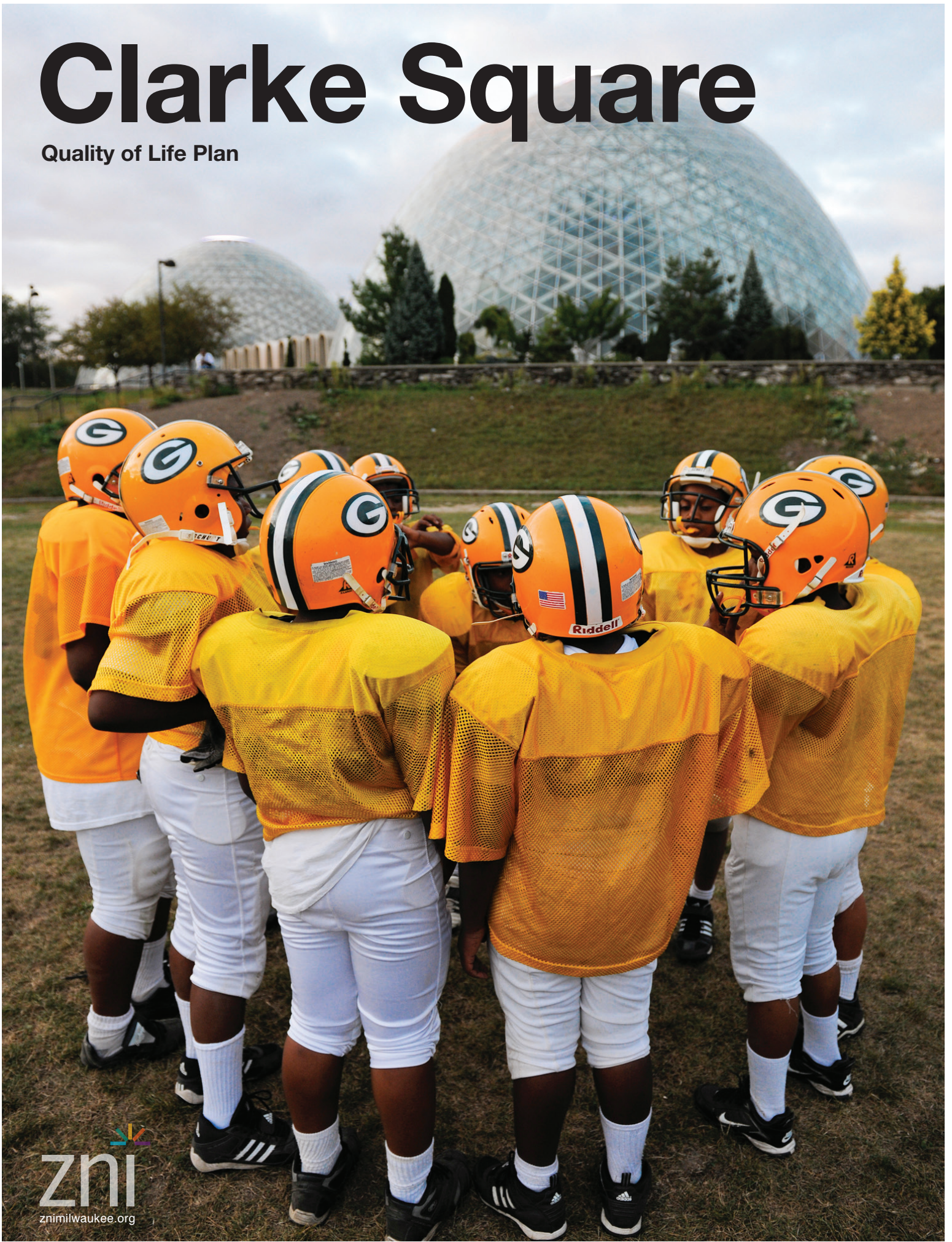


# Clarke Square

Quality of Life Plan





**Clarke Square** is a neighborhood of many riches. One of the most diverse communities in Milwaukee, it is home to Journey House, a community-based organization that strengthens families, as well as service agencies such as the Milwaukee Christian Center and the Lao American Organization. The community boasts the Milwaukee County Mitchell Park Conservatory—where visitors can enter the world’s only beehive-shaped glass domes—and Cesar Chavez Drive, a commercial strip that draws Milwaukee’s Latino community and others to shop, eat authentic Mexican food, and enjoy the vibrant atmosphere. A gateway to Milwaukee’s Near South Side, Clarke Square is located near the emerging economic engine of Menomonee Valley and international tourist attractions such as the Potawatomi Casino, Miller Park (home of the Milwaukee Brewers), and the Harley-Davidson Museum.

