



# RIPPLE EFFECT

SUMMER 2025 | MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN, BID #21





## From the CEO – A Fond Farewell

As I write this farewell, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we've shared together. Working alongside property owners, brokers, business owners, policymakers, urban enthusiasts, and residents of Downtown Milwaukee has profoundly enriched my life. Each relationship I've built has been invaluable, transforming challenges into opportunities and dreams into realities. While we've faced hurdles—whether navigating economic changes or tackling urban development concerns—the successes we've achieved together far outweigh them. This transformation is a testament to the love, tenacity, and unwavering support of this remarkable community that will always be my home.

As I prepare for this next chapter in my life, I am overwhelmed with gratitude, pride, and optimism. My time with this organization has been filled with purpose, marked by countless moments I will cherish forever. From the successful launch of Downtown revitalization projects to witnessing the growth of local businesses and vibrant community events, every achievement has reminded me of what we can accomplish when we come together.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been part of this journey: our dedicated board members, my incredible team, and all those who tirelessly work to make Downtown Milwaukee shine. Your enthusiasm and collaboration have inspired me every day. I will always cherish those extended meetings that turned into laughter-filled brainstorming sessions, the community gatherings that showcased our collective spirit, and the innovative partnerships we forged together. I am confident that Milwaukee Downtown will continue to thrive and reach new heights we never imagined possible.

Even as I close this chapter, my connection to our community remains strong. I look forward to cheering on our continued progress, and to witnessing Milwaukee Downtown evolve in exciting ways as we embark on year two of our five-year strategic plan. I am eager to see the growth in public space activations, job opportunities, and initiatives supporting our arts, culture, sports, and entertainment industries. I take pride in our work to provide a safe and welcoming community through our outstanding ambassadors and Community Intervention Team.

My last day with the organization will be Friday, June 27. At that point, the role of CEO will transition to the exceptionally capable Matt Dorner, who has served as our Economic Development Director for the past ten years. I am also excited to congratulate Erica Green in her new role as COO and Brian Johnson as Director of our Public Service Ambassador program.

I leave with peace, knowing Downtown Milwaukee is in great hands with these phenomenal individuals at the helm, along with the support of the full team and our exceptional board of directors.

## Thank you for your enthusiasm and friendship these past 28 years.



With love, heartfelt gratitude, and best wishes for a bright future,

Beth Weirick, CEO



August, 1998

### Press Conference Announcing BID #21's Formation

The leadership of the newly formed Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 held a press conference at Mason and Water streets. Boy, was it windy! We unveiled the organization's logo and announced two new clean, safe, and friendly services to Downtown: the Public Service Ambassadors and the Clean Sweep Ambassadors.



November - December, 1999

### Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival

Milwaukee Downtown led the effort to bring holiday grandeur back to Wisconsin Avenue, adding roofline lighting to the buildings along the way. What's more, we illuminated three Downtown parks for the holidays. The "kickoff ceremony" for the new festival took the form of a simple ribbon cutting beneath the gazebo at Pere Marquette Park, with speeches from lead sponsors and city officials.

July 31 - August 5, 2006

### First-Of-Its-Kind Employee Appreciation Initiative

Milwaukee Downtown launched the first Downtown Employee Appreciation Week in the spirit of a high school "Homecoming Week." The inaugural event included office challenge games, a Downtown battle of the bands, a Downtown fashion show, and a volleyball competition. It was recognized by the International Downtown Association with a Downtown Achievement Award for being an innovative concept in business retention and recruitment tactics.



September 11 - 15, 2009

### The 55th Annual International Downtown Association Conference

Other urban centers began to take note of the synergies happening in Downtown Milwaukee. With the help of city officials, business leaders, Visit Milwaukee, and neighboring BIDs and associations, we hosted the 2009 International Downtown Association Conference. At the time, the organization was comprised of representatives from more than 650 cities. The five-day showcase featured a series of events and tours that put the splendor of Downtown Milwaukee on full display.

May - October, 2017

### The Year of Wisconsin Avenue

To spotlight the unprecedented investment that was occurring along Downtown Milwaukee's main street, Milwaukee Downtown declared 2017 "The Year of Wisconsin Avenue." The festivities included a series of activities, all celebrating this grand stretch.

