

Layton Boulevard West

Quality of Life Plan





Layton Boulevard West is fast becoming a community of choice for families, young professionals, and small business owners. Bounded by Pierce Street on the north, Lincoln Avenue on the south, Layton Boulevard on the east, and Miller Park Way on the west, Layton Boulevard West brings together three historic Milwaukee neighborhoods: Silver City, Burnham Park, and Layton Park. These neighborhoods offer quality, affordable housing, a wealth of retail and recreational amenities, and ethnic and cultural diversity.

Just 10 minutes from downtown Milwaukee, Layton Boulevard West encompasses the iconic Mitchell Park Conservatory Domes, Miller Park stadium, the bustling Miller Park Way commercial district, and the Menomonee Valley, where 300 acres of brownfields have been restored to job-creating productive use.

The Hank Aaron State Trail, starting at Milwaukee's lakefront and following the Menomonee River eight miles west to the county line, allows neighbors to walk or bike to work, while the newly restored Valley Passage at 37th and Pierce Streets gives people immediate access to the Valley's jobs and recreational opportunities.

Layton Boulevard West's diverse population – 66% Latino, 22% Caucasian, 5% African American, and 4% Asian – is reflected in its mix of ethnic restaurants and distinctive shops along the National, Burnham, and Lincoln corridors. This diversity is one of the area's most valued assets. As longtime resident Gerda Fransiskas explains: "What's so special about Layton Boulevard West is that there are people who were born in these houses and they're still here. And then you have people that were born in different countries, and we all come together and we are all friends, and that makes it a community."

Layton Boulevard West also faces significant challenges from poverty, unemployment, and foreclosed homes. Neighbors old and new understand these challenges and have come together to take action. Coordinating their efforts is Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, Inc., a community development organization founded in 1995 by the School Sisters of St. Francis. Layton Boulevard West Neighbors stabilizes and revitalizes the area through grassroots leadership, economic development, homeownership promotion, and housing development and rehabilitation.

Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, community members, and partners have come together to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for improving the quality of life in the neighborhood. The Plan capitalizes on past successes and strengthens the momentum building in the community, where there is a renewed sense of hope, commitment, and collaboration. Neighbors and partners are excited about the new opportunities and the possibilities. They are confident that Layton Boulevard West will continue to grow as a healthy and safe neighborhood of choice.

Welcome to our community!

Layton Boulevard West



LAYTON BOULEVARD – 1906*



PLANNING PROCESS



SACRED HEART SANATORIUM ON LAYTON BOULEVARD – 1893*

History

From the first European settlements in the late 1700s, the Menomonee Valley and its surrounding neighborhoods have brought prosperity to successive waves of immigrants. Europeans thrived in the area, and today new immigrants moving to Layton Boulevard West are hopeful they will be able to provide better lives for themselves and their families.

By the mid-19th century, the Valley had become a manufacturing center. Its refineries, tanneries, and other industries employed tens of thousands of workers, many of whom built or bought homes on nearby land.

By 1880, the Valley had the city's highest concentration of factories. As incomes increased, commercial districts flourished. Valley workers spent hard-earned silver dollars at Silver City, a strip of shops and taverns along National Avenue. German and Polish merchants and workers settled near what is now the Valley Passage, a tunnel that connected Silver City to the Valley, giving rise to the Silver City neighborhood. A few blocks south, the neighborhood that is now Layton Park grew up around Layton House, a hotel founded in 1850 by English immigrant John Layton and his son Frederick.

With its fountains, promenades, and ornamental plantings, Layton Boulevard symbolized a higher standard of living. When the demand for quality housing after World War I increased, the celery fields west of Layton Boulevard and south of Orchard Street became what is now Burnham Park, home to six *American System-Built Homes*. Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for an emerging middle class, these architecturally significant single-family homes built in 1915 and 1916 still grace Burnham Street.

European immigrants thrived in a neighborhood offering abundant comforts and conveniences, but during the Great Depression they were hard hit. Not until World War II, when Milwaukee's manufacturing industry was called upon to produce military goods, did the area and its residents recover. Prosperity continued until the 1970s when globalization began and factories throughout Milwaukee closed. By the end of the century, nearly 70% of the city's manufacturing jobs had disappeared.

The economic upheaval affected many of Milwaukee's old and proud neighborhoods, including those on the south side. In response, in 1995 the School Sisters of Saint Francis

founded Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, a nonprofit community development organization dedicated to restoring and revitalizing Layton Park, Burnham Park, and Silver City.

Today in Layton Boulevard West, Latinos, Asians, and African Americans are joined with the children and grandchildren of European settlers. Together, they are building on the past to create a better future for themselves and their families.

Says Milwaukee historian John Gurda, whose Polish grandparents settled in the area in 1915, "Residents are responding positively to change, looking back with pride and ahead with hope. Through a number of powerful grassroots initiatives, the community is moving in precisely the right direction: forward and together."