The Zilber Neighborhood Initiative in Clarke Square strives to build on these powerful assets, drawing on the skills and energy of neighborhood residents. At the kick-off event for the initiative on April 30, 2009, more than 435 residents shared their vision for the community. They were asked to complete three sentences: “The best thing about Clarke Square is...”; “Something I would like to change about Clarke Square is...”; and “Something that is needed in Clarke Square is...” Residents’ responses became the basis for the Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative Quality of Life Plan.

Neighbors, community leaders, and agency partners that represent Clarke Square’s many cultures guided the process. Active participants met for several hours each week, giving up summer nights to craft specific strategies. For the first time in decades, Clarke Square stakeholders came together to develop and endorse a unified plan for improving the quality of life.

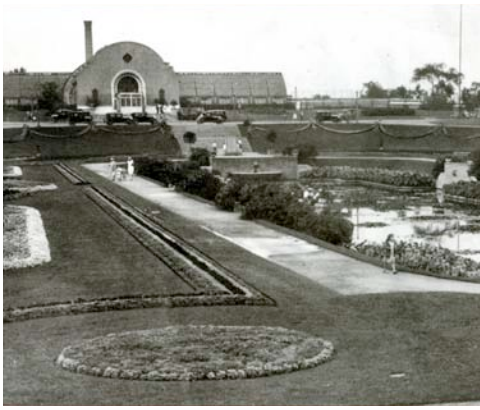
The inclusiveness of the ZNI planning process has energized and mobilized residents and other community leaders. It also has stimulated

a new spirit of neighborliness and commitment to community. Marta Alamo no longer cleans the street in front of her home across from Mitchell Park by herself. Now, young football players and cheerleaders cross the street to help her. More people come out to support the efforts of law enforcement to promote neighborhood safety. More Cesar Chavez Drive businesses are improving our streetscape and growing their companies.

Clarke Square residents are passionate about their community. With passion comes commitment and, together, they lead to achievement. The mantra of “passion, commitment, achievement” will drive the implementation of our plan.

Through this initiative, residents plan to spread the word that Clarke Square is not just a place to pass through on the way to somewhere else, but a great community in which to live and work. We believe that this is Clarke Square’s moment. Join us as we work together to achieve our vision of Clarke Square as a neighborhood of choice in Milwaukee.

# Clarke Square



**HISTORIC MITCHELL PARK**

*Photo is property and courtesy of the Milwaukee County Historical Society*



**HISTORIC MITCHELL PARK**

*Photo is property and courtesy of the Milwaukee County Historical Society*



**HISTORICAL PHOTO OF MEMONONEE VALLEY INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR**

## History

**One of the most diverse neighborhoods in Milwaukee, Clarke Square has a rich history that is closely linked to the nearby Menomonee Valley industrial corridor.**

The neighborhood is named for Norman and Lydia Clarke, who in 1837 purchased a parcel of land immediately west of Walker's Point, one of three original settlements that eventually formed the city of Milwaukee. Clarke's Addition, as it was known in those days, went largely undeveloped until the late 1800s when Walker's Point had absorbed all the residents it could accommodate. Newcomers moved into Clarke Square, building on the vacant lots and reaching the neighborhood's western boundary of Layton Boulevard by 1900.

These early settlers had their roots in Germany, Scandinavia, the British Isles, and the eastern United States. They were drawn by the jobs to be found in the Menomonee Valley, located just north of Clarke Square. Giant companies such as International Harvester and the Milwaukee Road, along with smaller local ventures, employed thousands of blue-collar workers. Many of them walked to work from their homes in Clarke Square. Enterprising merchants and tradesmen located their businesses within the neighborhood, adding a commercial element to the mix.

