



Fond du Lac & North

Updated for 2040

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Department of City Development | November 2021

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RESOLUTION PAGE

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Executive Summary

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WHAT DOES THIS PLAN DO?

The Fond du Lac and North Area Plan is the work of many different stakeholders in the community. This is not just a document by and for the City of Milwaukee's Department of City Development (DCD). Rather, this Plan builds off dedicated and innovative work in progress. In addition to the original Fond du Lac and North Area Plan from 2004, several community partners have done their own neighborhood-level planning and organizing. This Plan aims to support and incorporate many of those goals into this Plan, which is DCD's official guide, adopted by the Common Council, for land use and development. This Plan was developed in close collaboration with three community organizations, who have been our partners on this Plan:

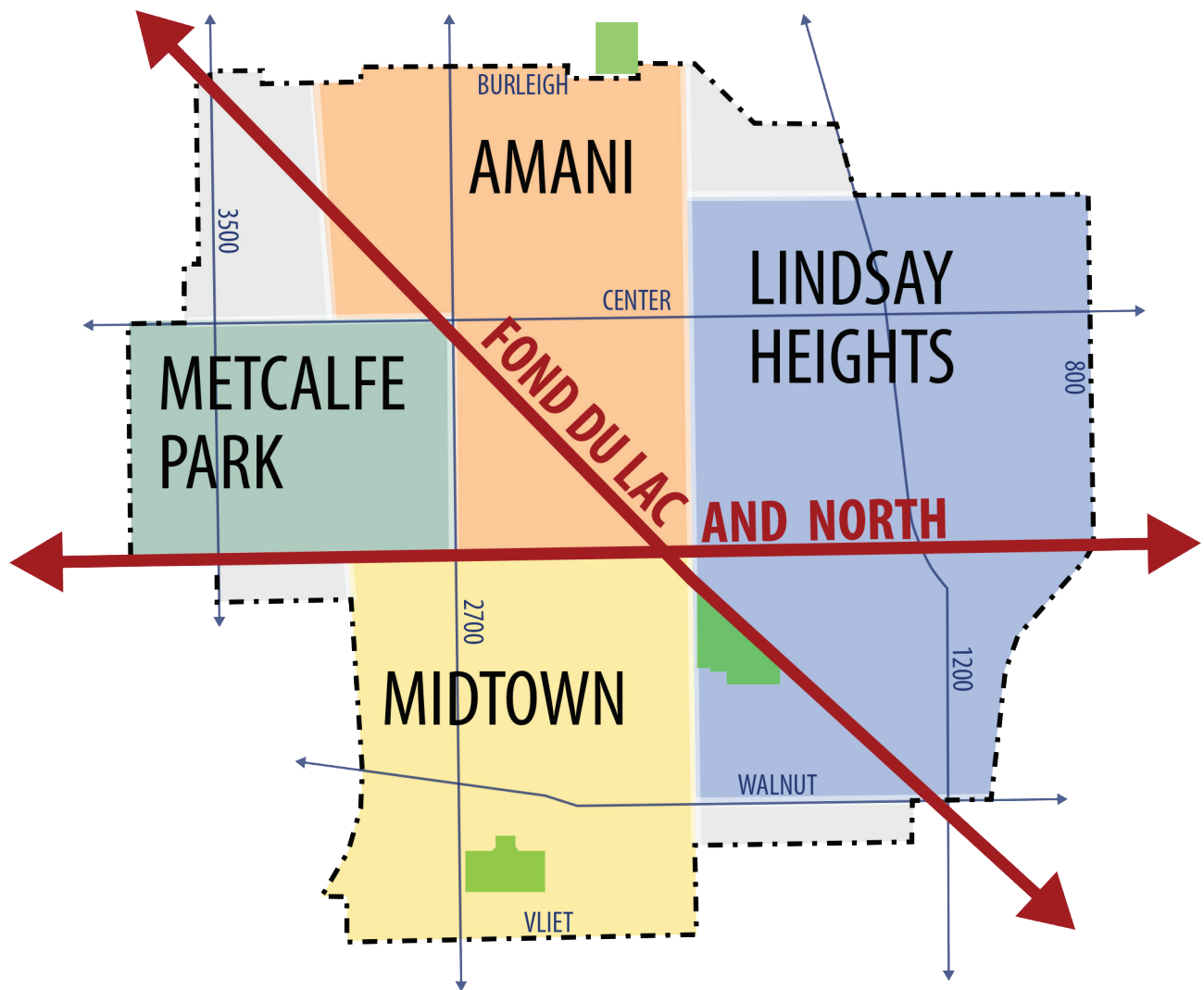
- » **Dominican Center**
- » **Metcalf Park Community Bridges**
- » **Walnut Way**

Not only will this Plan be used by DCD and the three community partners on a regular basis, but it will also be a tool for others, whether it is for referencing future land use and policy recommendations, understanding the development and design expectations for development, or for collaborating with DCD on larger projects within the neighborhood. Plan recommendations will be relevant to many different stakeholders, including:

- » **Residents and Property Owners**
- » **Business Owners and Workers**
- » **Developers**
- » **Other City Departments**
- » **Other Governmental Agencies**

This Area Plan is the first complete area plan update that DCD has completed since the original development of the City's Comprehensive Plan, which was developed in response to the State of Wisconsin's requirement that every community have a comprehensive plan by 2010. The reason that the Fond du Lac and North Area Plan was the first to be updated is because there are unique needs in an area where conditions have been changing. This Plan will:

