



THE BEERLINE TRAIL

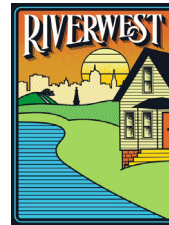
Equitable Implementation Plan – 2019
Executive Summary

M I L W A U K E E – W I S C O N S I N

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & PROJECT LEADERSHIP



Community Members



BEERLINE TRAIL PARTNERS

- Bader Philanthropies
- City of Milwaukee
- Greater Milwaukee Committee
- Greater Milwaukee Foundation
- LISC – Milwaukee
- MKE <-> LAX
- Rails to Trails Conservancy
- Riverworks Development Corporation &
Riverworks Business Improvement District
- Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation

Plan funded by:

- LISC – Milwaukee
- City of Milwaukee

Plan prepared by:

GRAEF

Plan finalized: October 2019

BEERLINE FUNDING PARTNERS

- ArtPlace America
- Bader Philanthropies
- Brico Fund
- CarMax Foundation
- City of Milwaukee
- Fund for Lake Michigan
- Greater Milwaukee Foundation
- KABOOM!
- LISC – Milwaukee
- Milwaukee Arts Board
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Neighborhood Improvement Development Corp.
- Office of Community Services
- Prairie Springs: The Paul Fleckenstein Trust
- Rails to Trails Conservancy
- The Kresge Foundation
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Housing and Economic
Development Authority
- Wisconsin Women’s Business Initiative Corporation

A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR TOM BARRETT

The Beerline Trail exemplifies the City of Milwaukee's commitment to reimagining and repurposing formerly underutilized spaces to bring new investment and energy to our neighborhoods.

With the help of many community partners, we have transformed a former rail corridor into a multi-use trail connecting the Harambee and Riverwest neighborhoods and providing space for community gatherings, performances, and public art. The Beerline Trail also serves as an anchor for equitable economic development in the surrounding neighborhood.

The process of developing the Beerline Trail has unified arts and culture with community development, created civic gathering places, and amplified local voices and cultures. This is the Milwaukee Method of Creative Placemaking and the efforts to develop the Beerline Trail that relied on significant community involvement demonstrate that our Milwaukee Method works.

This Beerline Trail Equitable Implementation Plan serves as the vision for the next phase of development and stewardship of the Beerline Trail. This includes the development of a linear park along the trail, improved connections to adjacent neighborhoods, increased programming and art installations, and exciting redevelopment projects along the trail. The Plan also provides a road map for how the City and our partners will achieve this vision in a way that ensures existing residents and businesses are able to benefit from investments on and along the trail.

With the group of strong partners that are committed to the future of the Beerline Trail and aligned to carry out this Plan, I know the Beerline will continue to develop as a signature public space in our City. See you on the trail!



Tom Barrett
Mayor



WHAT IS THE BEERLINE TRAIL?

The Beerline Trail runs diagonally through the Harambee and Riverwest neighborhoods of Milwaukee along a former railroad right-of-way. Since 2002, the City of Milwaukee and community partners have been working to clear railroad tracks and make the right-of-way accessible to the neighborhood as a connective corridor and green space.

Much has been accomplished – there is a paved trail from N. Bremen Street that runs diagonally to W. Capitol Drive, and there have been many incremental improvements to the trail driven by community members, including public art, seating areas, and many community events and programs on the trail.

WHAT IS THE BEERLINE TRAIL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT?

The **Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project** was created to ensure the next phases of trail development serve the needs of the community, and that other development inspired by and centered around the trail as a premier public green space benefits residents equitably. Prior to the Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project efforts, this corridor was significantly impacted by blight, disinvestment, and a lack of perceived safety. This plan lays out the road map toward these community goals and priority projects.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The Beerline Trail crosses Holton Street, a commercial corridor that also acts as the border between the Harambee (West of Holton) and Riverwest (East of Holton) neighborhoods. Residents of Harambee and Riverwest often feel culturally separate from each other, not only due to the geographic boundary, but also due to economic and racial differences between the neighborhoods. A key value of our work with this public space design is to create an inviting place for cultural exchange that can stimulate sustainable connections with residents of both neighborhoods given these differences, both real and perceived.

