

safegrowth plan

# connecting dots

2914 west pierce street transformation plan

Silver City Neighborhood Milwaukee, WI **53215**



# 2914 west pierce street transformation plan



## CHAPTER 1: VISIONING

Vision Statement

Background

Site Characteristics

Asset Map

## CHAPTER 2: PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Site Visits, Interviews & Previous Studies

Safety Audits

Observations

## CHAPTER 3 PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Crime Analysis

CPTED Analysis

## CHAPTER 4: STRATEGY

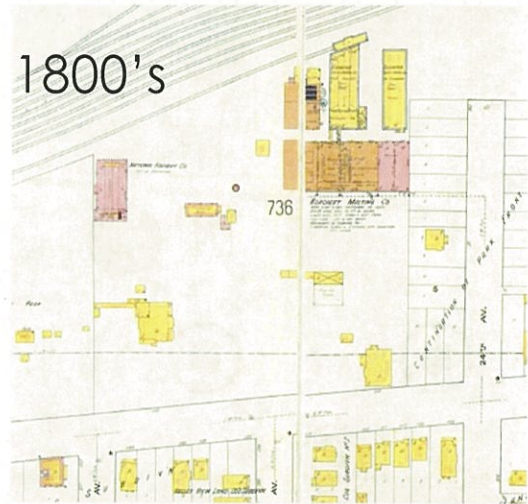
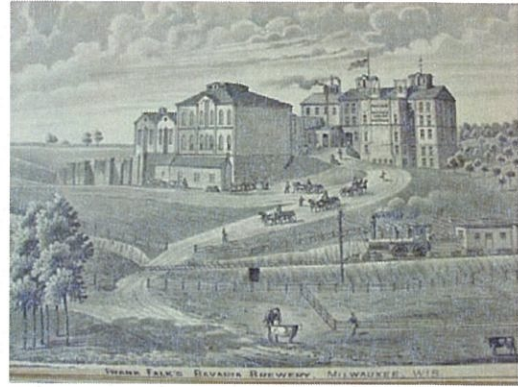
Recommendations



# chapter 1: visioning

## Vision Statement

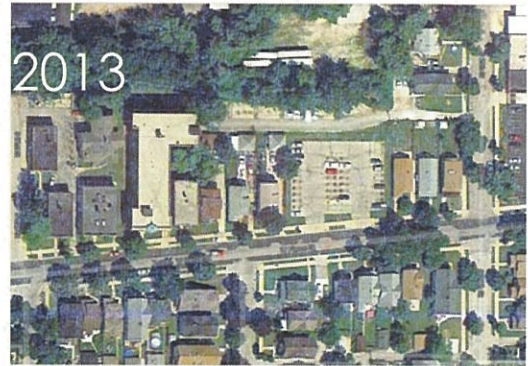
***Build a stronger, renewed sense of place for a lot connected to its surroundings and neighbors connected to each other.***



## Background

Neighbors surrounding the small, City-owned parking lot on Pierce Street had been voicing their concerns to the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) and the neighborhood organization, Layton Boulevard West Neighbors (LBWN). MPD and LBWN took this opportunity to team up with the residents to conduct a SafeGrowth and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPT-ED) review of this parking lot and surrounding area.

The site is located along Pierce Street, a corridor that is quickly becoming well-known due to existing attractions on either end and new developments in the Menomonee Valley, just to the north. Pierce Street lies in between the Mitchell Park Conservatory (the Domes) and Miller Park, the home of the Brewers. With the recent arrival of the Urban Ecology Center and the Bike Federation of Wisconsin just down the street, as well as the newly-opened, 24-acre Three Bridges Park to the north, neighbors felt that this stretch of the corridor deserved more attention and care.