Longfellow School — one of the oldest public school buildings in Milwaukee — dates to 1886. Mitchell Park began to take shape a few years later. As it developed, the neighborhood became known for its shops, tree-lined streets and, perhaps most of all, its churches, many of which still stand.

Clarke Square continued to grow until the 1930s, when the Great Depression put a stop to development. After World War II, the children of older residents began leaving the neighborhood, making room for another influx of newcomers. Hispanic families, many with links to tannery workers who were

recruited from Mexico during the 1920s, began moving in during the 1960s. By 1990, Latinos made up 35 percent of the neighborhood population and by 2000 the figure was above 60 percent. Immigrants from Southeast Asia, such as the Hmong from Laos, started arriving in force in the 1990s.

A variety of social service institutions serve these newcomers and others. They include Milwaukee Christian Center, founded in 1967, and Journey House, which was established in 1969. MCC offers programs for young people and seniors, as well as an emergency food pantry and a housing improvement program. Journey House works to empower children, adolescents, and adults through education, leadership, athletic, and workforce development programs.

The relative newcomers to Clarke Square did not have the employment opportunities that drew their predecessors to the neighborhood. Labor unrest and industrial decline during the 1960s and '70s drove most major employers out of the Menomonee Valley, leaving it a vast brownfield that was designated as a "landfill" by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

In the last 10-15 years, however, the Valley has been undergoing a revitalization. Palermo Villa, Inc., P&H Mining Equipment, the Potawatomi Casino and Miller Park provide jobs and contribute to the economic health of adjoining neighborhoods, including Clarke Square. A historic tannery complex has been rehabilitated into offices and condominiums.

The rejuvenation of the Menomonee Valley, the creation of a Business Improvement District on Cesar Chavez Drive, and the involvement of numerous organizations and individuals in the Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative all point to a promising future for a community older than the city of Milwaukee itself.

## Catalytic Projects

The following catalytic projects meet community needs identified by neighborhood residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. Together they will improve the infrastructure and cohesiveness of the community.

### 1 Journey House Longfellow Center for Family Learning and Youth Athletics

Journey House, a results-oriented community organization, and MPS Longfellow, a high-performing school, will build a \$6 million addition to Longfellow to provide education and recreation services to residents. This joint facility meets the community demand for increased services, classroom and educational space, indoor sports venues and recreational areas, and green space. Journey House has secured \$2.75 million in private funding towards this capital campaign. The project is “shovel-ready” and will create immediate local jobs.

### 2 NFL Football Field in Mitchell Park

The NFL Green Bay Packers donated the former Nitschke Field Turf, a \$300,000 synthetic field, to Journey House. Journey House will raise \$450,000 to install and maintain the field in Milwaukee County’s Mitchell Park. National research demonstrates that high-quality football fields are catalysts for building community partnerships, increasing property values, and fostering economic development.

### 3 Mitchell Park

A comprehensive study will be conducted on how to design Mitchell Park to meet the needs of an active, competitive sports community and support the emerging neighborhood interest in urban gardens. The plan will provide guidance on using open space for planting gardens and creating playing fields for organized football, soccer, and basketball, as well as creating spaces for other sports and year-round family recreation.

### 4 Sports-Plex

A “Sports-Plex” multipurpose complex will be developed in Mitchell Park, including a large gymnasium that can be used for athletic competitions or community events, and be available for rental for large gatherings such as family reunions and quinceaneras. The Sports-Plex will connect to other recreational destinations, such as the Hank Aaron State Trail, and make available year-round sports and recreational activities to community members. This is in the pre-development phase.

### 5 Skateboard Park

A skateboard park will be built in Mitchell Park to meet the growing demand of young people. This is in the pre-development phase.

### 6 Bike and Pedestrian Pathways

To promote a bike-friendly community for youth and families, bicycle lanes and walking paths will be created. A facility where residents can build and repair bikes and skateboards also will be created.

### 7 Clarke Square Park Revitalization

Clarke Square Park will be revitalized as a safe, open space for children and families to congregate. The park will be designed to include benches, tables, drinking fountains, and other amenities that promote playing and gathering. The pavilion will be updated and expanded to accommodate neighborhood and family events.

### 8 Milwaukee Christian Center

Milwaukee Christian Center will launch a capital campaign to build a new center on its current site that would include a 48-unit senior housing complex, an expanded food pantry, indoor gymnasium, and space for community services.