Planning Process

Inclusive. Collaborative. Resilient.

Every voice counts and every contribution is needed to revitalize the area. Understanding this, Layton Boulevard West Neighbors brought together neighbors and local groups to share their hopes and dreams for the community and to define a common vision.

Guided by a planning advisory committee made up of people who live, work, and serve in the neighborhoods, staff and volunteers met with neighbors from every corner of the community. Layton Boulevard West Neighbors spoke with longtime homeowners and newcomers; with parents, school administrators, and faith leaders; and with community development colleagues, real estate agents, and shopkeepers. In visioning sessions and community meetings, neighbors identified local assets and areas for improvement; they brainstormed strategies and possible solutions.

Over the course of 10 months and countless conversations, more than 200 people contributed to this Quality of Life Plan. As a result, neighbors have come together and committed themselves to realizing this collective vision for Layton Boulevard West.

*Photos property and courtesy of the Milwaukee Public Library.

Layton Boulevard West Catalytic Projects

Catalytic projects improve physical conditions in the neighborhood and stimulate interest and investment in the community. In the course of planning, people who live and work in Layton Boulevard West analyzed opportunities for growth and development, and identified several projects to undertake.

1 Turnkey Homes

Building on the successes of the Silver City Townhomes and LBWN's Turnkey Renovation Program, LBWN will expand to buy and renovate foreclosed homes to help stabilize the housing market and promote homeownership. We will give these homes new life, add value to the properties by using eco-friendly materials, practices, and renewable energy systems, and sell them at a price affordable for moderate-income owner-occupant buyers.

2 School Model Block

The School Model Block initiative focuses on improving a one-block radius around a school. It stabilizes property values while increasing neighbors' pride. The community has identified Anna F. Doerfler School and the surrounding area as the first opportunity for revitalization, with other schools being involved in the future. Actions will include beautification and cleanup, housing renovation, homeownership promotion, and foreclosure prevention in the blocks around the school.

3 Arlington Heights Park

This underused park will become a destination for entertainment, sports, and recreation. Neighbors have asked for enhancements to bring more positive activities to the park. In partnership with the City of Milwaukee and others already invested in the Park, LBWN will lead improvement projects including the construction of a band shelter, installation of lighting and seating areas, eco-friendly landscaping, and new signage to create a safe, open space for families to gather and recreate.

4 Greenfield Avenue Improvements

As a major thoroughfare, neighbors feel that Greenfield Avenue does not promote a welcoming and safe community in its current condition. They will advocate for improvements in Greenfield Avenue's infrastructure, increased pedestrian safety, and the installation of a bike lane.

5 Burnham Park

Burnham Park is centrally located in the neighborhood and many residents take advantage of its open spaces. To meet the increasing needs of youth and families for an active and safe park, neighbors will collaborate with partners to add seating areas, improve lighting and landscaping, and enhance the pavilion.

6 Layton Boulevard West Legacy Homes

Historic Layton Boulevard's rich architecture and the six Frank Lloyd Wright homes on Burnham Street have the potential to attract new homeowners and become tourist destinations. LBWN will work with the Wright in Wisconsin organization and the Historic Layton Boulevard Association to return these homes to their architectural significance and promote them as a neighborhood amenity.

7 Silver City Commercial Corridor

In coordination with small businesses, volunteers, the City of Milwaukee, and LISC Milwaukee, LBWN will commission a market analysis to identify commercial opportunities in the Silver City commercial corridor. LBWN will continue to support the development of key anchor businesses to attract visitors and new businesses.

8 Pierce Street

Neighbors cited the Valley Passage and the new branch of the Urban Ecology Center as reasons for renovating residential properties and developing business and community activities in this area. LBWN will work with neighbors and partners to identify and support new and redevelopment opportunities along this underutilized corridor.

9 Welcome to our Community!

Gateway markers will be installed on the neighborhood's main intersections to promote Layton Boulevard West as a welcoming community and distinctive tourist destination. Additional signs will be installed throughout each of Layton Boulevard West's neighborhoods to promote their individual assets and identities.

