



May 31, 2024
Milwaukee Common Council
200 E Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

To Members of the Milwaukee Common Council:

On behalf of the Urban Manufacturing Alliance, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding the proposed rezoning of part of the Menomonee Valley for high-end residential development.

This area has long been earmarked for manufacturing uses, as reinforced by many City-adopted planning documents, including the Valley Comprehensive Plan and the recent City-wide Industrial Land Analysis, which was informed by deep engagement from workforce practitioners, economic development practitioners, entrepreneurial groups, businesses, business districts, residents, and more, to create a comprehensive plan to ensure a resilient and equitable local economy. The Valley is a critical source of employment for Milwaukee residents. Allowing any part of it to be rezoned for residential use sets a dangerous precedent that could open the door to further rezoning efforts and jeopardizes the future of the local manufacturing sector across the city.

The Menomonee Valley is nationally recognized as a model of successful urban manufacturing. In 2019, the Urban Manufacturing Alliance hosted our national conference in the Menomonee Valley because of its exemplary integration of manufacturing businesses in the city's neighborhoods, commitment to placemaking and placekeeping, and dedication to supporting good-paying career pathways for local residents. This event brought local, state, and national leaders here to learn about Menomonee Valley Partners' and other city initiatives and visit prominent companies like Ingeteam, Rexnord, and dozens of others in the Valley and across the city. At UMA, we view Milwaukee – particularly the Valley – as best-in-class in maintaining and growing manufacturing that supports local residents in accessing jobs.

This issue extends beyond local concerns: it is part of a national fight to preserve industrial land for manufacturing and the stable, well-paying opportunities for residents it often provides. Protecting and keeping land for industrial use is not only crucial for sustaining local employment, but also for promoting economic mobility for underserved communities.



Rezoning this land would undermine years of effort dedicated to ensuring that the Menomonee Valley remains a hub for manufacturing jobs that are accessible to a diverse workforce and for businesses that contribute to the City's growing economy. We urge the Common Council to listen to the leaders in the Valley and throughout Milwaukee who are asking you to uphold the existing zoning designations and to support your city's commitment to manufacturing and job creation and to protect the Menomonee Valley's future as a vital manufacturing area for the benefit of all Milwaukee residents.

Sincerely,

Katy Stanton
Co-Director
Urban Manufacturing Alliance