### 9 Hmong American Peace Academy

Hmong American Peace Academy will expand its campus from K-6 to K-12 to effectively prepare 900 students for the demands of a competitive global economy. This project responds to the significant increase in student enrollment and parents’ desire to continue their children’s education at the academy.

### 10 Urban Careers Institute

The institute is an employment and training program that will place 75 adults in jobs each year. It meets the need for customized training and employment-readiness preparation in the areas of finance, science, engineering, coaching and officiating, urban ecology, economic development, customer service, and office technology.

### 11 New Energy Star Homes

The Milwaukee Christian Center Youth Build program will build three new Energy Star homes, which will provide affordable housing opportunities for residents. Neighborhood youth in Youth Build, an intensive carpentry skills training and educational program, will build these homes.

### 12 Welcome to Clarke Square

Four Clarke Square gateway markers will be installed to market the community as one of the gateways to the Near South Side and tourist destinations such as Potawatomi Bingo Casino, Harley-Davidson Museum, Miller Park, and Mitchell Park Domes. In addition, a local artist competition will be held to design a logo and banners that promote Clarke Square as a neighborhood of choice for families and businesses. The banners will be displayed throughout the neighborhood to demonstrate pride in its diverse cultures and attractions.

### 13 Cesar Chavez Business Improvement District

A new initiative will improve co-operation among businesses and attract new development in the Cesar Chavez Business Improvement District. The Cesar Chavez BID also will encourage commercial and residential property owners to invest in their properties and the community, improve façades, and attract businesses that are willing to help improve the business community.

### 14 Cesar Chavez Drive & National Avenue

As part of the City of Milwaukee’s Near South Side Comprehensive Plan, this active corner of Clarke Square is seeking to attract committed business partners. This business development will become a cornerstone of the neighborhood, which is located just blocks away from Wisconsin’s largest tourist attraction: Potawatomi Bingo Casino.

# Clarke Square





LONGFELLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



LONGFELLOW CLASSROOM



JOURNEY HOUSE LONGFELLOW CENTER FOR FAMILY LEARNING AND YOUTH ATHLETICS RENDERING

# Clarke Square

## Strategic Plan

### 1: Community-School Partnership

**Provide an academic and athletic facility that honors Clarke Square residents and provides adequate and appropriate space for families to learn and play**

Longfellow School, the largest elementary school in Wisconsin, and Journey House, a community-based organization, are in the midst of a \$6 million capital campaign to create the Journey House Longfellow Center for Family Learning and Youth Athletics. The new facility will enable Journey House and Longfellow to share educational classrooms, flexible meeting and program space, and a youth gymnasium. It will ensure consistent collaboration among staff, teachers, families, students, and other support staff. It also will help meet growing community demand for services and activities, and relieve overcrowding at the school. The project is “shovel-ready” and will provide jobs immediately for community residents.

#### **1.1 Establish the Journey House Longfellow Center for Family Learning and Youth Athletics as the community campus for programs, services, and activities through all stages of life**

The Center will provide opportunities for families to improve academic and English language skills in a rigorous academic program; pursue a career path through workforce readiness and training programs; develop leadership and athletic skills; foster discipline and character; engage in enrichment activities; expand their social network; and engage in improving their neighborhood.



JOURNEY HOUSE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM



JOURNEY HOUSE CLASSROOM



TEACHER WORKING WITH STUDENT

# Clarke Square

## 2: Lifelong Learning

**Support high academic performance at neighborhood schools, encourage post-secondary education, and promote lifelong learning**

At Longfellow School, which serves more than 900 pupils, students are holding their own academically against their peers in other Milwaukee public schools. However, there is room for improvement. Longfellow students lagged from 10 to 40 percentage points, depending on the grade and subject, behind state averages on the Wisconsin standardized test results for 2009. At the same time, 48 percent of residents over age 25 in the Clarke Square area lack a high-school diploma. We will expect children, young people, and adults to commit to lifelong learning.