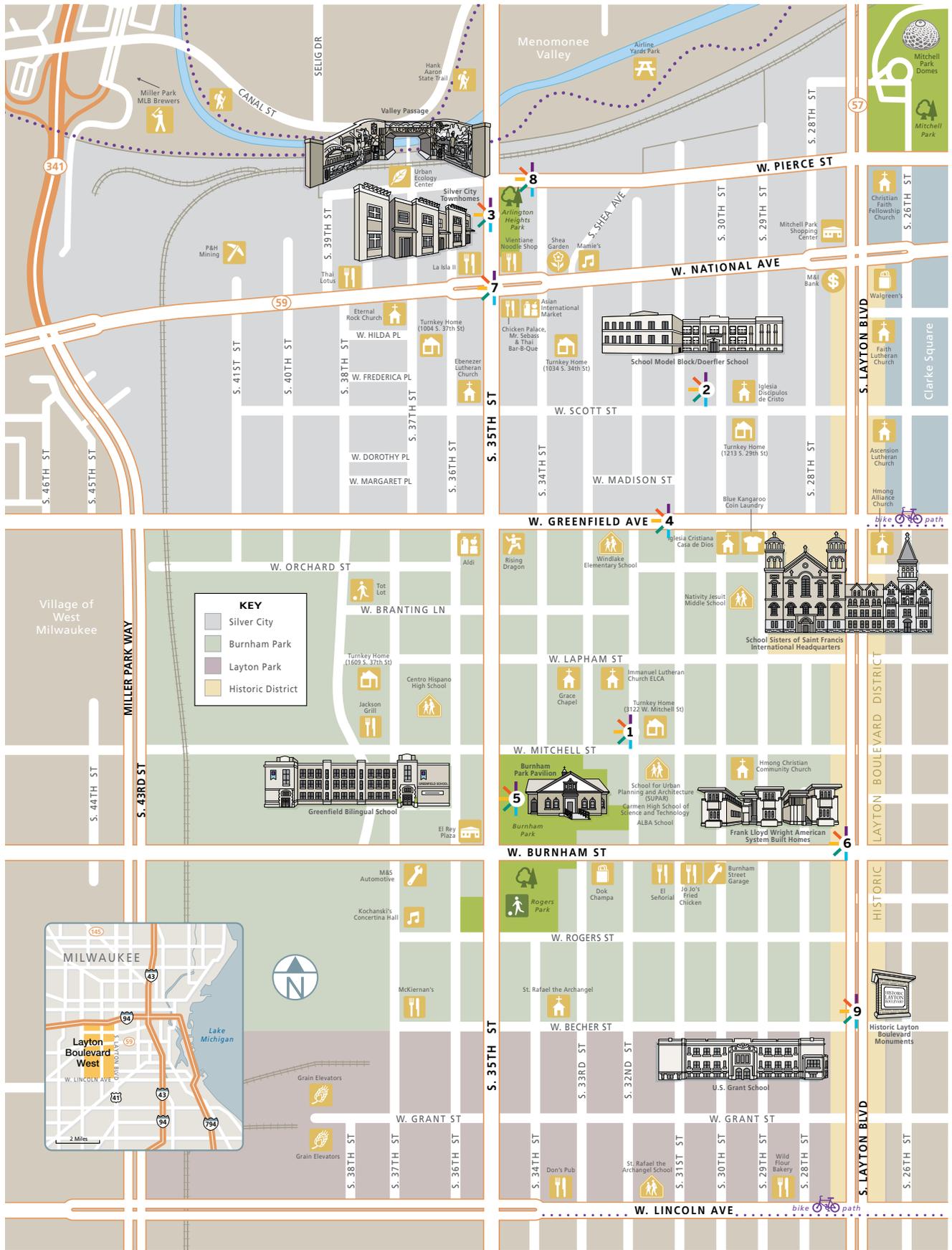
Resource/Community Center

It became clear during the planning process that neighbors of all ages need a gathering place where they can share common interests and access services. A centrally located resource and community center will be developed to provide a place where all will feel connected to each other and the community.

Farmers' Market

A farmers' market will provide neighbors with affordable, local produce and other healthy foods, and serve as a place where neighbors can connect regularly.

Layton Boulevard West





WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY!



BURNHAM PARK NEIGHBORHOOD



NATIONAL AVENUE STREETSCAPING

Strategic Plan

This Plan is the result of a year-long planning process that brought together people who care about improving the quality of life in Layton Boulevard West. Early action projects in the summer of 2011 included the installation of 14 street signs along Layton Boulevard, the creation of a video to document the planning process, and the transformation of a vacant lot to a pocket park and community garden built and maintained by neighbors.

1. Neighborhood Appearance

Improve the physical infrastructure of the neighborhood by promoting the maintenance and improvement of private properties and public spaces, and by engaging the community in cleanup efforts.

With a wealth of bungalows, churches, parks, three commercial corridors, and a historic boulevard, residents of Layton Park, Burnham Park, and Silver City recognize Layton Boulevard West's potential to become one of Milwaukee's most attractive neighborhoods. Neighbors have begun to uncover and capitalize on these assets. However, with over 75% of buildings and infrastructure built prior to 1930, neighbors understand the challenges that come with maintaining and improving private properties and public spaces.

Since 1995, LBWN has worked to improve the neighborhood's appearance by securing and promoting resources for exterior and interior home repairs from a variety of sources and partnerships. The Plan will expand on these efforts to ensure that Layton Boulevard West is a beautiful place that all are proud to call home, a community of choice for potential homeowners, and a place where businesses can prosper.

