



## MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN, BID #21 FACT SHEET

### WHAT IS A BID?

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 is an organization established in 1998 to support the interests of the downtown Milwaukee business community. Created through private sector leadership, Milwaukee Downtown is a management district that oversees 120 blocks representing approximately 400 property owners in the center of downtown Milwaukee. These property owners voluntarily agree to be taxed to enhance the environment and complement services provided by the city. Through the tax, Milwaukee Downtown funds specific initiatives aimed at creating a clean, safe and friendly downtown, including developing a comprehensive consumer marketing campaign to brand downtown as a destination to area residents.



Downtown Milwaukee skyline looking east.  
*Photo by Dan Bishop*

The boundaries of BID #21 cover approximately one square mile, running from 10<sup>th</sup> Street on the west to Lake Michigan on the east, and from Schlitz Park on the north to St. Paul Avenue on the south.

### PRIORITIES OF MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN, BID #21

#### Clean, Safe & Friendly Services

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 contracts four teams to ensure downtown remains clean, safe and friendly.

- The **Public Service Ambassadors (PSAs)** serve as downtown's walking concierges. Distributing info to visitors on the streets, they also serve as an extra set of eyes for Milwaukee's Police & Fire Departments. To aid in their efforts, the PSAs use several tools to maintain a consistent presence in downtown, including the Traveling Information Kiosk (TIK), Bicycle Information Kiosk (BIK), Chariot and Bike Patrol Team.
- The **Clean Sweep Ambassadors (CSAs)** keep downtown litter-free by panning and brooming downtown everyday. They also scrub and power wash each block within the district once a quarter and install park decorations for the Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival.
- The **Graffiti Removal Team** ensures downtown is graffiti-free by eliminating tags within 24 hours of discovery.
- The **Landscape Crew** puts the finishing touches on downtown by tending to over 250 planters and hanging baskets along Wisconsin Avenue, Old World Third Street and the RiverWalk.

#### Marketing

In addition to branding downtown as a destination through collateral and a multi-faceted advertising campaign, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 also sponsors several events throughout the year. Each targets a different audience to enhance perceptions of downtown as a great place to live, work and play.

- **Downtown Dining Week** puts downtown's culinary talents on display with one delectable deal. The annual event attracts over 50,000 diners to downtown with prix-fixe menus at \$10 for lunch and \$20 for dinner at 40 restaurants. Coinciding with the launch of the Milwaukee Trolley Loop season, Downtown Dining Week kicks off late May/early June.

MORE

## **PRIORITIES OF MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN, BID #21**

### **Marketing (continued)**

- Begun by Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 in 2006 as a business retention and recruitment initiative, **Downtown Employee Appreciation Week** mirrors a “spirit week” with special events, office challenge games, musical competitions and discounts at local businesses to rally downtown Milwaukee’s 78,000 employees. Downtown Employee Appreciation Week not only rewards the lead contributors in the local economy, but also elevates downtown Milwaukee’s image as a great place to conduct business. As the only event of its kind in the nation, it received the 2007 International Downtown Association’s Outstanding Achievement Award for its originality and replicability in other markets.
- To showcase the explosion in housing options, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 partners with the Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS® to package downtown living options and amenities during the **Downtown Open House** – downtown’s largest weekend open house featuring nearly 40 properties. The open house properties are linked with free shuttles that board passengers at the Milwaukee Public Market where the Downtown Housing Expo is held. The Downtown Open House is held in conjunction with the Milwaukee River Challenge in mid-September.
- Since 1998, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 has been lighting up downtown with the **Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival**. Dazzling guests with new displays and bundling the abundance of activities each year through a comprehensive guide, the festival reigns the region for seven weeks.

### **Parking & Transportation**

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 along with neighborhood partners led the creation of the Alliance for Downtown Parking & Transportation to address parking and transportation concerns. Initiatives derived from the committee include ParkMilwaukee.com and a downtown parking map.

An advocate for mass transit, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 is among the members of the Loop Group. Comprised of private and non-profit organizations, the group fundraises for downtown’s free summer trolley service, the Milwaukee Trolley Loop, which connects visitors to key attractions, restaurants and retail, Wednesdays through Saturdays.

### **Business Retention & Recruitment**

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 has taken a lead role in business retention and recruitment initiatives. Working with the UW-Extension Center for Community Economic Development, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 completed a 2007 market analysis, which summarizes the current status of downtown and suggests opportunities for growth. The study also contained a series of focus groups with downtown residents, employees, young professionals, college students, and visitors to identify ways to improve downtown Milwaukee as a great place to live, work and play. The comprehensive report has become a tool for brokers looking to lure new businesses downtown.

To complement the market analysis, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 collaborated with the Milwaukee Development Corporation to execute an Executive Pulse Survey. The one-on-one interaction with downtown CEOs has helped identify challenges faced by individual companies, large and small, influenced companies to stay downtown and reaffirmed a commitment to improving downtown.

### **Advocacy**

Representing approximately 400 property owners in the center of downtown Milwaukee, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 advocates for policies or actions that will improve the district on a local, state or national level.

**PRIORITIES OF MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN, BID #21**

**Retail**

In 2008, Milwaukee Downtown unveiled plans to concentrate on retail development. Interviewing a number of retail specialist, Milwaukee Downtown hired Downtown Works – a Washington, D.C.-based consulting firm that specializes in cultivating retail districts in urban centers. Upon the completion of the Downtown Streetfront Retail Strategy, Milwaukee Downtown hired Deanna Inniss to lead recruitment efforts. Since February 2009, Inniss has been interfacing between prospective retailers and landlords to match new retailers with appropriate spaces, maintaining a property database and tenant prospect list, and assisting existing retailers with merchandising.

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**INFORMATION**

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 is located at 600 E. Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202. For more information on Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21, visit [www.MilwaukeeDowntown.com](http://www.MilwaukeeDowntown.com) or call 414.220.4700.

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