- » **SET EXPECTATIONS** and provide the basis for reviewing new development and redevelopment in the face of both increasing pressure and disinvestment
- » **SET PRIORITIES** for public and private investment
- » **ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY** in a robust discussion around aspirations and expectations
- » **PROVIDE ACCOUNTABILITY** for implementation
- » **ADDRESS HISTORIC AND SYSTEMATIC INEQUITIES**



THE PLANNING AREA

The plan area is bounded roughly from Burleigh Ave to the north, I-43 to the east, Vliet and Galena Streets to the south, and the 30th Street rail corridor and 38th Street to the west. The planning area includes four distinct neighborhoods: Amani, Lindsay Heights, Metcalfe Park, and Midtown, as well as small parts of other neighborhoods. The planning area is mostly within the 15th aldermanic district. To make the plan boundaries more consistent with neighborhood and aldermanic boundaries, the boundaries were expanded slightly from the original 2004 plan to include the entire Metcalfe Park neighborhood, the area east of I-43 and west of 20th Street, and a small stretch south of Walnut Street. The planning area does not fully encompass the Amani neighborhood, which extends north to Keefe Street, nor the Midtown neighborhood, which extends south to Highland Avenue between 20th and 27th Streets.

COMMUNITY-LED PLANNING

The Fond du Lac and North Area Plan was driven by authentic and ongoing community engagement. Throughout the planning process, residents shared their vision for their community and how to achieve those goals, so that the recommendations found respond to the needs identified.

The partnership between DCD and the Community Partners enabled deeper conversations with a greater number of residents than would have been possible otherwise. The Community Partners were involved in every step, from helping to design the outreach approach, to staffing public engagement events, to vetting draft materials, and reviewing this document.



The COVID-19 pandemic brought unexpected changes to engagement. In-person engagement was quickly replaced with remote engagement for the second half of the plan. Despite the abrupt shift, residents stay engaged and adapted to the virtual format. **Chapter 1** provides greater detail about what was shared during the following engagement events and activities:

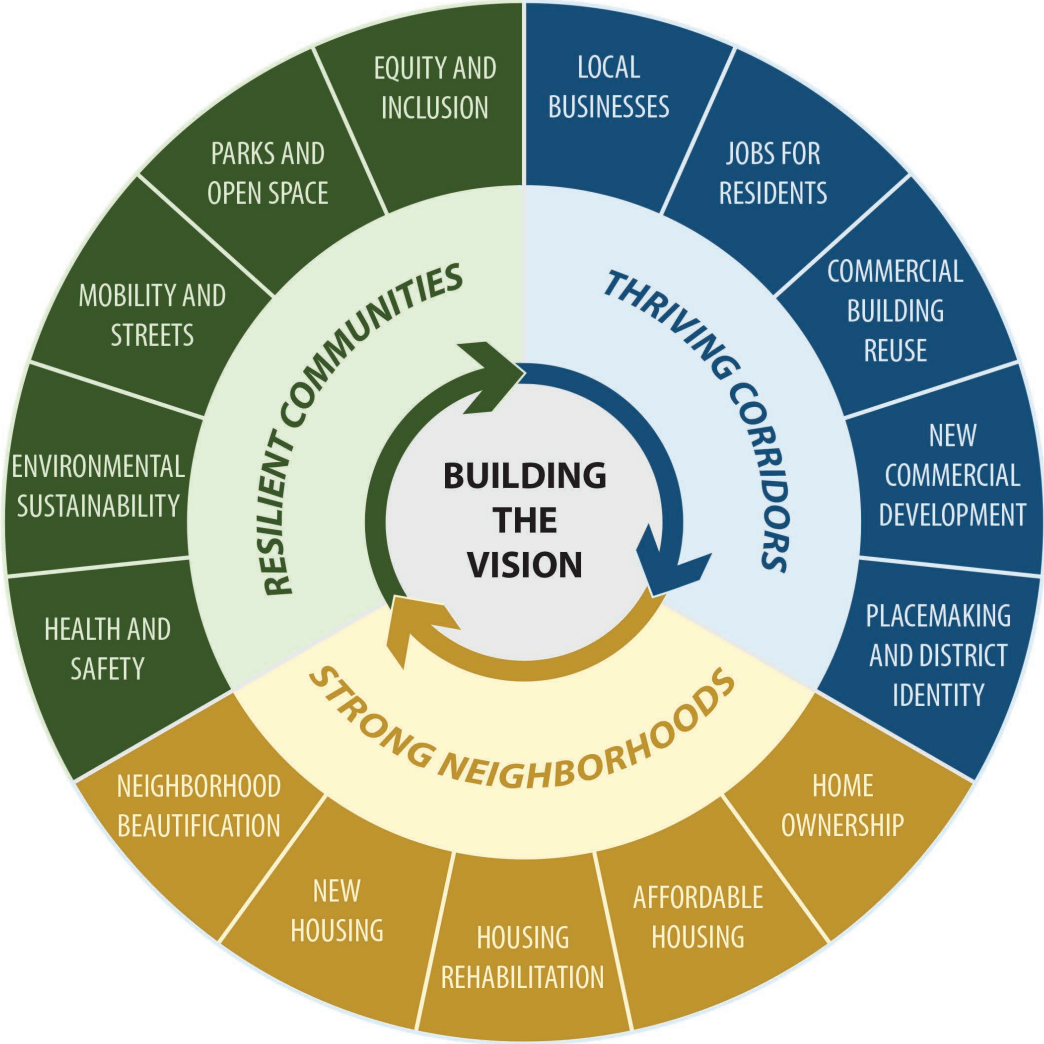
- **4 Community Meetings**
- **Focus Groups**
- **Online survey**
- **Door-to-door canvassing**
- **Advisory Group**
- **Interdepartmental & agency coordination**
- **Attendance at local events**
- **Project website**

BUILDING THE VISION...