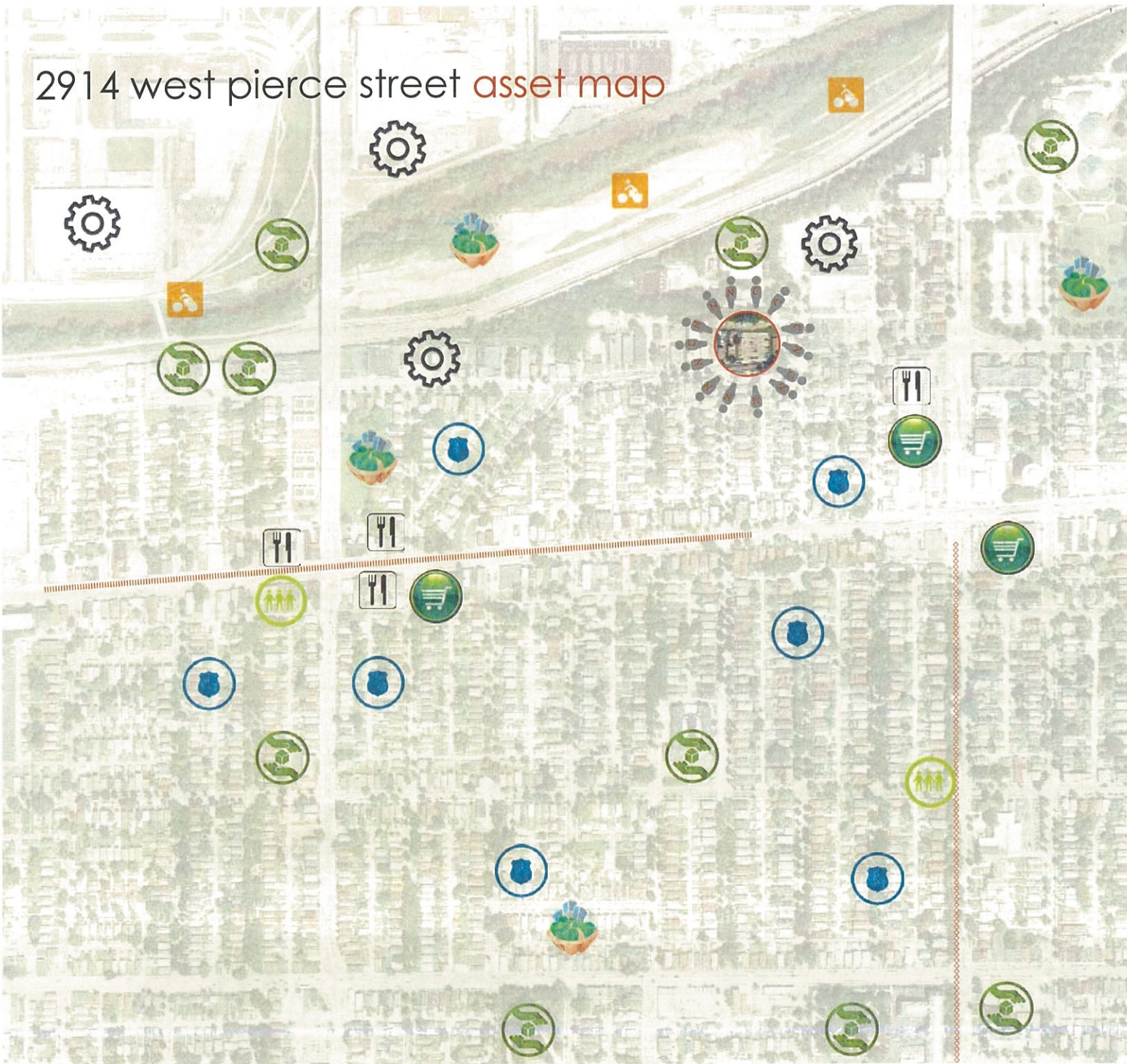
## Site Characteristics

The parking lot sits on a dividing line between Silver City - a mostly residential neighborhood to the south - and the Menomonee Valley - a hub of industrial activity. The lot is owned by the City and can be used by up to 40 vehicles with the proper permit. To the west, south, and north sides, the lot is surrounded by owner-occupant families. The northern edge of the lot abuts against parking for a nearby apartment complex.





# 2914 west pierce street asset map



-  citizens/individuals
-  associations
-  institutions
-  land/environment
-  block watch
-  industry
-  shop
-  eat
-  commercial corridor
-  historic boulevard