1.1 Promote the improvement of homes and commercial buildings.

We will raise awareness among property owners of the benefits – to themselves and the community – of maintaining their property and enhancing curb appeal. We will organize workshops on basic maintenance and renovation, and connect property owners with grants and loans to help them maintain and improve their properties. Neighbors take the initiative to access these resources and add their own to improve aesthetics, lower utility bills, and increase property values. As more people invest here, the neighborhood looks nicer and attracts further investments. LBWN will build on the success of past "Most Improved Home Contests" to encourage home and business owners to take action. To help lead these projects, we will form a curb appeal committee.

Concentrations of vacant properties present an additional challenge to the neighborhood's appearance and threaten community stability. We will work with homeowner-counseling organizations and public officials to assist property owners facing foreclosure. We will expand our Turnkey Renovation Program to acquire and renovate foreclosed homes, and sell them at an affordable price to responsible homeowners. Turnkey homes are completely renovated to combine new-home energy efficiency with historical charm for 21st century living. Each newly renovated foreclosed home is move-in-ready.

Layton Boulevard West



HANK AARON STATE TRAIL ARTIST



TURNKEY RENOVATION PROGRAM



SILVER CITY RESIDENT HOWARD BONG IN SHEA GARDEN

1.2 Engage residents and partners in improving the appearance of public spaces.

Residents of Layton Boulevard West take pride in the neighborhood's rich canopy of trees, but some blocks have fewer trees and plants than others. We will work with neighbors to identify blocks, parks, and public spaces that would benefit from landscaping. We will promote tree planting along our commercial corridors and other sites, and support landscaping and community garden projects.

Neighbors are taking responsibility for cleanup projects and the prevention and removal of graffiti. They understand the importance of a clean neighborhood to attracting new investments. We will build on this momentum to expand clean-up efforts. To further improve the appearance of public spaces, we will advocate for street and sidewalk repairs. We will partner with the City of Milwaukee and others to update, improve, and transform parks into family-friendly neighborhood assets. We will collaborate with local schools to encourage students to lead and participate in community improvement projects, especially on blocks directly surrounding the schools. These neighborhood beautification projects will create and enhance relationships among students and neighbors while building a sense of community ownership.

1.3 Enhance the neighborhood's appearance through the creation of public art.

Public art beautifies urban spaces and celebrates a neighborhood's ethnic and cultural heritage, identity, and sense of pride. The mural displayed along the Valley Passage reflects Milwaukee and Silver City's rich past, resilient present, and wishes for a prosperous future.

Creating public art builds community. In collaboration with local artists and arts organizations, we will develop and expand programs to engage the neighborhood, particularly our youth, in the creation of public art.



BLOCK GROUP MEETING



GRAFFITI REMOVAL



SILVER CITY RESIDENTS STEVE AND GLORIA ESPINOZA

2. Community Safety Network

Support a peaceful, clean, and well-maintained neighborhood where all feel safe and welcome.

Layton Boulevard West is a community of hard-working and caring people who strive for a more peaceful environment where neighbors help one another and feel good about where they live. While violent crime has decreased in recent years, neighbors involved in the planning process see visible property crime, such as graffiti, as a challenge to the neighborhood's safety and welcoming spirit.

Engaging more people and building trust among residents, businesses, and partners will make people feel safe and welcome, encourage neighborliness, contribute to community safety and confidence, and persuade others to invest in community improvement efforts.

2.1 Ensure a clean and safe neighborhood by promoting positive behaviors.

We will foster respect and courtesy and encourage owners – including landlords – to take personal responsibility for the maintenance of buildings and yards. Neighbors have begun adopting frequently tagged spaces and foreclosed homes to erase the signs of abandonment and help market the homes to friends and families. We will identify additional leaders and create mentoring relationships to organize neighborhood cleanups, address littering and promote beautification, expand graffiti removal and prevention efforts, and create citizen patrol clubs.

2.2 Build a sense of safety throughout the neighborhood by creating a neighbors' network.

An organized community plays a critical role in crime prevention. A neighbors' network will improve communication among residents, landlords, business owners, community organizations, public officials, and the police department and will provide a forum for community problem-solving.

We will work with neighbors to support and expand active block clubs, revitalize inactive clubs, and form new ones. We will help create a neighbors' network, bringing block club leaders together to resolve issues affecting the community and then build on the positive momentum with community-building projects. We will also encourage block club leaders to participate in citywide safety organizations such as the

Citywide Block Watch Council and we will identify a young leader to represent our community on the *Youth Council – City of Milwaukee*, a youth group that meets with community leaders and business owners to address issues affecting Milwaukee's teens.

2.3 Increase and improve communication among neighbors, landlords, business owners, community organizations, and law enforcement.

We will strengthen relationships and communication through block clubs, block meetings and parties, and electronic and print newsletters. We will also educate neighbors on crime prevention and reporting and improve communication among neighbors, elected officials, community organizations, and the police department. Over the past several years, more than 30 blocks in Layton Boulevard West have organized to resolve issues and undertake block pride projects. These expanded efforts will not only improve communication but also celebrate block success stories inspiring others to do the same.