We produced a 12-block audio tour of the avenue via the Otocast app, featuring the voices of various community leaders. It allowed smartphone users to explore points of interest throughout Downtown. We also established the Downtown Placemaking Task Force, which commissioned street artist Mauricio Ramirez to transform ten utility boxes along Wisconsin Avenue with murals representing its storied history.

Milwaukee Downtown also launched its Key to Change fundraising campaign that year. The organization installed seven key-shaped parking meters along Wisconsin Avenue that served as donation depositories for our homeless outreach efforts. Plus, BID #21 was integral to the launch of Sculpture Milwaukee, which brought 22 sculptures to Wisconsin Avenue. This months-long celebration earned Milwaukee Downtown another Downtown Achievement Award from the International Downtown Association.





# Meet Our Newest Role Models

Help us welcome several new staff members to our team and congratulate the individuals who have taken on new roles with Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21.

## Matt Dorner

### INCOMING CEO

On June 28, 2025, Matt Dorner will officially take on the role of Chief Executive Officer for Milwaukee Downtown, only the second one in its history. He has served as the organization's Economic Development Director since 2014. Over the last decade, Dorner has been fully engaged in quality-of-life issues and economic growth. Assisting the development community and benchmarking the resurgence of Downtown Milwaukee with quantifiable data is a top priority for him.

In addition, Dorner's tenacity and dedication to launching public-private projects has been remarkable. Over the past several years, he assisted with the implementation of Brighten the Passage, Active Streets for Business, improvements at Pompeii Square, Frame the Square at Cathedral Square Park, and the Downtown Milwaukee Dog Park, the district's first public dog park, which is slated to open this summer.



### What are you most excited about in your new role?

I'm thrilled to continue advancing the mission and vision of Milwaukee Downtown with our amazing team, board of directors, partners at the City and County, and colleagues in the commercial real estate industry. Beth Weirick has been a tremendous leader for this organization, ensuring its stability over the last 28 years and establishing long-term goals for our next chapter to ensure continued success and growth.

### What trends are occurring in downtowns nationwide? Is Milwaukee on par?

The pandemic changed the way that many people work with employers offering greater flexibility. Fortunately, through strong business leadership and quality-of-life initiatives, Milwaukee has outpaced many of its peers in its recovery, and foot traffic has essentially returned to pre-pandemic levels. We attribute much of this success to new businesses committing to Downtown and our approach in helping employees reattach to the office. We strongly believe emotional connections are fostered and strengthened through community building and public space activations. Downtowns are also seeing more Class B and C office buildings being converted into residential to meet the growing demand for urban living, which is the case in Downtown Milwaukee.

### What are your thoughts on Downtown Milwaukee's growing residential population?

Downtown Milwaukee offers a high quality of life with tons of access to arts, culture, dining, green space, water, and a number of growing job opportunities. It's no surprise that the demand to live here is increasing. I am proud to be a near-Downtown resident and an active user of our public transit options.

From an organizational standpoint, we love the vibrancy that our residents bring. Plus, growing our residential population increases our density beyond 9 to 5, which helps to support and attract retail and commercial activity.

### Speaking of a high quality of life, what are some of the significant amenities that will soon be available to Downtown residents and employees?

One of the most exciting developments will be the delivery of Downtown's first dog park this summer. More than five years in the making, the park has been a void in our landscape as the number of our residents has grown, along with employers who allow employees to bring their dogs to work. It was a recurring topic in the Connecting MKE: Downtown Plan 2040, and in our ongoing perception surveys and market research, so we're elated to redevelop an underutilized site and add the park to our list of distinguished amenities.

### What's next in fulfilling the goals of the organization's five-year strategic plan?

We're now on year two of implementing our five-year strategic plan, with many of the action items underway. We remain committed to creating a vibrant Downtown that continues to attract new employers to our office buildings and delivers compelling reasons for employees to report to their Downtown offices. This year, we're making a concerted effort to explore the creation of a Public Space Management Organization, to develop, maintain, and activate inclusive public spaces in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner. We're currently working on an updated retail study to activate our street-level vacancies and we're also playing a key role in the redesign of Red Arrow Park for future improvements as funding becomes available.