...What the neighborhood wants

The challenges and opportunities that residents brought to each meeting were numerous, and they did not always fit into the neat categories of a typical comprehensive plan. Nevertheless, all these issues are important. This process honors that feedback by incorporating some of the most-often heard resident priorities, important policies and recommendations found in other planning efforts, by the community partners, other city departments, and other government partners. **Chapter 2** explores the various policies and strategies to support:

- **Resilient Communities**
- **Thriving Corridors**
- **Strong Neighborhoods**



LAND USE AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

While the Plan does not anticipate or recommend large-scale changes to how land is used, there are some recommended changes. At the same time that there are policies and recommendations for improving the vacant lots throughout the area, there are also opportunities to strategically and sensitively accommodate moderately denser development in certain areas, primarily along and near major transit routes, current and planned. For example, there are opportunities to allow less common housing models, such as townhomes or smaller, clustered single-family homes in the planning area between North Ave and Wright Street and between the 30th Street corridor and N. 27th Street. The N. 27th Street corridor also presents opportunities to allow more multi-family style housing, especially if bus rapid transit, or other enhanced transit service, is implemented in the near future.

One of the main purposes of a comprehensive plan is to provide a basis for zoning changes. **Chapter 3** details a few opportunities to examine ways to better align the future land use recommendations mentioned above with the zoning.

Additionally, design guidelines found in **Chapter 3** outlines the best practices in urban design for residential and commercial land uses. These guidelines do not replace or supercede zoning regulations, rather they serve as a guide for new development and redevelopment to ensure quality design that positively reflects the community and provides lasting value.

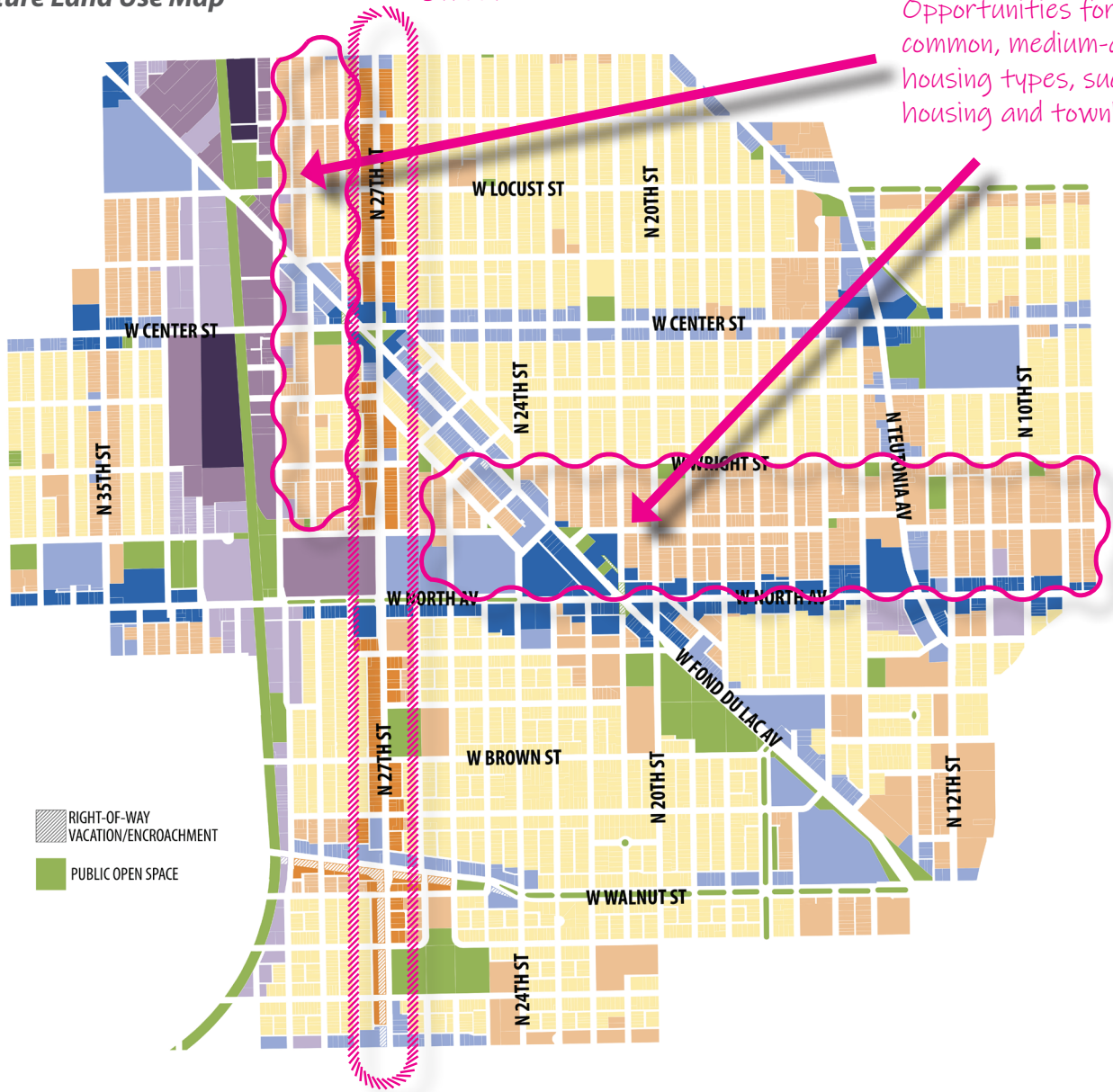
DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS & TOWNHOMES	
Context	<p>Multi-family buildings and townhomes are appropriate in urban neighborhood districts, urban corridor districts and commercial-mixed activity districts, but may also be allowed in traditional neighborhood districts, provided the scale and density of such developments are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood context.</p> <p>When a multi-family building is introduced into a single-family or duplex neighborhood, it should generally be designed in a townhouse style with individual entries to ground level units and facades with a vertical articulation to reinforce the typical lot widths and traditional patterns of the surrounding area.</p> <p>Residential only buildings are discouraged in Commercial-Main Street districts where mixed-use buildings with commercial uses on the ground floor are preferred</p>
Site Layout	<p>Front and side street setbacks should be similar to other buildings on the block or in the immediate area, but setbacks greater than 10 feet from a street lot line or five feet from a side lot line should not be required.</p> <p>Front and side street setbacks of up to 20 feet may be allowed to provide for a transition zone between ground floor residential units and the public sidewalk.</p> <p>New construction in residential areas should generally be separated from existing buildings by at least 5 feet, unless both buildings are constructed with appropriately fire rated walls.</p> <p>Attached townhome units may be built on individual lots with a zero side setback or common wall along the property line, or may be provided as separate units within a single multi-family building.</p> <p>Multiple buildings may be placed on a single lot, provided that the overall density is within the allowed range and the context is appropriate.</p>
Building Orientation	<p>All multi-family buildings should be oriented toward a public street with an identifiable main entrance facing the street and connected to the public sidewalk.</p> <p>Walk up townhome units with individual entries are allowed in multi-family buildings provided that all exterior entries to such units are visible from a public street or other public or semi-public common space.</p> <p>Residential units located on the ground floor should be elevated at least 2 feet above the sidewalk or setback at least 5 feet from the street property line.</p> <p>Accessibility for residents and guests should be considered in the design.</p> <p>A common outdoor amenity space equivalent to at least 15% of the lot area should be provided for multi-family buildings with more than four units.</p>