Neighbors will continue to partner with the Milwaukee Police Department to expand educational programs on crime trends, prevention and reporting, and to ensure that neighbors are prepared to assist in safety initiatives. Together with the Police Department, the District Attorney's Office, and other community partners, we will increase efforts to identify and address nuisance properties and other crimes at their early stages. This would include the creation of landlord compacts, in which property owners work together to ensure safe living environments for neighbors. These activities will allow neighbors to feel in control of their community's well-being. When a problem arises, neighbors will call on other neighbors and know the process for solving the problem.



LAYTON PARK RESIDENTS GREG AND DOLLY MERTENS



SOUNDS OF SUMMER CONCERT IN ARLINGTON HEIGHTS PARK



ICE CREAM VENDOR IN BURNHAM PARK

3. Social Engagement

Build strong relationships that develop a sense of community and encourage collaboration.

Residents of Layton Boulevard West want to know their neighbors better and they want more places and opportunities to socialize. They are attracted to and value the area's ethnic diversity, yet recognize the need for some help in navigating cultural and language differences. Residents also indicated the need to foster relationships with community service organizations that will support their revitalization efforts.

Understanding the importance of strong relationships, LBWN fosters new and ongoing relationships by organizing committees to welcome new neighbors, block clubs, block improvement projects, community projects such as the Burnham Park Community Garden, open houses, and special events like the Neighborhood Annual Gathering, Silver City Trick-or-Treat Street, and the Sounds of Summer concerts in Arlington Heights Park.

3.1 Build leadership among neighbors.

Cultivating leadership at all levels is the thread that ties together all of LBWN's neighborhood revitalization activities. Over the years, hundreds of leaders in Layton Boulevard West have emerged to improve their blocks, vacant homes, parks, and commercial districts. Proactive leadership development is the strategy that provides the foundation for making this Plan a reality. Building on our past leadership development successes, we will identify and nurture local leaders to create the community we all envision. At every point in the implementation of this Plan, LBWN will empower existing and emerging leaders to take ownership of their neighborhood. Through leadership trainings, block-club captain roundtables, block improvement projects, and other community projects, LBWN will connect neighbors to other leaders and the information, tools, and resources they need to take on leadership roles in numerous neighborhood revitalization projects.

3.2 Promote new opportunities for social interaction.

We will expand the Welcoming Committee to help new residents, homebuyers, and business owners feel at home. We will organize and promote clubs where residents can share common interests, like movies, crafts, walking, and foreign language conversation; expand promotion of concerts and special events; and promote inter-generational activities where young and old can interact and develop meaningful relationships. To enhance the sharing of resources among neighbors, we will promote initiatives like the Milwaukee Time Exchange, through which people can barter by swapping their knowledge and skills with each other.

We will foster cross-cultural interactions and help overcome language barriers by ensuring that neighborhood events and activities are inclusive and accommodating to all neighbors. We will promote new opportunities for social engagement to encourage interaction among diverse groups of neighbors. Connecting neighbors with language resources will aid in overcoming barriers to social interaction and community building.

3.3 Develop partnerships with community service organizations to meet our neighbors' needs.

We will work with neighbors to identify services needed in the community; develop partnerships with organizations providing these services; identify venues where these organizations can operate; and explore their potential expansion into our neighborhood.



NATIVITY JESUIT MIDDLE SCHOOL



TENNIS LESSONS IN BURNHAM PARK



U.S. GRANT SCHOOL

4. Youth Education and Leadership

Support youth in achieving their potential, both academically and personally, and encourage them to serve and lead in the community as they develop life and work skills.

A desirable community for families is one that provides children and youth with opportunities that prepare them for purposeful and productive lives. Parents and neighbors in Layton Boulevard West want their children to learn the values of education, hard work, and civic responsibility, and they asked for more out-of-school programs that support academic achievement, encourage lifelong learning, and prepare youth for the workforce. They also want to see their children involved in constructive activities, like organized sports and community service projects that build character, enhance self-esteem, and cultivate leadership.

4.1 Partner with local schools to engage students in healthy living, academic achievement, leadership development, and community service programs.

As a complement to the Healthy Living strategy, we will encourage and support schools to install gardens maintained by students; recommend that schools offer healthy cooking classes and participate in farmers' markets where students can sell their own produce; and advocate for more school sports teams.

Studies show that being unsupervised during out-of-school hours puts children and youth at greater risk of poor school performance and truancy. Children and youth want access to programs and activities that meet their needs and accommodate their interests. We will support efforts to start or expand out-of-school activities that build character and leadership while fostering a sense of civic responsibility, including mentoring and tutoring programs. We will connect schools to additional resources to enhance academic programming and strengthen student achievement.