In general, about 50% of residents living in the Harambee neighborhood live at or below the poverty line, compared to less than 25% of Riverwest residents. About 85% of Harambee residents identify as African-American, compared to around 20% of Riverwest residents. Over 60% of Riverwest residents identify as white, compared to around 4% of Harambee residents. Property values in Harambee are far below property values in Riverwest.

For further demographic data, neighborhood context, and history, please see the Appendix.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE BEERLINE?

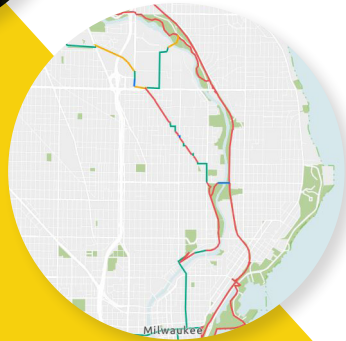
A World-Class Linear Park & Community Green Space

envisioned through numerous community conversations & engagement events shaping the Lifeways Plan design for the Beerline Trail by Walter Hood, Hood Design Studio (2019 MacArthur Fellow & Gish Prize Awardee)



Regional Connectivity to the Wider Bike & Pedestrian Network

coordinated by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy through the Route of the Badger project



Community Leadership & Programming

with community partners along the trail & in the surrounding neighborhoods



Community-Centered Development Projects

including commercial & residential development designed to provide equitable benefits to residents



MISSION of the Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project

To **sustain and enrich** the lives of people in Harambee and Riverwest by promoting **health, well-being and prosperity** through increased circulation of **resources, voices, ideas, labor, and creativity.**



VISION of the Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project



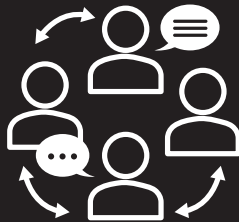
BEERLINE TRAIL GROWS TO CONNECT NEIGHBORS THROUGH INVESTING IN PROPERTIES & GREEN SPACE

Develop a linear park and other green spaces in connection with reimagining and rehabilitating nearby properties as a wraparound approach based in resident and business engagement. Emphasize intentional design that incorporates art, health, landscape, and sustainable living practices.



RIVERWORKS GROWS AS A NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED CREATIVE DISTRICT

Identify, attract, and support for existing and potential creative entrepreneurs in the neighborhoods through business development, marketing and promotion, live-work space development, and public programs.