**2.1 Prepare students to compete in the global economy by promoting innovative approaches and state-of-the-art facilities at Longfellow and other neighborhood schools**

Research-based practices are more likely to succeed. Research shows that quality after-school programs reduce the risk of truancy, performing poorly in school, depression, and substance abuse. Clarke Square is committed to after-school programs that increase students' cognitive and social skills and provide opportunities for community service. Studies also show that expanded school days, year-round schools, parent participation, and a rigorous curriculum are keys to academic progress. By instituting best practices in education, we will increase the rate of promotion to the next grade level, post-secondary education, or career path.

**2.2 Support campus expansion of Hmong American Peace Academy**

Hmong American Peace Academy (HAPA) is a Milwaukee charter school that serves about 400 pre-kindergarten through 8th-grade students. Responding to a significant increase in student enrollment and parents' desire for their children to continue their education at the academy, HAPA will expand its campus to serve students through 12th grade.

**2.3 Increase adult English Language Learner (ELL) speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills to provide greater access to employment opportunities and post-secondary education**

Attending ELL classes exposes residents to multiple cultures and traditions, while paving the way for them to attain U.S. citizenship and better jobs.

**2.4 Increase the number of university and college courses offered in Clarke Square and facilitate student transition to main campuses**

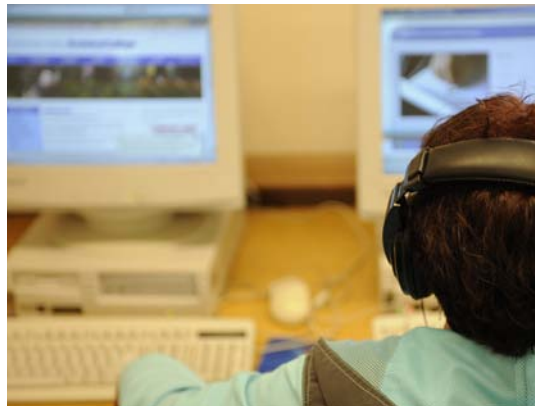
Currently, Journey House is a delegate agency of Milwaukee Area Technical College and offers ELL and Adult Basic Education (ABE)/General Education Development (GED) in Clarke Square. Mount Mary College also offers computer classes in the community. To improve access to higher education, we will encourage Marquette University, University Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Cardinal Stritch University, and other institutions to hold classes in our community.

**2.5 Provide education and mentoring opportunities for teens and their parents to reduce teen parenthood**

**2.6 Help parents understand and cope with the unique developmental stages of their children, from prenatal to young adulthood**



JOURNEY HOUSE CLASSROOM



JOURNEY HOUSE JOB TRAINING



NEW ENERGY STAR HOMES

# Clarke Square

## 3: Employment and Job Training

### Match employment opportunities for teens and adults with employers' current and emerging workforce needs

About 20 percent of area residents who wanted work were unemployed in 2009—twice the national average. Providing residents access to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages is an important step toward boosting the economic well being of our neighborhood.

#### 3.1 Create the Urban Careers Institute to increase job skills and workforce readiness in existing and emerging industries

The Institute will expose residents to careers, provide job preparation and workforce readiness training, and facilitate job placement or transition to post-secondary education. Our focus will be on careers in the areas of finance, science, engineering, coaching and officiating, urban ecology, economic development, customer service, and office technology.

The Institute also will provide workshops for residents who do not seek certification, but have specific interest areas that they want to pursue. It also will offer workshops on resume writing, job seeking, job application, interviewing, and job retention.

We also will explore the potential of expanding residential construction/deconstruction programs for specific populations, such as former prisoners and adults over age 25.

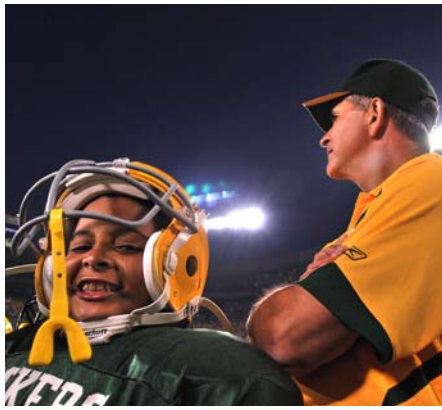
#### 3.2 Increase employment opportunities in Menomonee Valley

We will work with Menomonee Valley Partners to identify jobs and train potential employees in areas identified by employers. In addition, we plan to provide people with the tools necessary to sustain long-term employment.