		Districts								
		Residential Districts			Commercial Districts		Industrial Districts			
		Traditional Neighborhood	Urban Neighborhood	Urban Corridor	Commercial-Mixed Activity	Commercial-Main Street	Industrial-Mixed	Industrial-Commercial	Industrial	
Residential Land Uses	Single-family dwelling	D	D	A	A	U	U	U	U	
	Two-family dwelling	D	D	D	A	U	U	U	U	
	Family daycare home	D	D	D	D	A	A	U	U	
	Live-work unit	D	D	D	D	D	A	U	U	
	Accessory dwelling unit	D	D	D	D	D	A	U	U	
	Multi-family dwelling	A	D	D	D	D	A	U	U	
	Group residential uses	A	A	A	A	A	A	U	U	

> **Future Land Use Map**

Opportunities for multi-family and commercial uses along N. 27th Street

Opportunities for less common, medium-density housing types, such as cluster housing and townhomes



TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD
Compatible with RS6, RT3-RT4

URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD
Compatible with RM4-RM6

URBAN CORRIDOR
Compatible with RO2

COMMERCIAL - MIXED ACTIVITY
Compatible with CS, LB2

COMMERCIAL - MAIN STREET
Compatible with LB2-LB3

INDUSTRIAL - RESIDENTIAL
Compatible with IM

INDUSTRIAL - COMMERCIAL
Compatible with IC, IO2

INDUSTRIAL
Compatible with IL2, IH

PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

The priority neighborhood projects provide the road map for turning the goals of the community into action. They represent the continuation of important work by the City, community organizations, nonprofits, and other governmental agencies. This strong foundation positions the Fond du Lac and North area for ongoing success. These recommendations are in many ways a snapshot of what the community wants. It will be important to continually check in with the community partners and residents, especially when preparing to implement any one of these recommendations.

Chapter 4 includes project opportunities, organized within each neighborhood by seven topics:

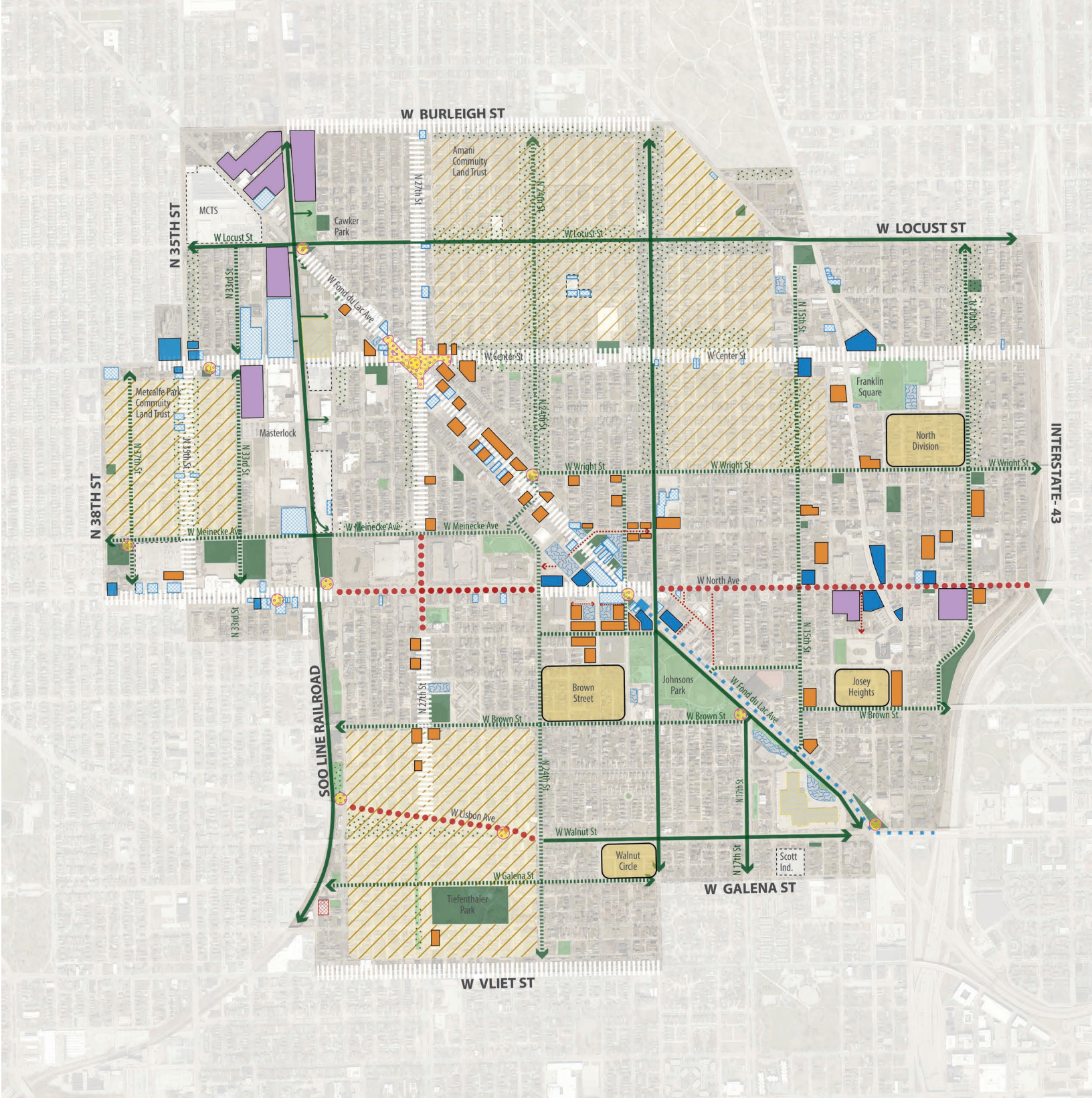
- > Street and Transit Improvements
- > Sustainability
- > Parks and Public Spaces
- > Placemaking & Identity
- > Neighborhood Development
- > Commercial Corridor Development
- > Industrial Development

ADOPTING THIS PLAN IS JUST THE FIRST STEP!

Implementing the recommendations in this plan—in order to realize the goals set by the community – is where the real work begins. Just as creating this plan was the work of many, implementing the recommendations will be a collaborative effort. Similarly, multiple funding sources will often be required. City departments and governmental agencies, community organizations, philanthropic organizations, nonprofits, advocacy groups, and the private market all have roles to play.

Chapter 5 lists the priority recommendations and projects found in Chapter 4 and identifies the time frame, the lead implementer, supporting partners, potential funding sources, and the related planning effort that supports the recommendation. The map on the opposite page illustrates these priority projects.

Over the ten to twenty year lifespan of an Area Plan, the City and partners are prepared with a vision that meets many different situations. Some of the recommendations are well within reach and on track to be accomplished in the next couple years, while others will take more time and effort. Recommendations need to be ambitious and aspirational! Community engagement was integral to the development of this Plan, and ongoing community engagement is essential when moving forward with any one of these recommendations to make sure that community sentiment is reflected.



- Potential Street Reconstruction
- Rapid Implementation Safety Project
- Potential Bike Boulevard
- Potential Separated Bike Path or Trail
- New or Improved Public Open Space
- Housing Rehabilitation Area
- Building Renovation or Reuse
- Multi-Family or Townhome Site
- Commercial or Mixed-Use Site
- Commercial or Industrial Site
- Existing and Potential City Subdivisions
- Community Art Project
- Vacant Lot Improvements
- Green Parking Lot Opportunity
- Solar Energy Opportunity
- Area of Special Interest
- Potential Streetcar Connection



PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

All of the recommendations are important and an integral part of the Plan; however, there are a few projects that emerged as high priority because they addressed a very fundamental need in the neighborhood and because they have the potential to be truly catalytic and transformative.

STREET AND MOBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Rapid Implementation Safety Improvements

Implement quick, safe changes to dangerous streets

Bus Rapid Transit

Support new, quicker bus service on 27th Street and Fond du Lac Avenue

30th Street Corridor Trail

Shared-use path along rail corridor in coordination with commuter rail initiatives

COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT

Ikon Hotel & Conference Center

Support renovation of Sears building

Former MEC Site

Encourage redevelopment or reuse

N. 35th and W. Center Streets

Encourage multi-use development with community space

Fondy North Transit Oriented Development

Encourage redevelopment near transit

PUBLIC SPACES AND SUSTAINABILITY

Library Square Street Art Hub

Encourage community-led placemaking

Fondy Farmer's Market

Reinvigorate physical space for year-round use

Butterfly Park

Reconstruct playground

Tiefenthaler Park

Support redesign

Vacant Lot Improvements

Plant trees to beautify vacant lots

Eco Main Street

Add green infrastructure and trees during reconstruction of North Avenue between 8th and 20th Streets.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Housing Rehabilitation