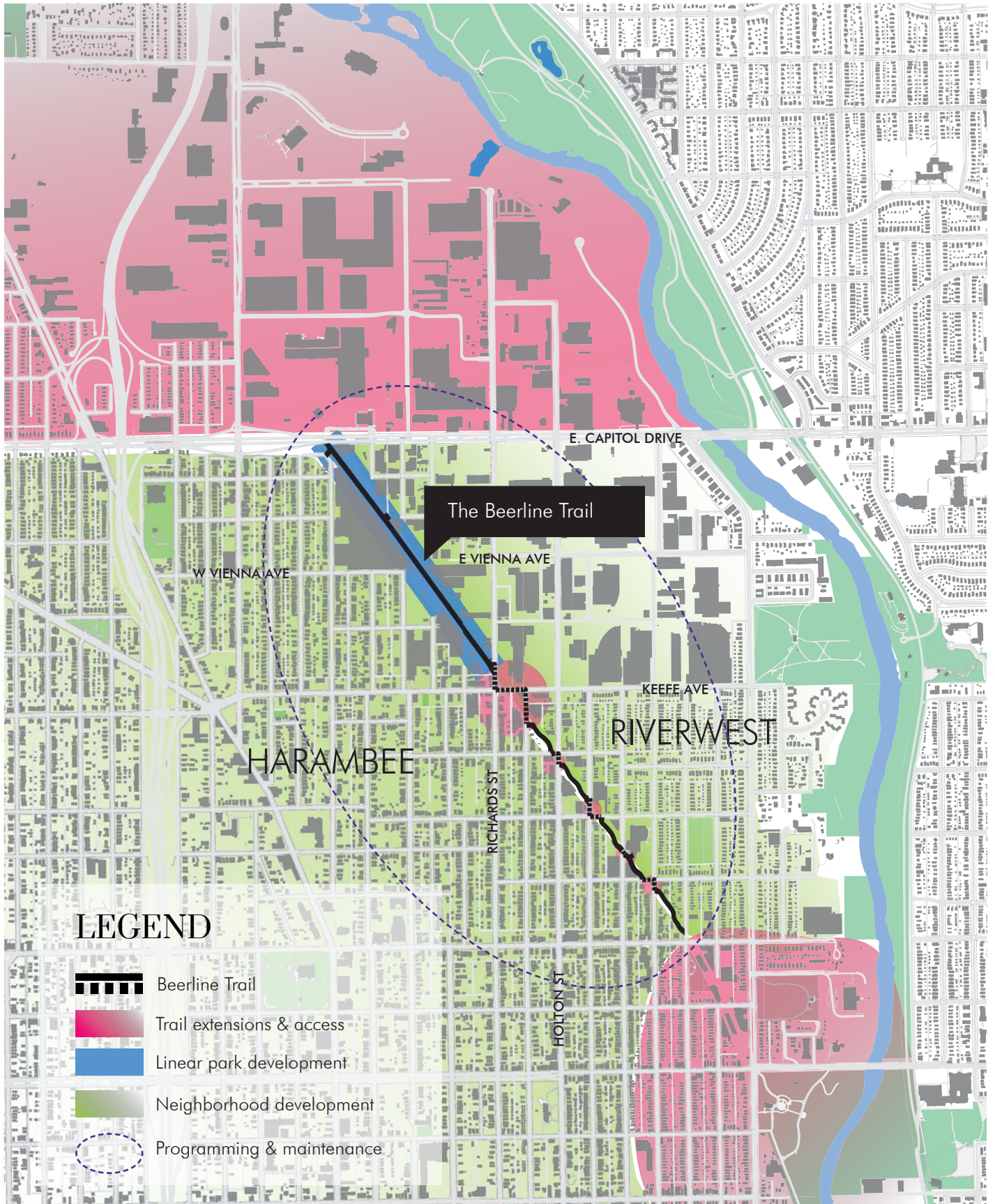
INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM DEVELOPS TO BUILD NEIGHBOR PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES

Share information, inspiration, and input among neighborhood stakeholders around development opportunities. Create Art and Neighbor Engagement strategies and Storybuilding tools in a variety of media and program forms to foster communication. Activate stewards from the neighborhood and the region committed to long-term health and resources for the neighborhood development project.



HOUSING MARKET STABILIZES TO ADDRESS ECONOMIC DISPARITY FOR CURRENT RESIDENTS

Create opportunities for care and development of existing and new residential properties. Pilot new rehabilitation methods that focus on long-term home investment, green infrastructure and creative live-work space. Align real estate developers, industry professionals, residents and business owners to address the issue of development in keeping with current property values.