#### 3.3 Increase number of participants in Youth Build residential construction/life skills training program for young people ages 16-24

Youth Build is a workforce development program for at-risk young adults. The program exposes young people to the fields of construction and entrepreneurship, while building homes. We are committed to building three affordable, Energy Star homes. The community will develop a mentoring system for Youth Build members, and encourage them to obtain GEDs and transition to the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership's Big Step apprenticeship program or the workforce.





NFL FOOTBALL FIELD AT MITCHELL PARK



MITCHELL PARK DOMES



SPORTS-PLEX

# Clarke Square

## 4: Youth, Parks, and Recreation

**Offer the community ample access to appropriate spaces for organized sports, family recreation programs, and youth development activities**

In Clarke Square, more than one-third of residents are under the age of 18. It is important to the community as a whole for these young people to have access to engaging, character-building activities, reducing their vulnerability to crime, gangs, and drugs.

### 4.1 Appropriately fund and build capacity for youth development programs

The community recognizes the importance of positively engaged youth. There are 60 to 100 children per block living in Clarke Square; consequently, sustaining and growing funding for youth development programs is paramount to the plan. Building capacity for high-quality youth development programs and organized sports will assist in increasing public safety, improving graduation rates, and developing healthy children.

### 4.2 Redesign Mitchell Park to meet the needs of an active, competitive sports community and support the emerging neighborhood interest in urban gardens

In addition to the famed Mitchell Park Domes, the park boasts acres of space that can accommodate the varying interests of neighborhood residents. We plan to provide play fields for organized, football, soccer, and basketball, as well as other sports and family recreation activities. At the same time, we envision flower and vegetable gardens gracing the park. To determine how best to design the space, we will undertake a comprehensive study of the needs of park users.

### 4.3 Install an NFL-quality football field in Mitchell Park that serves as a community infrastructure anchor and galvanizing force for healthy children and families

National research demonstrates that high-quality football fields are catalysts for building community partnerships, increasing property values, and fostering economic development. The installation of a \$300,000 synthetic field donated by the NFL's Green Bay Packers will allow local youth to run, pass, and kick on the same turf designed for professional players. The field will help establish Mitchell Park as a hub that draws large numbers of children and families to play, cheer, and watch the games, thus increasing safety for everyone. Playing organized football will help develop skills, discipline, and character in team members and cheerleaders.

### 4.4 Create a multipurpose sports and recreational complex in Mitchell Park that connects to other recreational destinations such as the Hank Aaron State Trail

Building a multipurpose "Sports-Plex" that includes a large gymnasium for athletic competitions and can be rented out to community and family groups will provide a venue for residents to participate in indoor sports and recreational activities throughout the year. Affordable rentals for winter sports will be available, such as snowboarding, cross-country skiing, and sledding.

The Sports-Plex would offer easy access to the Hank Aaron State Trail, which provides a continuous connection through dedicated trails and marked streets between the lakefront and Milwaukee's west end.



SKATEBOARD PARK



ORGANIZED YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAMS



MITCHELL PARK DOMES AT NIGHT

# Clarke Square

## **4.5 Build a skateboard park**

Dozens of communities throughout the Midwest have created skateboard parks where young people can practice skills, stay fit, and have fun. Our youth have asked for a neighborhood skateboard park, and we will work to fulfill that request.

## **4.6 Promote a bike-friendly community for youth and families**

Bicycle lanes and walking paths make it feasible for residents to travel in a way that is both healthy and better for the environment. We will advocate for these paths, and create a facility where people can build and repair their bikes and skateboards.

## **4.7 Revitalize Clarke Square Park as a safe, open space for children and families to congregate**

In addition to updating the Clarke Square Park pavilion, we will redesign the park to include benches, tables, drinking fountains, and other amenities that promote playing and gathering for neighborhood and family events and activities.

## **4.8 Provide appropriate indoor gymnasium space to engage children and families year-round**

The Clarke Square community does not have enough gym space to meet the intensive demands of its residents. In addition to the gym at the Journey House Longfellow Center for Family Learning and Youth Athletics, we will work to provide additional regulation-sized basketball courts and other indoor space to practice and play.

