



May 30, 2024

Zoning and Neighborhood Development Committee
Milwaukee City Hall
200 E. Wells St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Support for Adoption of Bruce and Pierce Sub-District Plan,
File No. 230959

Members of the Zoning and Neighborhood Development Committee,

The Menomonee Valley Business Improvement District, which represents the nearly 150 businesses and thousands of employees within the Menomonee River Valley, supports the adoption of the Bruce and Pierce Sub-District Plan. This area is a relatively new addition to our BID (#26), and this plan represents the result of outreach and engagement of area businesses, property owners, and nearby residents to understand the strengths and opportunities of the sub-district and develop a vision for moving it forward together.

The Bruce and Pierce Streets businesses asked to join the BID after they began dealing with issues that resulted from opening of a multi-story residential building and a school within this historically industrial area. Since BID inclusion in 2019, we have been working to understand the issues in the area in partnership with the City of Milwaukee. Our goal is to help businesses that call this area home, support and grow good jobs and continue to thrive, while employees, nearby residents, and people who come to the area for fishing, kayaking, or other recreational activities feel welcomed and safe in this part of our community.

BID 26 engaged with the City of Milwaukee to co-fund a study on the needs of this sub-district. Through multiple public meetings, focus groups, and one-on-one meetings, we heard consistent themes from those who work, live, or recreate in this area: this is a good area to do business, it is accessible to the nearby workforce as well as logistics for moving products; the Burnham Canal is a unique asset, and the area is also a cycling route for residents. However, there are real and perceived safety issues: the streets and areas under viaducts are often dark and foreboding, illegal dumping is an issue, as is speeding, and land use conflicts exist around the school and apartment building that make residential/industrial co-existence challenging.

OFFICERS

CHAIR Joyce Koker, Harley-Davidson
VICE-CHAIR Tracey Heber, Stamm Technologies
SECRETARY Dan Sterk, Regal-Rexnord
TREASURER Jeff Morgan, Allied Insulation Supply

MEMBERS

Claudia Paetsch, Marquette University
Larry Stern, Standard Electric Supply Co

231 W MICHIGAN ST P421
MILWAUKEE, WI 53203

TheValleyMKE.org

Recommendations in the plan were the result of significant input from many engaged stakeholders throughout the district and in the surrounding neighborhood. They include: addressing safety concerns, improving streetscape and intersections, improving access to the Burnham Canal, and making zoning consistent to support existing businesses while preventing additional future land use conflicts.

The BID and the City have already begun looking into implementation steps. For instance, we are working with businesses and MPD District 2 on safety issues and planning for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) walks of the district. We have begun discussions on a lighting study to look at improving dark areas. The City's Commercial Corridors team and the BID have launched a matching Exterior Enhancements grant to match the costs of property owner improvements such as new windows, exterior lighting, landscaping, and other measures that make the streets feel safer and more welcoming. The BID and several businesses in the district are also participating in cleanups and painting of some public infrastructure to brighten the entryways.

The Bruce and Pierce Streets area is a strong part of the Valley and our City, full of businesses that have been here for decades making products shipped around the world, as well as a place for start-up businesses who have found a place to put down roots and grow. It is also home to a remarkable project transforming a contaminated canal into a restored wetland, which will provide wildlife habitat and a natural amenity for the greater neighborhood. While there is much work to be done (as outlined in the plan), the base from which we are starting is strong, and we are excited to be working together to make this area an even stronger and more vibrant part of our Milwaukee community.

We are grateful for the Common Council's support of all the planning efforts in the Menomonee River Valley that have led to its transformation from a veritable wasteland into a national model of sustainable development and encourage your full support of this plan to continue these efforts.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce Koker".

Joyce Koker, Chair

Business Improvement District #26