Data: SEWRPC Aerial (2015); City of Milwaukee; MMSD; Milwaukee County; WisDOT

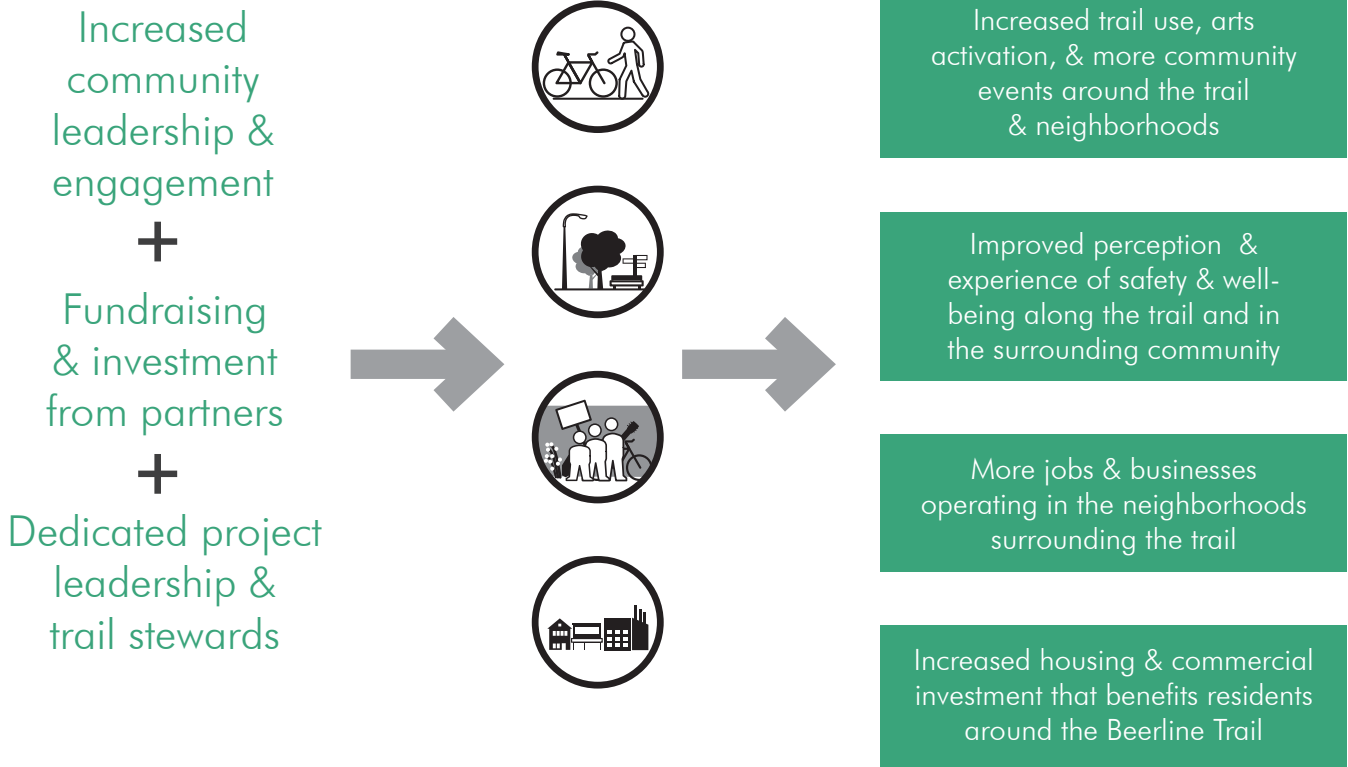
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project is a result of the vision, imagination, and planning of many: community members from the Harambee and Riverwest neighborhoods, Milwaukee artists and landscape architects, community organizers, non-profit organizations and philanthropists, and the City of Milwaukee. Since 2002, this network of individuals and organizations have combined efforts, ideas, and resources for the improvement of the trail and the surrounding community. Much has been accomplished, but fully realizing the potential for the Beerline Trail to achieve the goals established by neighborhood residents will require continued efforts and additional resources.

It is at this pivotal moment that this Equitable Implementation Plan seeks to chart a path forward – through trail branding, wayfinding, and publicity,

to leadership and management, to neighborhood development efforts, and of course, to the continued construction and refinement of the trail itself and future phases to connect to the regional trail network.

This Equitable Implementation Plan seeks to express a unified and coherent vision for the future of the trail and provide a road map for the next five years of work that will be needed to achieve the project’s goals. As of the writing of this plan this work is well underway – in fact, trail and community development activity has been happening for the past five years or more. This Plan also summarizes the work that has already taken place on the trail and in the surrounding neighborhoods and show how the future of the project will build on this momentum for the benefit of the residents of Harambee and Riverwest.



ACTION PLAN: PRIORITY PROJECTS



Trail Extensions & Access Improvements

Ensure that residents can easily **access** the Beerline Trail as a neighborhood green space and **connection** to employment and gathering spaces.

1. Create an east/west access point in the center of the Linear Park at Vienna Avenue.
2. Address existing gaps in the Beerline Trail through wayfinding signage and on-street bikeway improvements.
3. Extend the trail and connect into the larger trail network to the north and south of the Beerline Trail.