## Rachel Farina

### DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

At the start of this year, Milwaukee Downtown welcomed Rachel Farina as our Director of Communications, a new role within the organization. This position was created to communicate Milwaukee Downtown's growing number of events and initiatives that have ripple effects on surrounding neighborhoods and the region, and to steer the goals of our five-year strategic plan. Farina has served as a marketing, communications, and public relations liaison for Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 since 2003.



## Erica Green

### CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

In early 2024, Erica Green (formerly Chang) was named Milwaukee Downtown's Director of Public Space Initiatives. In her new role as COO, effective April 10, 2025, she will continue to manage activations in parks and third spaces, and she will also oversee operations for all core service contracts. This includes managing our Public Service Ambassador, Clean Sweep Ambassador, and landscaping contracts, and working with the Community Intervention Team to assist unhoused citizens and reduce crime and public disruption. Previously, Green served as our Marketing, Events and Social Media Director, from 2016 to 2021. Milwaukee Downtown plans to hire a Placemaking & Program Manager to assume some of Green's previous responsibilities.



## Brian Johnson

### DIRECTOR OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

A member of the Public Service Ambassador team since 2010, Brian Johnson's contributions to the Downtown community are innumerable. In 2021, Johnson was named the organization's first Homeless Outreach Public Service Ambassador. His dedication and ability to establish a rapport with individuals on the street and within our organization have elevated Johnson to his newest role, Director of the Public Service Ambassador program.



## Terence Lee

### HOMELESS OUTREACH PUBLIC SERVICE AMBASSADOR

Under the mentorship of Brian Johnson, Terence Lee is the organization's next Homeless Outreach Public Service Ambassador. Lee has been a PSA since 2021. He will support Mary Lockwood, the Downtown Homeless Outreach Coordinator at Milwaukee County Housing Services. A large amount of his time will be dedicated to establishing a rapport with individuals and building trust through the distribution of care kits containing basic essentials.



## Isabel Ullrich

### MARKETING, EVENTS & SOCIAL MEDIA DIRECTOR

In January 2025, Milwaukee Downtown promoted Isabel Ullrich to the role of Marketing, Events & Social Media Director. Her primary responsibilities include coordinating and implementing special events, fundraising and sponsorships, as well as managing the organization's social media channels. Her project management skills, talent for content creation, and ability to foster sponsor relationships earned her this well-deserved promotion. She was originally hired in June, 2024, as Milwaukee Downtown's Marketing, Events & Social Media Manager.

## Board of Directors Update

**Milwaukee Downtown is grateful to the visionary leaders who comprise our Board of Directors. Representing more than 430 property owners, this cohort is actively engaged in contract negotiations, placemaking, advocacy, and strategic oversight for the organization. They act as stewards of the district's success, working collaboratively to drive growth and investment.**



### Please join us in welcoming our newest board members:

**Jim Cavanaugh**, Cushman & Wakefield | Boerke, representing Schlitz Park; **S.R. Mills**, Bear Real Estate Group; **Matt Moroney**, Wangard Partners, Inc.; and **Omar Shaikh**, 3rd Street Market Hall and Carnevor Steakhouse.

With heartfelt gratitude, we recognize the following individuals whose terms have ended. Thank you to **Kevin Behl**, East Town Association; **John Creighton**, CBRE / Johnson Controls; **Kim Guerrero**, Colliers International; **George Meyer**, Kahler Slater; and **Scott Welsh**, Inland Companies / Colliers International, for their unwavering support and service to BID #21.

In addition, Milwaukee Downtown's Executive Committee has been restructured. The officers elected to a one-year term include:

**Tammy Babisch**, Colliers International – *Board Chair*; **Joseph Ullrich**, US Bank – *Immediate Past Board Chair*; **Kevin Kennedy**, Northwestern Mutual – *Vice Chair*; **Steve Bartelt**, The Marcus Corporation – *Secretary*; **David Knight**, Associated Bank – *Assistant Secretary*; and **Annette Adams**, MGIC – *Treasurer*. Milwaukee Downtown is grateful for their service and their ongoing commitment to steer the organization's next chapter.