As young people become engaged in leading and building their communities, they learn that their participation matters. We will work with schools to provide students with community service and leadership opportunities where they will connect with neighbors and partner with organizations to lead neighborhood improvement projects and, most importantly, learn about the critical role they play in their community.

Because research shows that parental involvement is

essential to student and school success, we will advocate for and help arrange workshops and other parent-learning resources. We will encourage and assist parents as they participate in their children's academic success.

We will partner with school administrators to further explore collaborations and the sharing of resources, and help connect schools with businesses willing to support initiatives to enhance students' healthy development.

4.2 Encourage youth to pursue a post-secondary education.

Neighborhood schools (public, private, and charter) serving grades K5 through 12 are highly regarded by residents. However, many of our youth do not pursue a post-secondary education and are not prepared for the workforce upon graduation. We will promote strategies that focus on academic advancement and connect youth with resources to help them achieve their post-secondary educational goals.

4.3 Prepare youth for the workforce by connecting them with job-readiness resources.

As labor markets tighten, our youth need to learn the skills that will help them find a job and perform well at work. Enterprising youth want to learn how to pursue their own business. We will connect them with workforce, leadership, and entrepreneurship development resources and tools.

4.4 Identify community sites for youth programs and attract youth service organizations.

For a neighborhood with a large population of children, there are too few activities and venues for after-school, weekend, and summer educational and recreational programs. Local schools and churches are overcrowded, the only Community Learning Center operates at Greenfield School, and the neighborhood lacks a library, community center, or family resource center to meet the increasing needs of youth and families. We will identify existing facilities, evaluate the viability of developing a community center, and create a neighborhood committee to secure resources for youth programming.

While Burnham Park provides open space and facilities for many recreational activities and sports leagues, there is widespread agreement that it could be redesigned to better meet the needs of today's youth and families. We will work with neighbors, the City of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee Recreation to explore opportunities for improvement.



HOMES ON BURNHAM STREET DESIGNED BY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT



HISTORIC LAYTON BOULEVARD MONUMENT



HOME OWNERSHIP PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

5. Community Identity

Develop and market a distinctive community identity that celebrates Layton Boulevard West's rich history, diversity, assets, and market potential.

Neighbors in Silver City, Burnham Park, and Layton Park take pride in the remarkable array of experiences and destinations available to residents and visitors in Layton Boulevard West. Biking on the Hank Aaron State Trail; trying exotic fruits and vegetables at any of the ethnic grocery stores; eating tacos, Pad Thai, or ceviche at a local restaurant; or touring a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home, are all experiences unique to the neighborhood. Add these experiences to what our neighbors value most – quality architecture, a rich history, a diverse population, and a strong sense of community – and it is clear why people are choosing to live, work, and serve in Layton Boulevard West.

Throughout the planning process, residents indicated that Layton Boulevard West's assets are mostly unknown to the Milwaukee community. Some local residents and many outside the community see the neighborhood as unsafe and unwelcoming. This image can lead prospective homebuyers, investors, shoppers, diners, worshippers, and parents with school-age children to choose other neighborhoods.

To promote investment, LBWN tends to the neighborhood's physical conditions, promotes homeownership, and strengthens social connections. With LBWN's leadership and project management, neighbors have improved properties, taken care of abandoned buildings, and cleaned up and maintained streets and parks.

Together, we have begun to brand and showcase the unique identity of each of our neighborhoods. We will expand these efforts to promote Layton Boulevard West as a community of choice. As we improve our image and perceptions about the neighborhood, we will enhance our neighbors' sense of identity, increase confidence, and attract more homeowners, visitors, patrons, businesses, and investments.

5.1 Increase awareness and build accurate perceptions of Layton Boulevard West.

We will develop a marketing strategy to improve perceptions of the neighborhood. This will include creating signs to highlight the distinct identity of each of our neighborhoods, organizing

activities that reflect our diversity, and promoting walking and biking tours that showcase Layton Boulevard West's assets and amenities. We will also engage neighbors, local businesses, schools, churches, and partner organizations in neighborhood promotion. Accurate, current safety data will be provided to neighbors so they can share it with others in the neighborhood and throughout Milwaukee to help dispel negative perceptions.

5.2 Use the arts to build community identity and create a sense of place.

We will partner with youth, families, schools, and organizations to explore Layton Boulevard West's identity and celebrate its rich history through the creation of public art. We will support innovative ways to improve the appearance of vacant and boarded-up properties, like creating artwork on window boards and installing attractive window displays.

5.3 Retain existing homeowners and attract new homeowners.

With 88% of single-family homes and 68% of duplexes occupied by their owners, neighbors value homeownership and see these high rates as one of the community's most important strengths. While the majority of duplexes across Milwaukee are owned by absentee landlords, Layton Boulevard West's high rates of owner-occupied duplexes are a reminder of the traditional role of the duplex as an affordable homeownership option by providing both living space and additional rental income.