## chapter 2: problem identification

### Site Visits, Interviews, & Previous Studies

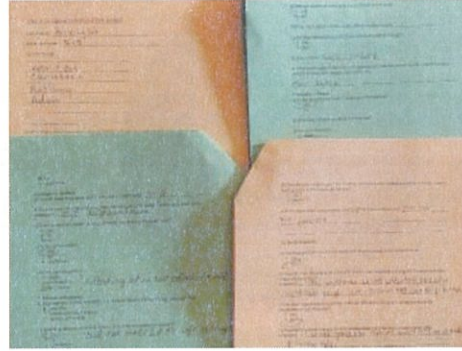
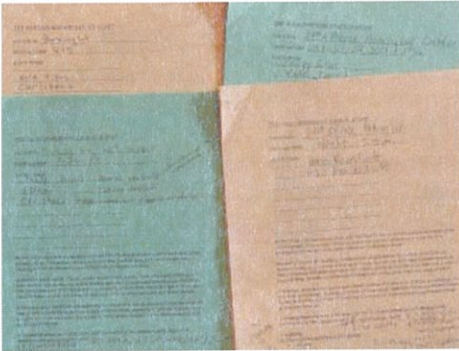


Our team drew from several different sources of information to best understand the site and what strategies could be successfully implemented. Since the impetus for this site selection began with the neighbors, much of the feedback came from interviews conducted on-site as well as neighbor input during the day and night Safety Audits. In addition, the team gleaned the perspective of a management team of a nearby apartment complex.



# chapter 2: problem identification

## Safety Audits



Community members conducted two audits - one during the day, and one at night. Though most were present at both, the responses varied based on the time of day:

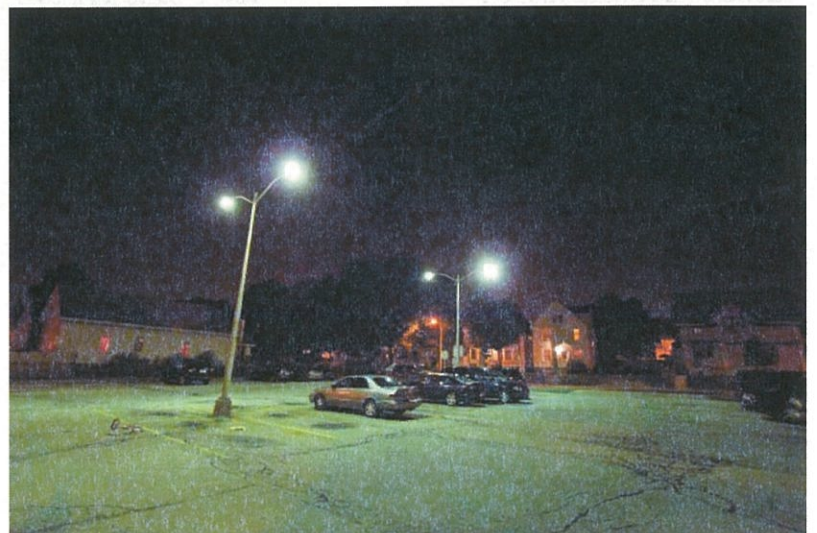
## Day Observations

- General impressions: dirty, abandoned, crime magnet
- Satisfactory lighting, signage, sightlines, & movement predictors
- Entrapment areas: Back alley bushes & hill behind lot
- Recently mowed lawn, but faded parking lines and signs
- No arrows indicating traffic direction
- Bikers, joggers, and families increase feeling of safety
- Possible improvements: new back fence, painted parking lines, security cameras, new signs, garbage cans, group clean-ups, plants, benches, better lighting, fixed asphalt in lot and on street



## Night Observations

- General impressions: Felt uncomfortable, nervous, lonely
- Inconsistent lighting (corners/back alley not lit well)
- Perceived the parking lot is not patrolled
- Entrapment areas: unlit areas, near bushes, in between cars
- Possible improvements: same as day suggestions, with the addition of Public Art and a block watch group





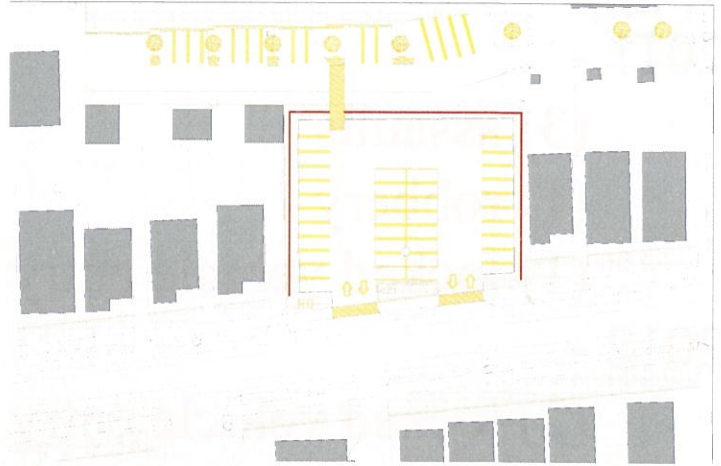
# chapter 2: problem identification

Based on interviews with neighboring residents, community members, and a property manager of nearby apartments, feedback was organized into the following objectives