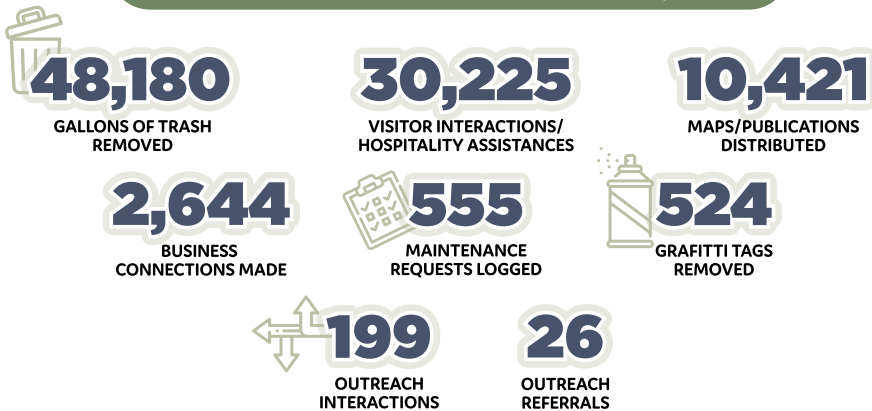
The Work of Our Ambassadors is Spot-On in Q1

In alignment with Milwaukee Downtown’s five-year strategic plan, we’re doubling down on our clean, safe, and welcoming initiatives. Our Public Service Ambassador contractor, Block by Block, has rolled out a new tracking platform.

SMART (Statistics Management and Ambassador Reporting Technology) System 2.0 allows us to easily measure our ROI on the services we offer. From visitor interactions to graffiti tags, the system tracks the walking paths and the daily engagements of our PSAs, to ensure that we’re covering all areas of the district.



Check out the impressive numbers that our Ambassadors delivered in Q1 this year:



Congratulations to our Public Service Ambassadors and Clean Sweep Ambassadors for always going above and beyond to ensure that Downtown sparkles.

Homeless Outreach Efforts Continue to Make an Impact

Milwaukee Downtown remains committed to enhancing quality-of-life issues for all citizens in our district. For our unhoused population, that starts with the Housing First model. Once stable housing is established, the individual receives customized wraparound services that could include primary medical care, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, and job training.

This model has proven to significantly reduce emergency and other tax-funded services, such as police response, EMS response, ambulances, emergency room, hospital inpatient, psychiatric inpatient, detox, municipal courts, public defenders, and jail time.

Since the start of Housing First and the Community Intervention Team in 2015, Milwaukee has seen a 92 percent reduction in its unsheltered population. The holistic approach of Housing First combined with the efforts of the Community Intervention Team has reduced public service costs and provided permanent supportive housing to more than 2,400 individuals.

While the number of unsheltered individuals increased nationally to record levels in 2024, Milwaukee city and county both saw a decline, with the county’s population falling

from 1,056 people in 2023 to 885 in 2024. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has twice cited Milwaukee for the lowest per-capita count of unsheltered individuals in the U.S., in 2021 and 2022. The city was also cited for the second lowest count twice.

In 2024, the Downtown Homeless Outreach Coordinator made over 3,400 street outreach contacts and helped over 70 clients find permanent housing solutions in the greater Downtown area. Meanwhile, the PSA Homeless Outreach Coordinator had nearly 700 interactions with unhoused individuals, assisted with over 450 outreach service referrals, and made nearly 125 panhandling and public nuisance interventions.

Milwaukee’s model for homeless outreach has made such an impact that it was highlighted in the 2024 documentary film, “Beyond the

CSA Team Gets New, Ultra Clean Machine

This year, we invested in a critical new piece of equipment for our Clean Sweep Ambassador team, contracted through Modern Maintenance. The electric Madvac All-Terrain Litter Vacuum LN50 is a cost-efficient ride-on vehicle that safely and effectively cleans up city sidewalks, parks, and streets. It replaced our ATLV machine. From concrete to grass, the LN50 can tackle all types of urban terrain with ease. Perfect for narrow spaces, it also has a wander hose for hard-to-reach places.

“The new Madvac machine undeniably outperforms our last power vac, making our cleanup time much more efficient,” said Greg Peterson, director of the Clean Sweep Ambassador team.

Spot the new Madvac around Downtown this summer!



Beats and Eats Return During Our Two Lunchtime Concert Series

Milwaukee Downtown will once again enliven the lunch hour for Downtown’s workforce with two beloved summertime music series. Designed to provide Downtown denizens with a lively break in their day, each series will highlight an assortment of popular local and regional acts.