To maintain these rates, we will support existing homeowners by connecting them with resources to turn homeownership challenges into opportunities for investment and growth. People sometimes struggle to meet their financial obligations, particularly in challenging economic times like those experienced by many of our residents in the past few years. Participants in the planning process realize that this downturn has deeply touched people's lives. To help neighbors keep and maintain their homes, and to improve financial wellness, LBWN will connect more neighbors to foreclosure prevention programs and counseling, financial wellness workshops, and home maintenance and renovation resources.

We recognize the need to build a strong housing market to combat the effects of the foreclosure crisis and increase Layton Boulevard West's reputation as a neighborhood of choice.



SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION ON TURNKEY HOME



FARMERS' MARKET



LAYTON PARK RESIDENT JOHN HEFTER
IN THE BURNHAM PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN

To attract new homeowners, we will implement a marketing plan to identify niches of prospective buyers interested in the distinct character and diversity of our neighborhood and define strategies to reach these niches. We will also host more home tours and home-buying workshops; educate lenders, realtors, and other agencies on how to promote our assets and the quality of our housing stock; and encourage neighbors, businesses, churches, and schools to promote our community and available homes among their networks.

While many neighbors dream of owning a home, participants in the planning process understand that, at different times in their lives, people prefer to rent. High-quality, affordable, and well-managed rental units attract high-quality tenants. To respond to renters' needs, we will work to preserve quality rental properties by connecting landlords with landlord training resources, with other landlords to share best practices, and with resources to weatherize, maintain, and renovate their properties. We will also encourage local homeowners to invest in foreclosed properties near their homes as a way to increase their own wealth and strengthen their commitment to the neighborhood.

The neighborhood's history and architecture are a point of pride for most residents. To make our community more attractive for visitors and potential homeowners, we will help property owners research the history of their homes and buildings and then share this history with others. This history will be incorporated into our neighborhood marketing efforts with local artists, arts programs, students, the media, and real estate professionals to create a deeper sense of place and community. As part of this effort, we will connect residents to resources for restoring properties in a historically sensitive manner. We will also work with the Wright in Wisconsin organization and the Historic Layton Boulevard Association to return our legacy homes to their architectural significance and promote them as a neighborhood amenity.

6. Healthy Living

Promote and support physical, emotional, and social well-being.

Numerous studies document the relationship between socioeconomic status, environment, and health outcomes. In our planning process, neighbors expressed a desire to lead healthier lives and recognized that, together, we can work to improve our own health, the health of the community, and the health of the environment.

6.1 Increase knowledge about nutrition and promote access to healthy food choices.

Layton Boulevard West's residents are aware of the importance of eating healthy foods, but many lack the knowledge and information they need to make good choices. While some stores offer fresh produce and healthy foods at affordable prices, many residents said that they do not take enough advantage of these options. In addition, there is limited space for community gardens where neighbors could grow their own fruits and vegetables.

The benefits of locally raised foods to our health and the environment have been well documented, as have the long-term advantages of consistent family activities like cooking and eating together. LBWN and partners promote healthy living options by supporting the creation of community gardens. To complement these efforts, we will work with community organizations and health providers to offer classes in nutrition, canning, and healthy cooking; establish additional community gardens and conduct workshops on growing fruits and vegetables; and sponsor a farmers' market. We will promote local restaurants and grocery stores that offer healthy foods, and encourage corner stores to give shelf space to healthier alternatives.

6.2 Increase access to free or affordable fitness, sports, and recreation activities.

Layton Boulevard West's residents benefit from direct access to the Hank Aaron State Trail and many use the facilities at Burnham Park. However, our neighborhood is a densely populated area with limited space for sports, fitness, and recreation. Neighbors want more open and public spaces as well as more informal and organized recreational activities.



TRICK OR TREAT STREET ON NATIONAL AVENUE



MAMIE'S



ASIAN INTERNATIONAL MARKET

LBWN and partners will work to improve green spaces and promote the use of the Hank Aaron State Trail among residents. We will continue to promote biking, running, walking, and other exercise; advocate for the creation of local sports leagues; and connect residents with existing recreational outdoor and indoor spaces for year-round use.

6.3 Promote a more pedestrian- and bike-friendly environment.

Many Layton Boulevard West residents want to walk and bike in the neighborhood, but are intimidated by street crossings on major thoroughfares and by inadequate street lighting. A more pedestrian- and bike-friendly environment will encourage exercise, increase support of local businesses, facilitate economic development, and enhance the area's image as a safe and welcoming community.

We will work with the City of Milwaukee and local property owners to improve sidewalks, lighting on streets and alleys, and pedestrian crossing signage, and to increase the number and extension of bike lanes. We will support bicycle repair classes and connect neighbors to biking resources. To enhance our image as a walking and biking community, we will create visual linkages between biking and walking routes, and stores, restaurants, and tourist destinations.