## **4.9 Increase adult recreation programs that meet the needs of residents**

We will pursue opportunities to partner with the Milwaukee Public Schools Department of Recreation and Community Services to offer activities at Longfellow and other neighborhood sites.

## **4.10 Increase health and wellness of Clarke Square residents**

Recreational activities are not the only way to attain health and wellness. By increasing access to fresh produce and healthy foods, and serving nutritious food at home and at community events, we will help achieve this goal.



BLOCK CLUB LEADER MRS. TYNA



RESIDENTS



BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS



MPD COMMUNITY OFFICER JESUS GLORIA

# Clarke Square

## 5: Social Connections

**Establish new relationships and build on existing connections to develop a sense of belonging and community pride in Clarke Square**

The vitality of any neighborhood depends on the connections individuals make with one another. Clarke Square has many active block clubs, associations, and community organizations that foster relationship-building. We will build on this foundation to strengthen the collective voice of Clarke Square and advocate more effectively for the neighborhood.

**5.1 Establish the Clarke Square Neighborhood Association comprised of existing and new block clubs, as well as interested individuals**

Achieving many of our goals depends on people working together for the common good. The Clarke Square Neighborhood Association will foster interaction and cooperation. A community website also will increase communication among residents and promote neighborhood services, programs, and activities.

## 6: Public Safety

**Ensure that Clarke Square is a safe place to live, learn, work, play, worship, shop, and serve**

While crime rates have declined in Clarke Square during the past three years due to anti-crime efforts such as the federally funded Weed and Seed initiative, residents continue to express concern about violent crime, gang activity, drug trafficking, prostitution, and persistent "hot spots." We will work to make our neighborhood safe for residents and visitors alike.

**6.1 Create safe passageways for pedestrians, bikers, and motorists**

To better understand where pedestrians and bicyclists—especially children going to and from school—are at risk, we plan to conduct a traffic study that will look at speeding, uncontrolled intersections, and school safety zones. We also will advocate for bicycle lanes, walking paths, and safe well-marked passageways from Clarke Square to Menomonee Valley.

**6.2 Sustain Weed and Seed to reduce crime and promote assets in the neighborhood**

Building on the successes of the Weed and Seed program during the past four years, we will work to improve collaboration with law enforcement agencies, including the Milwaukee Police Department and Milwaukee County Sheriff's office, and cooperate in identifying nuisance properties.

**6.3 Eliminate graffiti**

Eliminating graffiti sends a signal to the community that vandalism will not be tolerated. We will encourage residents to report graffiti and provide opportunities for young people to channel their artistic talents into creating public art.

**6.4 Increase awareness of public safety trainings in English and Spanish**

The award-winning City of Milwaukee Landlord Training program teaches property owners how to keep illegal activity off their property. We will encourage participation in this and other public safety programs.

**6.5 Provide reintegration services for ex-offenders returning or relocating to Clarke Square, and support services for their families**

A new report shows that the number of prisoners in the U.S. has quadrupled over the past three decades. States spend over \$38 billion per year on prison costs, or more than \$134 per citizen. By promoting reentry programs, communities can help lower recidivism rates and dramatically reduce the fiscal and human costs of imprisonment.

We will establish partnerships to provide a support service network for residents re-entering the neighborhood, including providing help to obtain GEDs, ELL classes, driver's licenses, housing, employment, entrepreneurship, and mental health services. Non-violent offenders will be connected to community service opportunities. In addition, we will explore establishing a multi-purpose facility for ex-offenders in collaboration with Justice 2000, Milwaukee Police Department, Office of the District Attorney, and the Clarke Square Neighborhood Association.



WELCOME TO CLARKE SQUARE



MILWAUKEE CHRISTIAN CENTER



MILWAUKEE CHRISTIAN CENTER

# Clarke Square

## 7: Neighborhood Beautification

**Raise the visibility of Clarke Square by enhancing its curb appeal and streetscapes in a way that reflects and promotes the cultures of its diverse residents**

As one of the most diverse communities in Milwaukee, Clarke Square offers a multicultural array of shops, restaurants, churches, and community-based activities. Its proximity to the Menomonee Valley industrial corridor and tourist destinations such as Potawatomi Casino, Harley-Davidson Museum, Miller Park, and Mitchell Park Domes also make it an appealing place to live, work, and do business.