Heart(beats) of the City powered by MGIC will get things pumping at Red Arrow Park on Wednesdays from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. The series will run June 4-August 27, with a hiatus on August 20. Food trucks will be parked nearby to sell lunchtime eats.

PNC presents Tunes@Noon will return to the Courtyard of 411 East Wisconsin Center from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm on Thursdays. Performances are scheduled June 5-August 28, with a break on June 19. Food options for purchase will be available from Davians and other vendors throughout the season.

“We’re thrilled to activate these cozy public spaces for Downtown employees and neighbors to enjoy a midday break,” said Erica Green, Chief Operating Officer for Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21. “Plus, it’s satisfying to provide a platform for a wide spectrum of rising and veteran musicians.”



Heart(beats) of the City powered by MGIC  
Red Arrow Park



<b>WED, JUNE 4</b> Eddie Butts Band	<b>WED, JULY 9</b> Jenny Thiel Group	<b>WED, AUGUST 6</b> Kal Bergendahl Project
<b>WED, JUNE 11</b> Listening Party	<b>WED, JULY 16</b> Horizon - Navy Band Great Lakes	<b>WED, AUGUST 13</b> Natty Nation
<b>WED, JUNE 18</b> 2000 and Late	<b>WED, JULY 23</b> Jon Hintz & Friends	<b>MON, AUGUST 18 (DEAW)</b> Rhythm Kings
<b>WED, JUNE 25</b> Charambo Latin Jazz	<b>WED, JULY 30</b> Rob Knapp and the Soul Patrol	<b>WED, AUGUST 27</b> Donna Woodall Group
<b>WED, JULY 2</b> The Midnight Purchase		

PNC Presents Tunes@Noon  
Courtyard of 411 East Wisconsin Center



<b>THU, JUNE 5</b> Frogwater	<b>THU, JULY 10</b> Kal Bergendahl Trio	<b>THU, AUGUST 7</b> Mighty Ms. Erica
<b>THU, JUNE 12</b> B-Free	<b>THU, JULY 17</b> Jon Hintz	<b>THU, AUGUST 14</b> El Sebas
<b>THU, JUNE 26</b> Jorge Vallentine	<b>THU, JULY 24</b> Darryl Armistead	<b>THU, AUGUST 21</b> Montage
<b>THU, JULY 3</b> Jay Matthes	<b>THU, JULY 31</b> Jenny Thiel Group	<b>THU, AUGUST 28</b> Van Issacson

Milwaukee Downtown Summer 2025 Calendars

Looking for more summertime happenings? Milwaukee Downtown has once again produced a comprehensive summer events guide, highlighting festivals, markets and more for the event-packed months of June, July, August and September.



If your business would like a quantity for guests and employees, please contact Brian Johnson via [bjohnson@milwaukeedowntown.com](mailto:bjohnson@milwaukeedowntown.com). You can also download a digital version of the calendar by visiting [milwaukeedowntown.com](http://milwaukeedowntown.com), or by scanning this QR code.



Downtown’s MOTOR Moves to Vel R. Phillips Plaza

The MOTOR, Milwaukee Downtown’s mobile info kiosk, will have a new home this summer. Formerly positioned in front of the Milwaukee Art Museum’s foot bridge at the end of Wisconsin Avenue during the summer months, it will now spend most of its time at the new Vel R. Phillips Plaza on Wisconsin Avenue, between Vel R. Phillips Avenue and 5th Street.

The MOTOR, which stands for Milwaukee’s Own Traveling Outdoor Resource, is staffed weekday afternoons and weekends by the Public Service Ambassadors. It’s chock full of maps and brochures on things to do in Downtown Milwaukee.

This year’s new location at the Vel R. Phillips Plaza will allow us to reach conventioners at nearby venues, as well as public transit commuters and Night Market attendees. In addition, the owner of Draft & Vessel, the food and beverage operator for the building on the plaza, expects to open its Draft & Co. concept there by this fall.





# A Public Space Management Organization is Being Explored

One of the goals of the city's Connecting MKE: Downtown Plan 2040 is to "invest in the public realm by improving streets, parks, and other public spaces in ways that encourage a more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient Milwaukee."