## Placemaking

Community members identified an opportunity for a stronger sense of place and better attention to the site's needs. The following reasons were cited as a few examples:

- Poor lighting at night near the back lot/alley
- Faded parking lines
- Dumping in the parking area behind the lot
- Cycles of "ups" and "downs" throughout the years (maintenance)



## Community Building

Upon arriving at the first site audit, many neighbors had never met before. Increased relationships among neighbors leads to a stronger community, and the community members see these as opportunities for improvement:

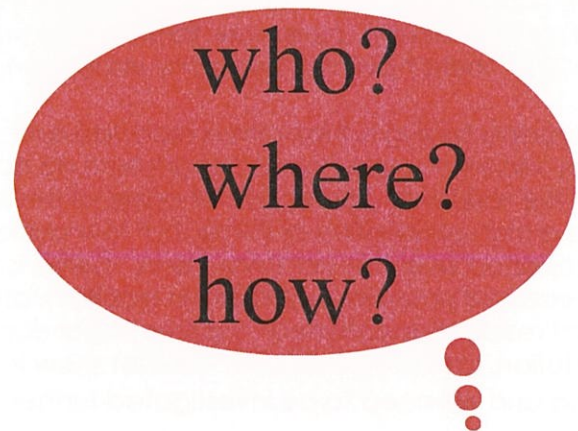
- Cooperative & active management company of nearby apartment complex
- No active block group; neighbors don't communicate
- Physical/social barriers (E.g. primary language differences)
- No relationships with tenants in apartments down the street



## Policies, Ordinance & Procedures

Community members voiced a concern for community safety and crime prevention because they observed and/or experienced the following:

- Vehicle break-ins and theft for cars parked in the lot
- Prostitution & drug sales happening late at night, in & near the lot
- Lack of knowledge of where (or to whom) to report incidences
- Lack of police patrol



# chapter 3: problem analysis

## Crime Statistics

The charts to the right show crime statistics for the whole Silver City neighborhood, although the following are the statistics specific to the lot (or on a property adjacent to it):

2011 -

(3) assaults

(1) robbery

(1) locked vehicle entry

2012 -

(2) locked vehicle entry

(2) locked vehicle theft

(2) theft

2013\* -

(1) burglary

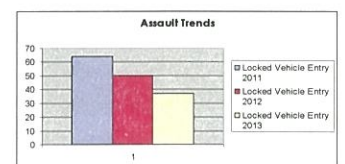
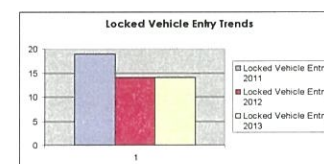
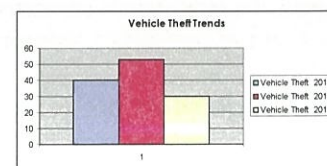
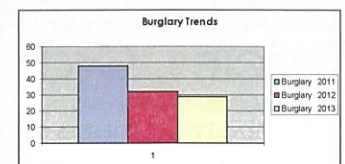
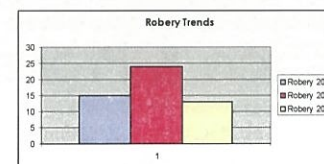
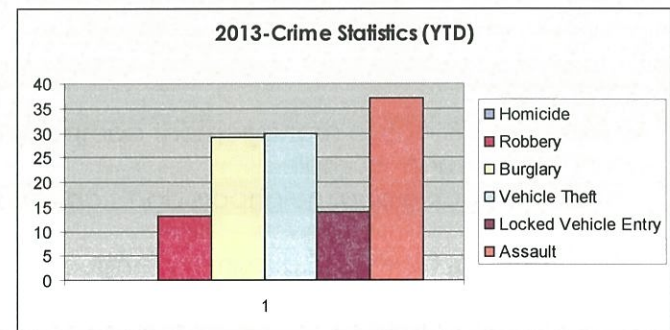
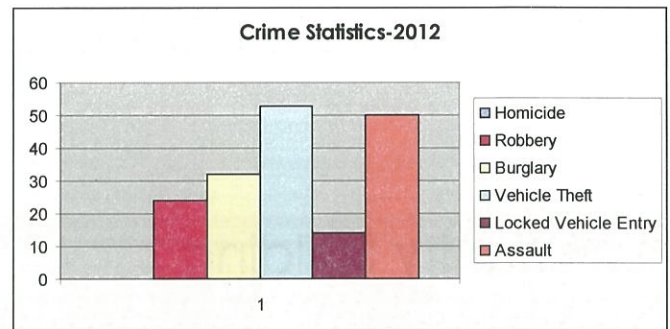
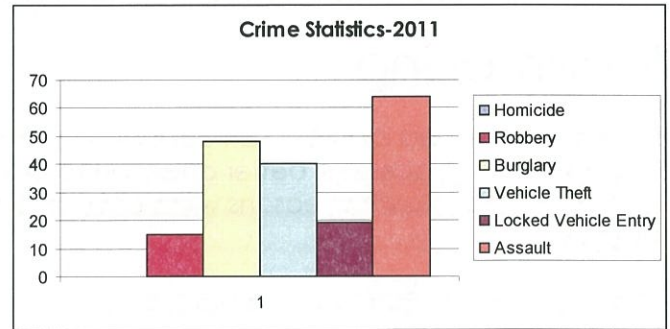
\*Comparative conclusions may not be drawn for 2013 data, as the year is incomplete