6.4 Educate the community about environmental issues, and promote strategies to create eco-friendly, sustainable neighborhoods.

For the past several years, LBWN and its partners have been involved in "green" solutions, from retrofitting homes, redirecting rain from gutters into rain barrels, and installing solar panels and green roofs. Neighbors are inspired by these actions and want to find eco-friendly and energy-efficient solutions for property improvement. They also want these resources to be readily available and more affordable. To respond to this demand, we will offer workshops where people can learn how to use "green" technologies, including the installation of rain gardens, low-flow water equipment, and native Wisconsin landscaping. We will offer tours to showcase "green" solutions already in place in the neighborhood, and we will present our Turnkey Renovations as examples of how property owners can reap the benefits of quality, energy-efficient improvements. We will partner with local government,

universities, businesses, and other agencies to secure resources and tools for sustainable building improvements that neighbors can use in their homes and businesses.

Participants in the planning process also expressed a desire to build a more environmentally sustainable neighborhood. We will partner with organizations, such as the Urban Ecology Center, to bring environmental sustainability expertise and solutions to the neighborhood. We will explore successful best practices from other communities for producing and processing local foods and connect our neighbors and businesses to these efforts. We will partner with schools and churches to create a community network to focus on environmentally sustainable community projects.

7. Economic Development

Foster economic vitality by increasing business opportunities, access to jobs, and financial wellness.

Layton Boulevard West is a centrally located residential neighborhood with three major commercial corridors of great potential: National Avenue, Burnham Street, and Lincoln Avenue. With a variety of established businesses and a number of vacant buildings offering attractive redevelopment opportunities, these corridors are primed for transformation. In addition, employers in nearby Menomonee Valley businesses and the Miller Park Way commercial district offer opportunities for employment for area residents.

LBWN has driven economic development efforts to transform problem properties into neighborhood assets and successful businesses. The organization has also helped local entrepreneurs establish, sustain, and grow their businesses even in tough economic times. Over the past 16 years, LBWN has worked with a variety of partners to bring large investments to the neighborhood, including a major public investment in streetscape improvements along National Avenue. LBWN has facilitated more than \$15 million in façade and other property improvements in Silver City. The transformation of a dilapidated tennis/basketball court and an underutilized parking lot into 20 affordable, rent-to-own townhomes has become a catalyst for further developments.

We will capitalize on this momentum and other accomplishments to move toward a prosperous future.

Layton Boulevard West



KOCHANSKI'S CONCERTINA HALL OWNER



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7.1 Identify and promote the neighborhood's potential for economic development.

Building on the success of LBWN's revitalization efforts on National Avenue, we will commission a market analysis for our main commercial corridors and share the results with investors and entrepreneurs to attract new business opportunities. The market analysis will help correct misperceptions of Layton Boulevard West, identify hidden assets, and guide us as we define our economic future. Two catalytic projects – the Silver City Commercial Corridor and Pierce Street – focus on business development and redevelopment opportunities. The market analysis will also identify neighborhood needs that are not currently being met within the neighborhood. With this information, we will develop strategies to attract new businesses to our vacant storefronts and industrial properties.

7.2 Develop a long-term initiative that promotes existing businesses, encourages the establishment of new businesses, and advocates for innovative business practices.

One of Layton Boulevard West's major assets is the diversity of shops and restaurants with the potential to make the neighborhood an appealing Milwaukee destination. To foster the neighborhood's economic vitality, we will work with existing businesses to strengthen their enterprises, promote their distinctive identity and enhance their reputation, and revitalize their commercial districts. In addition, we will identify prospective local entrepreneurs and connect them with resources to help develop and sustain local businesses, encourage local economic growth and job creation by promoting a "shop local" concept, and create business partnerships and supply chains between large and small businesses.

7.3 Provide opportunities for residents to reach their financial goals.

With nearly 23% of our families living below the poverty level, an unemployment rate of 14%, and a median income below Milwaukee's average, we recognize the importance of increasing household income and wealth. We will connect residents to resources to help them advance in the workforce, and give them the tools to manage their finances and work toward economic security.

To increase access to employment, we will work with local employers to promote job opportunities in the neighborhood. We will also connect our residents with workforce and career development resources and training, and with local employers who can help them acquire new skills and advance at work. To help neighbors achieve their financial goals, such as owning a home, building wealth, and increasing their financial stability, we will expand partnerships forged by LBWN with agencies that offer financial wellness strategies, resources, and education.



These efforts are supported by the Zilber Family Foundation. In 2008, the Foundation announced a \$50 million commitment to improve the quality of life in Milwaukee neighborhoods, starting with Lindsay Heights and Clarke Square. In 2010, the Foundation added the Layton Boulevard West neighborhoods of Layton Park, Burnham Park, and Silver City to the Zilber Neighborhood Initiative.