To achieve this goal, the plan tasked Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 with leading the effort to create "a 'public space management organization' to help fundraise, maintain, program, and promote our Downtown parks and public spaces." This was also underscored in Milwaukee Downtown's recent five-year strategic plan process, and was identified as one of the organization's "Big Moves."

Public space management organizations (PSMOs) are models used by urban centers nationwide. Milwaukee Downtown is currently exploring the creation of a PSMO to develop, maintain and activate Milwaukee's inclusive public spaces in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner.



Milwaukee Downtown hired community planning firm MIG to prepare case studies on four cities that developed PSMOs: Downtown Dallas, Inc. and Downtown Dallas Parks Conservancy (Dallas, TX), Hudson River Park Trust (New York City, NY), Memphis



River Parks Partnership (Memphis, TN), and Philadelphia's Center City District (Philadelphia, PA). Two graduate students from UWM's School of Architecture and Urban Planning program prepared a fifth case study, on the Washington DC NoMa BID.

The research for each case study focused on six areas: drivers and incorporation, partnerships, funding and organizational framework, strategic plan, public perception, equitable outcomes, and key performance indicators. All organizations researched had some form of a strategic plan that was implemented from the beginning. Some began with one set of goals and, as those goals were met, they pivoted and adapted. In every case, the PSMO was just one element of a strong organizational network.

Each organization also had one strong contractual relationship that provided a consistent and reliable portion of funding, as well as a combination of diverse supplemental

funding streams. For some organizations, that included a strong marketing and promotions arm which held fundraising events like galas. For others, a "Friends of" group was dedicated to raising funds. All organizations received revenue from some fee for service or leasing opportunity, as well.

Additionally, the study revealed that a PSMO should engage key stakeholders and the public during major planning phases, as transparency is key to public buy-in. Plus, a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the PSMO, governmental entities, and other partners is critical to success.

Beyond MIG's efforts, Milwaukee Downtown collaborated with Downtown Madison Inc. in April to foster a conversation on the benefits of a PSMO. We look forward to further conversations around establishing a PSMO, and will continue to seek public input for this catalytic initiative.



## Where You Work is the Perk Downtown Employee Appreciation Week Returns August 18-22

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will host its 20th annual Downtown Employee Appreciation Week, August 18-22. Modeled after "Homecoming Week," this spirit week for Downtown's workforce will feature daily activities, including office challenge games, thousand-item lunch giveaways, workout sessions, and after-work social events like trivia night and happy hour.

We also look forward to introducing some exciting new themed activities into this year's event. We're currently exploring the potential for a "Bring Your Dog to Work Day" and an "Intern Appreciation Day."

Your business can be a part of Downtown Employee Appreciation Week in a big way. To donate prizes, food, or services, or to coordinate an event at your location, contact iullrich@milwaukeedowntown.com.

Mark your calendars and check [iworkdowntownmke.com](http://iworkdowntownmke.com) regularly for more information.



## THE TABLE IS SET FOR DOWNTOWN DINING WEEK, MAY 29 – JUNE 5, 2025!

The 19th annual Downtown Dining Week returns to our city's iconic restaurants May 29 through June 5. This popular festival of feasting celebrates Downtown Milwaukee's renowned culinary scene. Over the course of eight days, participating restaurants will offer two- or three-course lunch options priced at \$15 or \$25, and three-course dinner choices at \$35, \$45 or \$55. Nearly 30 restaurants are on this year's menu.

2025's participants include: ARIA, Avli, Bacchus - A Bartolotta Restaurant, Benihana,

Blue Bat Kitchen & Tequilaria, Café at The Pfister, The Capital Grille, Carson's Prime Steaks & Famous Barbecue, Central Standard Crafthouse & Kitchen, DOC's Commerce Smokehouse, The Edison, Electric Lime Taqueria, Elsa's on the Park, Flourchild Pizza, The Knick, Mader's Restaurant, Milwaukee ChopHouse, Milwaukee Sail Loft, MOTOR Bar & Restaurant, Oggie's Kitchen + Bar, Old German Beer Hall, Onesto,

Rodizio Grill, Smoke Shack, The Social American Tavern, Third Coast Provisions, Tupelo Honey Southern Kitchen & Bar, Vagabond, and Ward's House of Prime.

