and create a strong urban pedestrian friendly environment that serves as an asset to the Northeast Side.