## Findings

Compared to all of Silver City (the neighborhood), the crimes reported most frequently at or near the parking lot are more targeted. Appropriately, crimes that are associated with vehicles are the ones that are more prominent at or near the lot where vehicles park. It is worth noting that though there were three assaults reported in 2011, there have not been any since then.

The overarching finding is that crimes reported and tracked by the Milwaukee Police Department do not align with the residents' perception of crime at this lot. There was a high perception of crime, but few crimes actually reported over the last three years. Crime is likely over-perceived or under-reported. In addition, other crimes that residents mentioned - such as illegal dumping, prostitution, and drug use/sales - do not show in this crime data and will need to be investigated further.

## Silver City Crime Statistics





# chapter 3: problem analysis

## CPTED Site Analysis

### First Generation CPTED

#### TERRITORIALITY

Goal: A clearly defined space with "legitimate users" who feel ownership over the lot

Users: People who park in the lot often do not have a direct line of sight to it, and those who can see it do not park in it

Ownership: The City owns the land, but is not present as often as the neighbors are

#### ACCESS CONTROL

Goal: Define users of the lot via entry/exit points

Vehicles: Each entrance/exit is accessible from the road (Pierce St), though there is no demarcation of a direction in which traffic should flow

Pedestrians: The back fence that connects to the apartment parking/alley provides an entry/exit point, but the fence is in disrepair and is therefore unclear

#### IMAGE

Goal: Proper management and maintenance of the lot

Short-term: Grass is mowed; Neighbors do clean-ups in the lot, but there is no garbage can; Some nearby properties could improve curb appeal

Long-term: Some signs and all parking lines have faded, making it seem as though management is not concerned about the property; this is a cycle that neighbors have noticed throughout the years

#### NATURAL SURVEILLANCE

Goal: Have "eyes on the street" and a design that makes people feel visible

Physical: Lack of sufficient lighting, particularly toward the back of the lot; neighbors on each side of the lot have placed fences that prevent natural surveillance

Social: Many neighbors observed from their own homes, but few know each other and communicate with one another

"One year from now.. I'd like to see a clean parking lot. New signs, clean paint lines, trash bins, new back fence, and a sign that states its under 24 hour surveillance or part of the neighborhood crime watch. A lot that looks tended to, instead of one created decades ago and let to become 'abandoned' looking. With that comes less shady activity, prostitution and break ins. Sends a nice message about the street, does not encourages crime."- Pierce St Neigh-

### First Generation Advanced

#### INCOMPATIBLE LAND USES

Goal: Ensure that the use of the parking lot is compatible with surrounding uses

Users: Most homeowners nearby do not use the lot

Uses: Without this lot, there would not be enough parking for tenants from nearby apartments

#### MOVEMENT PREDICTORS

Goal: Design predictable routes that are visible

Lighting: Alley/parking area behind the lot, as well as the north corners of the lot are not well-lit; the pathway through the fence is unexpected at night

#### ACTIVITY SUPPORT

The design of the lot, and its surroundings, currently matches its use. Residents nearby are able to use the parking lot for their vehicles.