Design & Buildout of the Linear Park

Implement the Hood Design Studio Lifeways Plans to create a signature neighborhood **green space** that will connect community members, provide amenities, support programming, and incorporate local art into a contemporary landscape.

1. Develop The Connector building at the southern entrance of the Linear Park, E. Keefe Avenue & N. Richards Street.
2. Install trail lighting along the Linear Park.
3. Install wayfinding at entrances and throughout the Linear Park.

WHAT IS CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?

Described by The Kresge Foundation as “the deliberate integration of arts and culture in revitalization work,” creative placemaking can be a way to address economic disinvestment with a cross sectoral approach.

The Milwaukee Method of Creative Placemaking has been formed in collaboration with national partners:

- » Increases access to important resources such as public place, green space, freshwater lakes, rivers, and other natural amenities via trail networks
- » Unifies the arts and culture with economic and community development
- » Accelerates equitable neighborhood development through creating civic gathering spaces and wraparound investment
- » Increases density, safety, business creation, tax base, and property values
- » Strengthens public and private alignments
- » Supports local artists, makers, and other creative entrepreneurs to co-lead neighborhood engagement processes

WHAT IS EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT?

To sustain and enrich the lives of people in Harambee and Riverwest by promoting health, well-being, and prosperity through increased circulation of resources, voices, ideas, labor, and creativity.

Equitable development is a place-based approach to creative placemaking, community investment & programming that breaks down barriers and expands opportunity, specifically for underserved or low income people and communities of color. The Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project (BTNDP) has refined this more general definition of equitable development as the basis for the project's mission statement.

The BTNDP envisions the trail itself, as well as the social infrastructure it supports and the community-based development it inspires, to spur circulation of resources, voices, and creativity within the community. Through the work of this project the neighborhood will come to see itself as a place full of life and opportunity for all.



Trail Programming & Maintenance

Focus on **stewardship** of the trail and neighborhood through **inclusive** programming and a **sustainable** maintenance plan that fosters the local work force.

1. Carry out programming that prioritizes collaboration with residents, organizations, artists, and youth in Harambee and Riverwest.
2. Ensure that programming is affordable and accessible to all residents and visitors.
3. Develop short- and long-term maintenance plans, including funding needs and sustainable funding resources.



Guide Equitable Development & Entrepreneurship

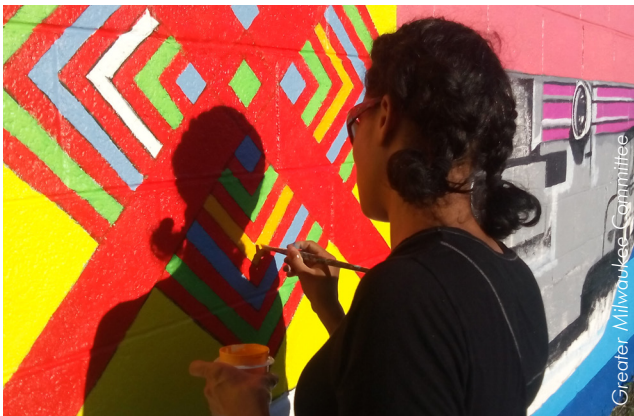
Work with the community and partners to develop commercial corridors that **support** the neighborhoods and affordable housing to **benefit** residents.

1. Guide the commercial redevelopment & acquisition of properties of interest along the Linear Park.
2. Spur development and enhancement on the primary commercial corridors of the surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Collaborate with development partners in the creation and rehabilitation of affordable housing on the north side of Harambee.

WHO IS THIS PLAN FOR?

This Plan is meant to inspire and motivate residents, community members, and project partners to realize the vision for the Beerline Trail and the Harambee & Riverwest neighborhoods together, through hard work, creativity, and investment. It is also a tool for project partners to define roles and responsibilities for the ongoing development of the Beerline Trail and assist in tracking progress and collective accountability to the community. This Plan would not have been possible without the hundreds of neighbors and community stakeholders who have been involved thus far, sharing their dedication to their community and their vision for the future of the trail and the neighborhoods.