The event continues to introduce new diners to Downtown's eateries. Last year, approximately 49% of the diners experienced a restaurant for the first time during Downtown Dining Week, and 60% of them neither lived nor worked Downtown – a testament to the event's ability to



draw new guests to the district. All diners are invited to complete a survey after every Downtown Dining Week experience, which is how Milwaukee Downtown tracks the event. This year, every completed survey will count as one entry into a grand prize drawing in which four diners will each be awarded \$350 worth of Downtown dining gift cards.

"Every year, Downtown Dining Week is highly anticipated by our guests and team members as a way to bring our community together over great dining experiences," said

Lindsey FitzMaurice, Managing Partner of The Capital Grille. "This year we are excited to offer a three-course lunch and dinner menu, featuring some of our guest favorites."

Diners can browse menus in advance at [downtowndiningmke.com](http://downtowndiningmke.com). This has grown to be a tremendously popular event, so reservations are highly encouraged.

Discounted parking opportunities will be available through our partners at Interstate Parking.





# North American Mounted Unit Commanders Association Selects Milwaukee for its 2026 Conference

A new conference will be trotting into town in early 2026. The Milwaukee Police Department's Mounted Patrol Unit will host the 18th annual training conference for the North American Mounted Unit Commanders Association, Inc. (NAMUCA) in Downtown Milwaukee.

The conference brings together mounted law enforcement officers and military mounted units from across North America, and occasionally from international agencies, including Ireland, Taiwan, Israel, and Australia. These training conferences provide members with vital equine training, professional development, collaborative opportunities, and a knowledge exchange to advance the safety and effectiveness of mounted units.

In planning for the 2026 conference, the nonprofit NAMUCA is seeking donations to support the education of mounted law enforcement personnel, and to enhance their stay in our fair city. Cash or in-kind contributions such as gifts cards, raffle items or vendor samples are welcome. All donations to NAMUCA are tax deductible.

Donations in \$100 increments can be accepted at namuca.com, under the "Events" tab. Paypal®, Venmo® and debit/credit cards are also accepted. If you would prefer to donate by check, please send it to:

**NAMUCA**  
Attn: Taya Workum  
584 Dawn Road  
Madison, OH 44057

For more information about donating products, please contact MPD Mounted Officer Esteban Arreguin at earreg@milwaukee.gov. Thank you in advance for supporting our nation's mounted law enforcement units.



## Options Galore for Getting Around This Summer

This summer, it will be easier than ever to attend Downtown's festivals, markets, and events via our wide range of public transit and micromobility options.

- **The Hop presented by Potawatomi Casino Hotel** is free to ride, making it easy to jump on and off at your next destination. Streetcars arrive every 15 minutes during peak hours, and every 20 minutes during off-peak hours and on Sundays. Get the details at thehopmke.com.
- **BublR Bikes, Milwaukee's bike share network**, offers e-bikes and pedal-powered bikes throughout the city. We're thrilled that the system plans to double its number of docks over the next year, with increased density Downtown. Community input will guide expansion locations and be marked by yard signs citywide. Complete the feedback survey at engage.milwaukee.gov/bublR2-o and find existing locations at bublr bikes.org.
- **CONNECT 1, Milwaukee County's battery-powered bus rapid transit system** conveniently links the Watertown Plank Park and Ride to the eastern end of Wisconsin Avenue, near Northwestern Mutual. View schedule information at ridemcts.com.
- **Lime and Spin** are dockless electric scooters available under Milwaukee's permanent scooter program. Riders are encouraged to use bike lanes and avoid sidewalks. To ride, you must download the Lime or Spin app, find a scooter, scan its QR code, and follow the app's instructions for parking and ending your ride.



# Public Art Continues to Flourish Downtown

The Downtown Placemaking Task Force has been busy these last few months. Since fall, they've added four new murals to the Downtown landscape. That includes the soon-to-be newest addition to the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection, which is being installed in partnership with the Milwaukee Riverwalk District at the Marcus Performing Arts Center later this summer. In addition, three sculptures by internationally renowned artists will find new homes in Downtown's public spaces.



**"Vessels of Milwaukee" by La Bang Studio**  
Marcus Performing Arts Center (permanent, coming soon)

La Bang Studio, founded by artist Christina Vang, was selected to install "Vessels of Milwaukee" along the Riverwalk. This will be the fourth and final piece of the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection. Work will begin at the location this summer.