#### DISPLACEMENT

Goal: Minimize conflict by intentionally placing conflicting activities in appropriate locations

Place: Residents witness drug use and prostitution associated with cars parked in the lot

Time: Residents witness drug use and prostitution typically after midnight



# chapter 3: problem analysis

## CPTED Site Analysis

### Second Generation CPTED

#### CAPACITY

Goal: *Ensure that the lot is properly supporting its intended use*

Parking: Vehicles must have a sticker and parking attendants are diligent about checking

Other uses: Perception of unwanted activities (e.g. prostitution, drug use) has reached a tipping point, but the data (numbers) don't back it up

#### COHESION

Goal: *Enhance the network between residents, businesses, and community stakeholders*

Block Club: None exists, and neighbors indicated that they would like one

Landlord compact: Years ago one existed for property owners on Pierce Street, but has since dissipated

#### CONNECTIVITY

Goal: *Connect local stakeholders to a wider net of support*

City services: Only about half of the neighbors who participated in the site audit knew where to report lights that are out, non-emergency crimes, etc.

Neighborhood resources: Only about half of the neighbors who participated in the site audit knew about the institutional assets/resources nearby

#### CULTURE

Goal: *Develop a sense of community where people care about who and what they're watching by providing cultural activities*

Block level: Residents expressed an interest in having a block party

Community level: Only some neighbors were aware of nearby concerts, festivals, and other events happening in the area

"Ten Years from now: More planting, gardens and trees. Garden islands in the lot. Something that themes the neighborhood, banners or sculptures. Maybe creative ground stencils highlighting the area. This parking lot IS part of the neighborhood and services our community, it should be safe and 'part of the surrounding area'. At this time I hope break-ins are rare and the lot is used more by our neighbors."- Pierce ST Neighbor



# chapter 4: strategies

## Recomendations

Embedded in the following recommendations is input from a plan created by students from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's (UWM) School of Architecture and Urban Planning. These students conducted a study of the Pierce Street corridor in the spring of 2013 and highlighted this parking lot in their analysis and recommendations.

### ACCESS CONTROL & MOVEMENT PREDICTORS

Work with the City and adjacent property owners to remediate the back fence, which is in disrepair; provide a clear pathway for pedestrians through it

### IMAGE & TERRITORIALITY

#### Short-term:

Work with the City to add a garbage can

Neighbors can establish a regular block clean-up schedule

Neighbors can engage with LBWN to access resources for home improvements, and participate in the neighborhood-wide Most Improved Home Contest; work together to present a unified image with curb appeal & landscaping

Neighbors willing to lend their expertise in building, design, and horticulture can collaborate to beautify the lot with native landscaping and stormwater best management practices such as bioswales and rain gardens

Long-term: Work with the City to address maintenance issues - fresh signs and painted parking lines/icons - which should lessen crime as it has in past years; possibly work to include permeable (porous) surfaces in the areas that are used for snow piles during the winter

### NATURAL SURVEILLANCE (Physical)

Work with City and adjacent property owners to light all areas on the edge of the lot

Neighboring residents could use natural screening barriers (as opposed to closed fences) to separate their property from the lot

Establish a relationship with Straightway Vineyard Church, who owns the former Falk Brewery - two large parcels to the north of the lot, currently bordered by large trees that block sightlines

### COHESION

#### Block Club:

Neighboring residents can form a block club to stay in communication, have a block party, and share in positive community activities

Appoint two (preferably one bilingual) block captains/leaders

#### Landlord compact:

LBWN, LISC, and District Two (MPD) can reconvene landlords along Pierce Street, especially between Layton Boulevard and 35th St.