- » **Residents**
- » **Community Stakeholders**
- » **Workers**
- » **Business Owners**
- » **Property Owners**
- » **Artists**
- » **Funders**
- » **Programming Partners**



ACTION PLAN COST ESTIMATES: PRIORITY PROJECTS



Trail Continuity, Extensions, & Access Points

(page 23)

Connecting the Trail Gaps	\$300,000
Extending the Trail North	\$400,000 + potential I43 crossing



Linear Park Priority Projects

(page 31)

Vienna Avenue Crossing	\$1,295,000
Gateway 1: Connector Building Park	\$725,000 + Connector Building
Gateway 2: Capitol Bridge Yards	\$760,000
Infrastructure (Utilities + Lighting)	\$285,000
Priority Projects Total	\$3,065,000

Chapter 2 of the full version of the Implementation Plan contains additional details about the full build-out of the Linear Park.



Connector Building Development

(page 34)

Site work & development	\$550,000
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Annual Programming & Maintenance Budgets

(page 41)

Annual budget for programming	\$200,000
Annual maintenance budget	\$20,000

LEVERAGED INVESTMENT:

These investments will leverage and be reinforced by new housing and commercial development, including affordable housing development in the neighborhoods adjacent to the trail and commercial development led by local entrepreneurs in Milwaukee's Creative District. This includes an anticipated:

- \$20 million in affordable housing construction and rehabilitation.
- \$15 million in commercial, industrial, and community space development
- \$400,000 in safety and public art projects

MANAGEMENT & STEWARDSHIP

The Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project is a creative placemaking collaboration located in the Riverworks area, including the Harambee and Riverwest neighborhoods.

Guided by the Milwaukee Method of Creative Placemaking, the current Project Leadership Team is an outgrowth of the Guiding Lenses Group that formed in 2014. The Guiding Lenses Group is a broad set of neighbors and civic leaders that came together for the Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project.

The Project Leadership team consists of representatives from the local and national organizations listed below. Members combine their expertise and resources in support of the project mission, vision, and goals.

The Project Leadership Team meets both as a complete decision-making body, and as topic-specific committees as needed.

Moving forward, the Beerline Trail Neighborhood Development Project will formalize a fiscal agent and governance structure under the umbrella of Riverworks Development Corp. in order to carry out fundraising for the next implementation stages of the project. This structure will provide continued opportunities for resident leadership. The dedicated members of the current project leadership team will continue to support the project through implementation, either through advising and collaboration or more formal roles.

CONSENSUS DECISION MAKERS:



ADVISORS & COLLABORATORS:



PROJECT INVESTMENT TO-DATE

To-date, approximately **\$2.9 million has been invested** in the Beerline Trail between Capitol Drive and Burleigh Street, leveraging additional investment in real estate development adjacent to the trail. Highlights include:

- » Land Acquisition and Trail Construction (WISDOT TE Funding)
Total Investment: \$1,260,000
- » Community Improvement Projects on the trail (9 total projects funded since 2014)
Total Investment: \$133,000
- » Planning, Engagement and Programming
Total Investment \$765,000
- » Environmental Remediation (removal and cleanup of 3456 N. Buffum)
Total Investment: \$755,000

Time Investment by Staff, Partners, & Community Members:

1,000 hours +

Investment in Trail-adjacent Real Estate Projects:

\$7 million +

Total Investment:

\$10 million +

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO-DATE

- » Neighborhood people power investment
- » Project Leadership Team – monthly meetings & ongoing stewardship + management
- » Guiding Lenses Group participation & leadership
- » Environmental remediation along the trail and the future linear park area
- » Paved path from W. Capitol Drive to N. Bremen Street/ E. Burleigh Street
- » Signage & wayfinding
- » Shipping containers for community spaces: green house, performances, class room
- » Outdoor classroom
- » Landscaping
- » Lighting
- » Murals & other public art
- » Ice skating rink
- » Seating area behind Café Corazon
- » Maintenance (ongoing)
- » Programming (ongoing)
- » Community capacity building & leadership development
- » Lifeways Plan
- » Equitable Implementation Plan