But in some respects, the neighborhood is a well-kept secret. We plan to change that by promoting and beautifying the community.

### 7.1 Clearly identify and market Clarke Square

We will erect four gateway markers at each corner of Clarke Square. A design competition will result in a new logo and banners promoting Clarke Square as a neighborhood of choice for families and businesses.

We also will work to:

**7.2 Enhance curb appeal by improving the exteriors of residential buildings and yards**

**7.3 Increase and improve tree canopy coverage by removing dead trees and planting new trees**

**7.4 Increase urban flower and vegetable gardens to beautify neighborhood and provide access to fresh, nutritious food**

**7.5 Promote Clarke Square as a neighborhood of choice — a family-friendly place to raise children and an attractive place to conduct and/or establish a new business**

**7.6 Provide incentives and recognition to residential property owners who go “above and beyond” to beautify their homes and blocks**

## 8: Housing

**Stabilize, promote, and preserve diverse housing options from affordable to market-rate to accommodate a wide-range of household incomes and family needs**

Clarke Square boasts a rich diversity of housing, including single-family homes, duplexes, and large apartment buildings. Distinctive and historic homes, such as those designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, are scattered throughout the neighborhood. Private independent living facilities and public housing meet the needs of seniors.

About half of our housing stock was built before 1897, making it much older on average than Milwaukee’s housing as a whole, and consequently more expensive to maintain. Housing sales in the neighborhood tumbled from their peak of 101 in 2005 to a low of 12 in 2008, though prices dropped during that period. At the same time, foreclosures increased. In 2008, foreclosures were filed on 5.3 percent of the one- and two-family residential buildings in the community—twice as many as the year before.

**8.1 Stabilize existing house by ensuring that residents have access to programs to prevent foreclosures**

**8.2 Hire a Housing Coordinator to provide support services for potential and current homeowners, including homebuyer counseling, homebuyer prequalification, credit and budget counseling, and general maintenance and improvement programs**

**8.3 Promote the Clarke Square neighborhood as a “place” for diverse housing types: single family, duplex, bungalow, Victorian, multi-family, and senior housing complexes**

**8.4 Support Milwaukee Christian Center’s efforts to build a 48-unit mixed-use independent and first-stage assisted living senior development in Clarke Square**

**8.5 Support Milwaukee Christian Center Youth Build to build three affordable, Energy Star homes**

**8.6 Identify and preserve specific unique and historic buildings or sites**



CESAR CHAVEZ DRIVE & NATIONAL AVENUE



MERCADO EL REY SUPERMARKET



MEXICAN CUISINE AT CHAVEZ DRIVE RESTAURANT

## 9: Economic Development

**We will foster community wealth by sustaining and growing businesses, and enhancing job creation and retention**

Per capita income in Clarke Square is only about two-thirds the city average. In addition, about 20 percent of the area's residents who want to work were unemployed in 2009—twice the national average.

Nevertheless, there is great potential for economic development in the community. For example, the Cesar Chavez Business Improvement District has helped bring a mix of thriving restaurants, grocery stores, fast food franchises, health clinics, and even a store that sells cowboy gear to Cesar Chavez Drive (16th Street). We will work to build on successes such as these.

### 9.1 Improve cooperation among local businesses and increase capacity to attract new business and real estate development

Plans include working with the Milwaukee Department of City Development to explore creating a Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) district; creating a Business Improvement District on National Avenue and Pierce Street (S 16th to S 27th Street); and seeking an official Main Street Milwaukee designation for the Cesar Chavez BID to increase funding opportunities and volunteer involvement in the business district.

### 9.2 Improve the aesthetics of blighted commercial areas by encouraging property owners to invest in their buildings and connecting them to resources for façade improvements

### 9.3 Grow businesses in Clarke Square by expanding their market opportunities and increasing their capacity to compete in a global market

Resources are available to help entrepreneurs start a business and to help business owners expand. We will connect business people to these resources and will work to better market neighborhood businesses. The result of these efforts will be more jobs, as well as needed products and services for the neighborhood.



These efforts are supported by the Zilber Family Foundation. In 2008, the Foundation announced a ten-year, \$50 million commitment to improve the quality of life in Milwaukee neighborhoods, starting with Lindsay Heights and Clarke Square.