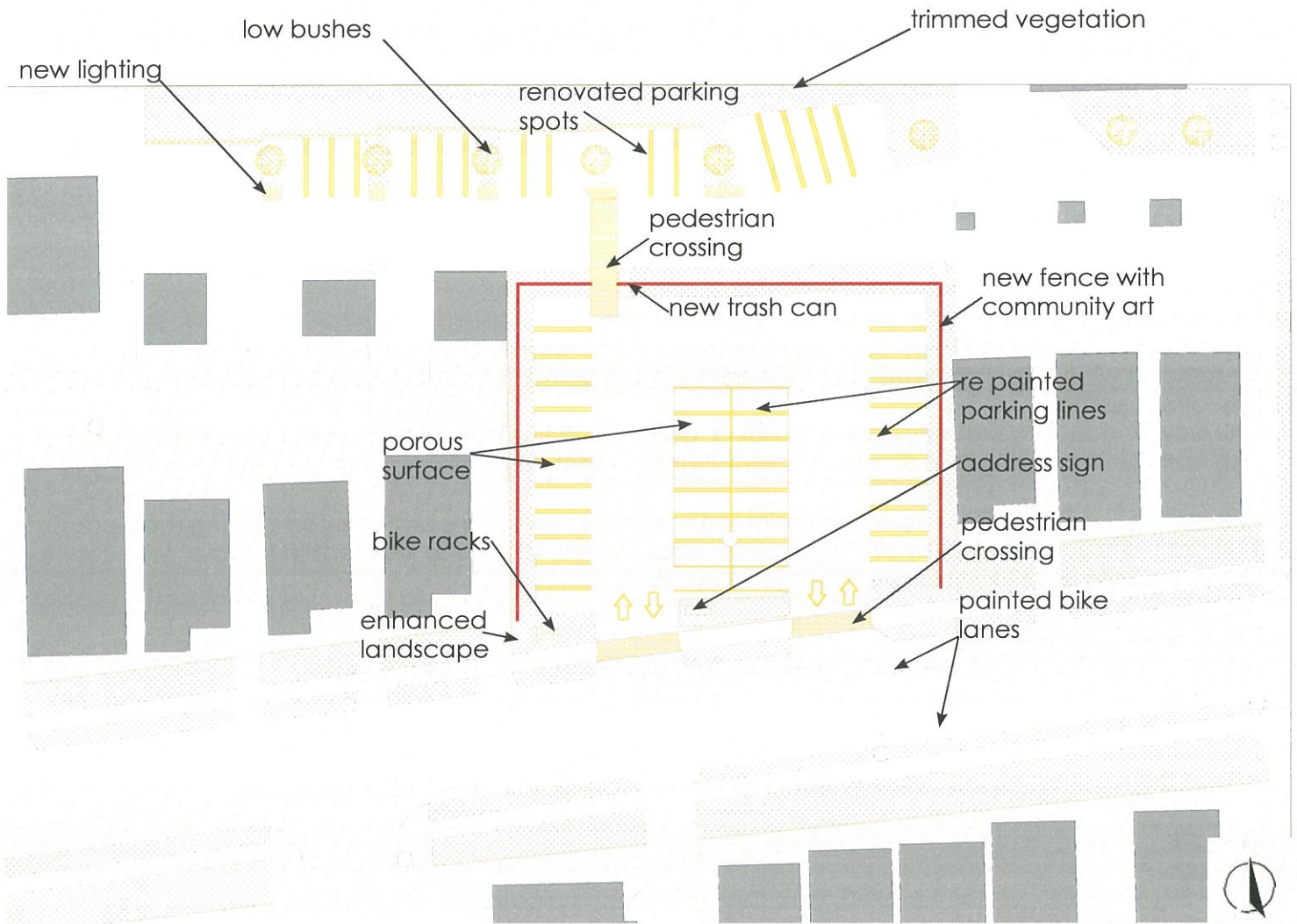
### CONNECTIVITY

LBWN, District Two (MPD), and current residents can share resources with those who would like training on how to report lights that are out, non-emergency crimes, etc.

Block captains/leaders to serve as point persons to LBWN and District Two to share information regarding nearby concerts, festivals, and other events happening in the area



# 2914 west pierce street transformation plan



UWM Urban Planning students summarized the parking lot by stating that it creates a deadzone in community fabric and though it is well-used, it “lacks aesthetic value to the community.” The lot will have a brighter future ahead if active residents mobilize to actualize their vision, a relationship is fostered with the City department that manages the property, and the landlord compact of previous years is reignited.

The impetus for these improvements is the same as the one for this project: the lot's neighboring residents. As noted in the Winter 2005 Journal of Architectural and Planning Research:  
 “Expertise then dominates experience... Where people are empowered, on the other hand, natural policing is likely to emerge – since there is an innate tendency in the human psyche to territorialise. It is not the police but communities of like-minded individuals who maintain the peace. “