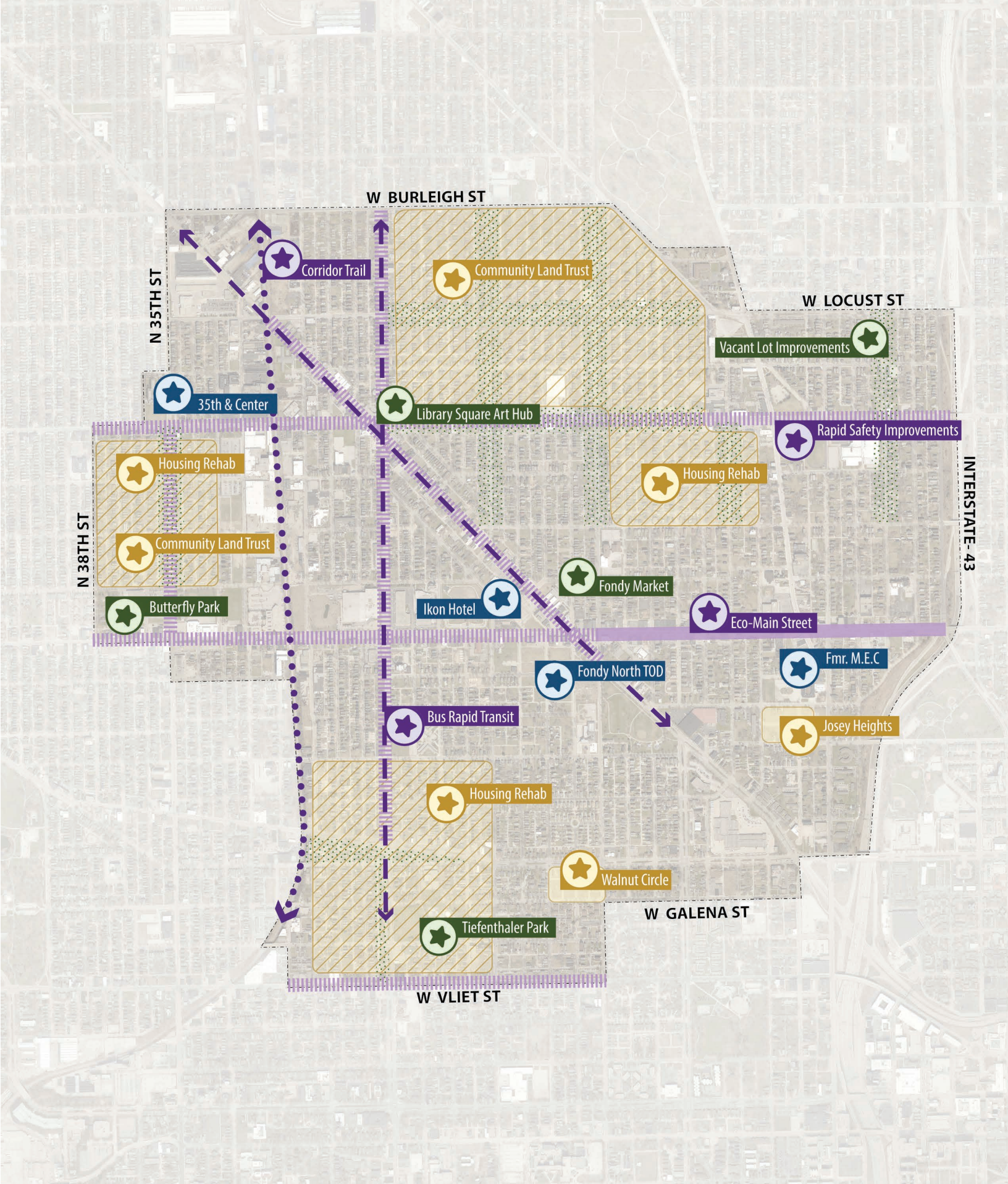
Prioritize renovation on existing housing stock

Josey Heights and Walnut Circle Subdivisions

Continue to encourage new high-quality, market-rate, traditional single-family homes

Community Land Trusts

Support community efforts for permanent affordable housing solutions



HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

This Plan serves as a road map over the next 10 to 20 years for achieving the goals voiced by the community related to a host of issues relating to the built environment. This Plan will be used by the City when evaluating land use and zoning decisions, as well as other City departments when making investment and policy decisions, other governmental agencies when coordinating on projects within the planning area, developers when considering the community desires for new development and redevelopment, community organizations when advocating for their priorities, and residents wanting to learn more about the different initiatives in their neighborhood. The recommendations in this Plan were developed collaboratively and will require collaboration to achieve. From practical, short-term recommendations to the more aspirational, long-term recommendations, this Plan lays the groundwork for action.

The Plan is organized as follows:

CHAPTER 1: Neighborhood and Planning Context

- > Neighborhood context
- > Historical perspective
- > Community engagement process
- > Market data and demographics

CHAPTER 2: Policies and Strategies

- > Area-wide policies and strategies to foster resilient communities, thriving corridors, and strong neighborhoods

CHAPTER 3: Land Use and Design Guidelines

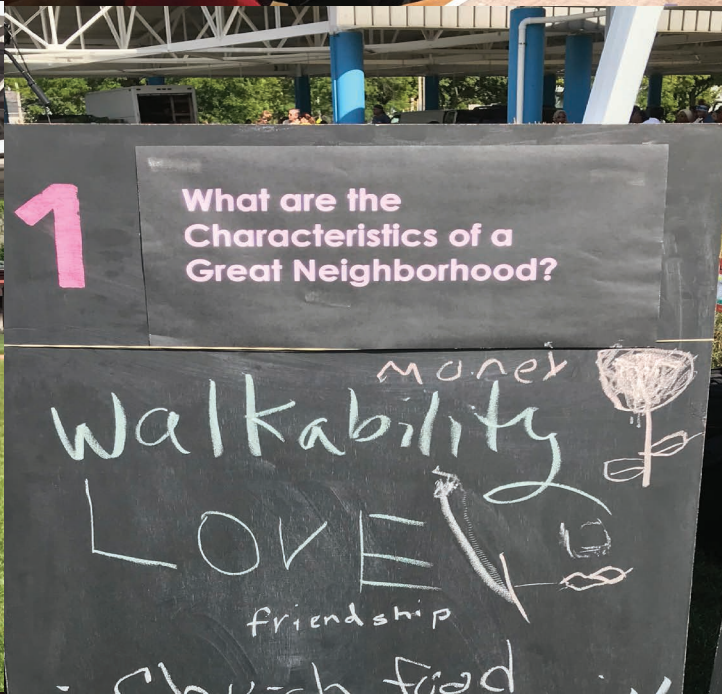
- > Land use recommendations
- > Best practices for urban design

CHAPTER 4: Neighborhood Recommendations

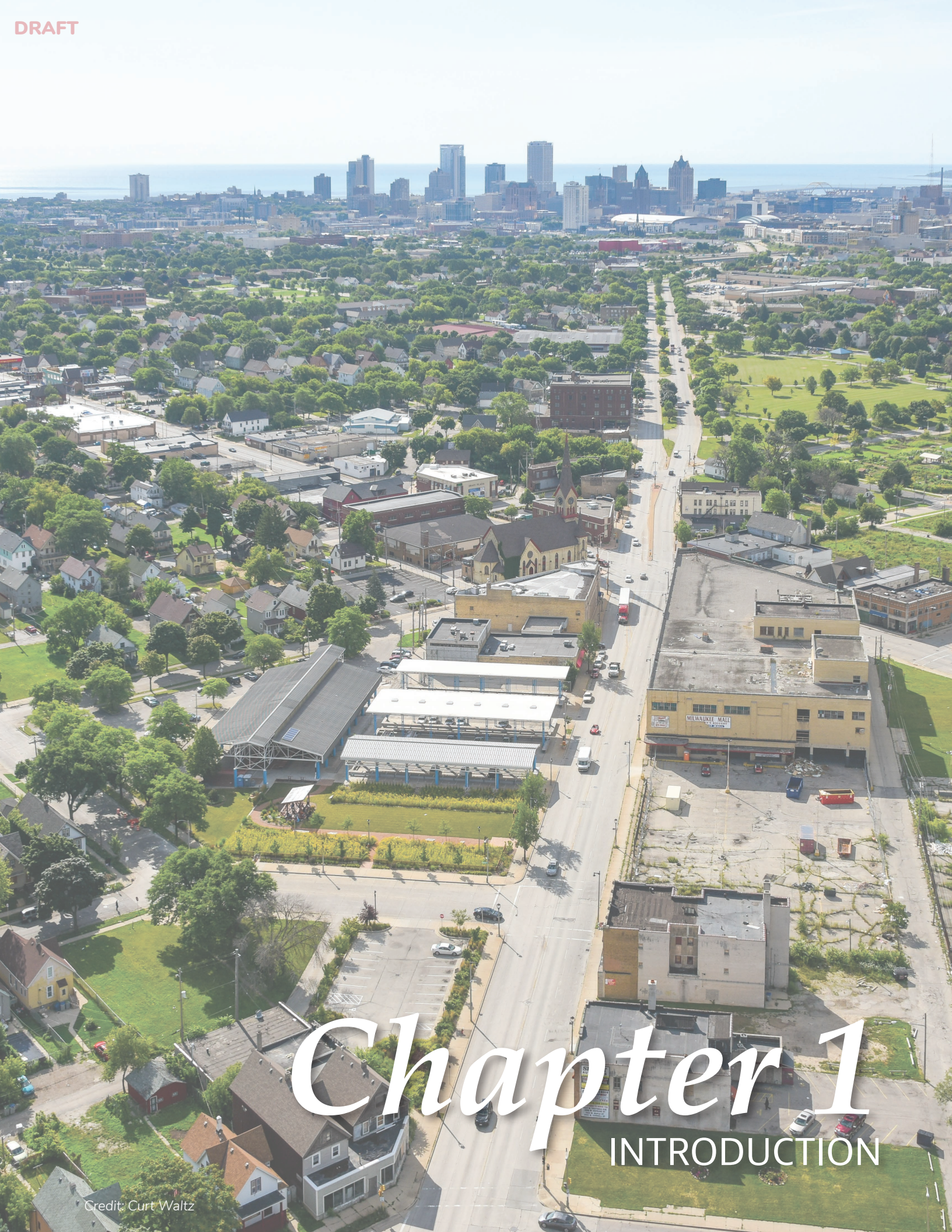
- > Specific project-level recommendations for each neighborhood: Amani, Lindsay Heights, Metcalfe Park, Midtown, and other areas
- > Identifies priorities

CHAPTER 5: Implementation

- > Implementation, including time frame and responsibility







Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

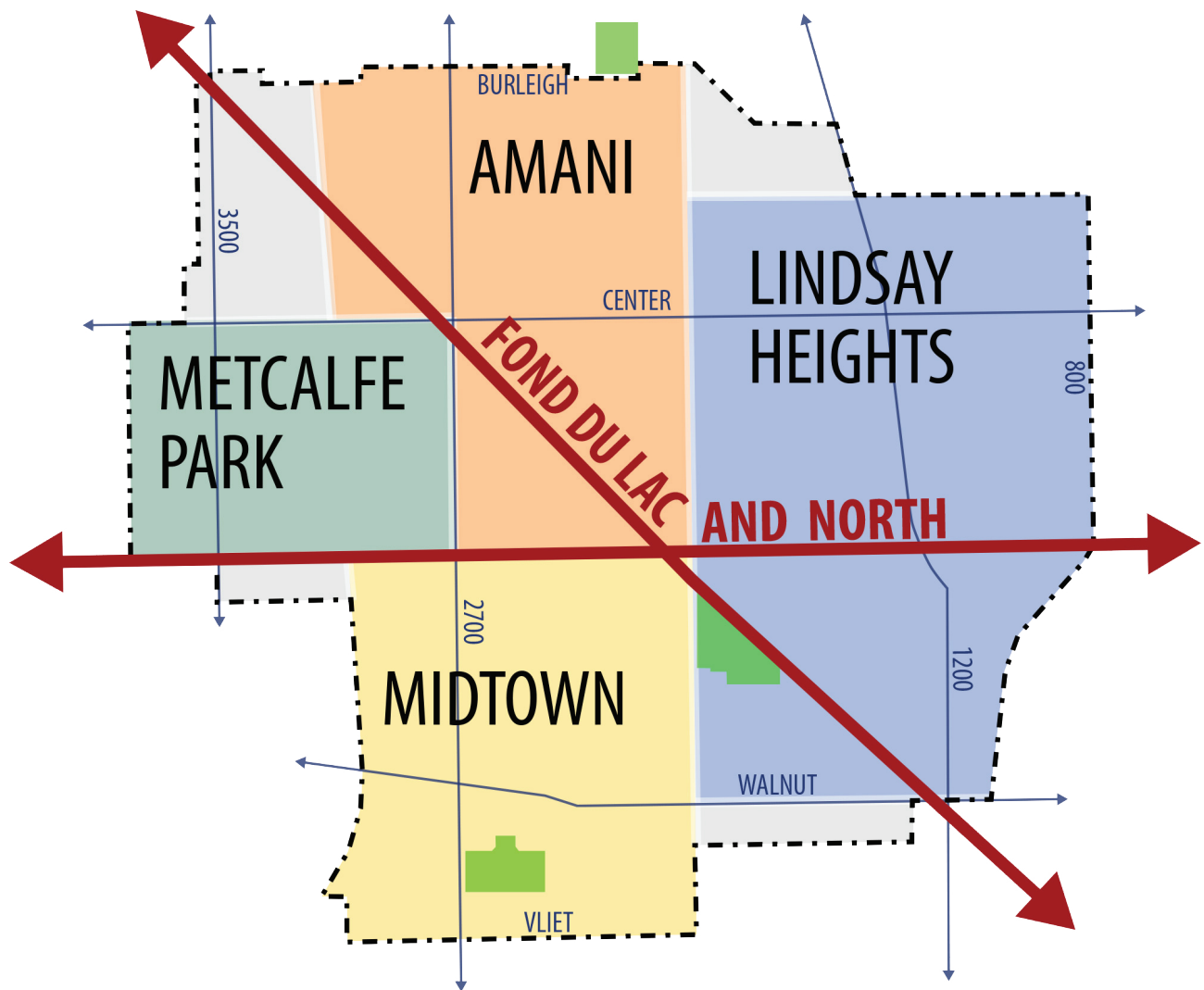
Encompassing distinct neighborhoods and corridors, the Fond du Lac and North Area covers much more than the iconic, namesake intersection. Portions of the study area are within walking distance of Milwaukee's downtown, while other parts are rooted in the neighborhood fabric of Milwaukee's north side. At the same time that the different neighborhoods within the planning area have faced challenges, they have all shown remarkable resiliency. Since the original area plan was completed in 2004, the area has seen ongoing development. Additionally, high-capacity community organizations have completed their own neighborhood planning efforts and initiatives to improve the quality of life for residents. These factors require a new plan for the area, one that builds on strength and plans for the future of the neighborhood in a way that incorporates the aspirations of residents and other stakeholders.

In 1999, Wis. Stats. §66.1001, more commonly referred to as "Smart Growth" Legislation, required that every municipality have a comprehensive plan. This legislation also dictated that all land use decisions and zoning be consistent with the comprehensive plan and that the plan be developed with public participation. This Plan will be used as guide for land use and development decisions for the next ten to twenty years. More specifically, the plan serves the following functions:

- > Articulates community goals and vision for the neighborhood
- > Guides future land use and development decisions
- > Sets expectations for development
- > Establishes priorities and helps secure resources, such as grants
- > Provides the initial input opportunity for residents in the development process
- > Integrate planning efforts
- > Identifies implementation responsibility and partnership opportunities

The Department of City Development (DCD) goes beyond a "check the boxes" approach to establish an actionable road map that builds on the existing strengths of the neighborhood to achieve what the residents, business owners, and stakeholders in the Fond du Lac and North area want for their neighborhood. Equity was at the forefront of many discussions during the plan and its considerations are woven throughout the planning process and the resulting recommendations. The COVID-19 pandemic and the racial unrest following George Floyd's killing further highlighted the existing inequities within Milwaukee. Community organizations challenged the City to create a race-conscious plan, one that addressed existing racial disparities and acknowledged the role government has played in creating them, and more importantly, in ending them. To that end, this plan contains recommendations that address residents' desire to:

- > Prioritize resident retention, anti-displacement, and increasing homeownership
- > Support commercial corridors and the creation of new Black owned businesses on neighborhood main streets
- > Improve neighborhood streets to undo past decisions that prioritized cars over safety and walkable streets for residents



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