**"Glimmer Pursuit" by CERA**  
Juneau Bridge Tower (permanent)

Part of CERA's "Light Seekers" series, this mural features a protagonist in a moment of curious and inquisitive exploration. It depicts a musician in motion, following a light, as a connection to the nearby performing arts venues. Milwaukee-based mural artist CERA is a 2012 graduate of the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.



**I Didn't Do It Alone by Karyn Olivier**  
Vel R. Phillips Plaza (permanent, coming soon)

Soon, the public will be able to contemplate Vel R. Phillips' legacy while sitting at a bronze version of her desk. It will be flanked by two vertical stone columns with six figurative sculptures that will represent the citizens, activists, and leaders who worked with Phillips for change. The sculpture will complement the kiosks on the site that tell the trials, tribulations, and joys of her life. The City of Milwaukee's Department of City Development selected Philadelphia-based artist Karyn Olivier to design this permanent memorial. It's expected to be completed in 2026.



**"Luminous Waters" by Unnaturell Design Co.**  
Knapp Street Bridge (permanent)

Unnaturell Design Co.'s mural concept, "Luminous Waters," was installed at the Knapp Street Bridge site. It represents the biological diversity of the Milwaukee River through a vibrant, modern palette and an illustrative, bold style. Unnaturell Design Co. is a collaboration between Caledonia, WI, muralist Thyla Arden and Washington-based artist Ayda Rose.



**"Buoyancy" by Brian Kaspr**  
740 North by 3L Living (permanent)

Inspired by community feedback from 140 survey responses, "Buoyancy" celebrates Downtown landmarks in lettering that spells out "Milwaukee." Architectural features of the city are also woven into Kaspr's mural, along with native plants.

**Rainbow Summer: HIGHLIGHT**  
Marcus Performing Arts Center Outdoor Grounds (temporary)

Milwaukee Downtown will partner once again with the Marcus Performing Arts Center on Rainbow Summer: HIGHLIGHT. The summer series is scheduled for July 14-20 at the Marcus Center's outdoor grounds. The event will feature free live music from local and regional artists, a vendors' market, food trucks, family-friendly activities, and more. Central to the activation will be a temporary public art installation, to be announced in early summer 2025.



**Within the Folds (Dialogue 1), 2020**

**by Thomas J. Price**  
Vel R. Phillips Plaza (temporary)

cast silicone bronze, ed. 2  
108 x 27 x 27 inches

Gift of Greater Milwaukee Foundation to America's Black Holocaust Museum, 2021

photo: Kevin J. Miyazaki for Sculpture Milwaukee 2020

Within the Folds was originally included in Sculpture Milwaukee's 2020 exhibition on Wisconsin Avenue. This year, as part of a collaboration with America's Black Holocaust Museum, the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Downtown, and Sculpture Milwaukee, it will be on view on Vel R. Phillips Plaza later this summer.



# WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD NEW BUSINESSES!

**801 Restaurant**

– *OPENING SOON!*

801 N. Jefferson Street

**Agency**

819 N. Marshall Street

414.409.5399

welcometo.agency

**Biggby Coffee**

920 N. Water Street

414.226.6537

biggby.com

**Cassis**

– *OPENING SOON!*

333 N. Water Street

**Duotone Modern**

534 N. Water Street

duotonemodern.com

**Electric Lime****Taqueria**

811 N. Jefferson Street

414.249.4587

**Enerpac Tool Group**

648 N. Plankinton Avenue

enerpac toolgroup.com

**HypeBoys**

224 W. Wisconsin Avenue

hypeboys.store

**Jr.'s Treats Snack Bar**

624 N. Water Street

414.808.0008

**Las Gardenias**

305 N. Plankinton Avenue

414.249.3738

gardeniasmke.com

**Loaded Spud**

– *OPENING SOON!*

789 N. Water Street

loadedspudeats.com

**Mediterranean****Cuisine MKE**

753 N. Water Street

920.306.3799

mediterraneancuisinemke.com

**Milwaukee Boot Co.**

– *OPENING SOON!*

301 W. Wisconsin Avenue

milwaukeebootcompany.com

**Sweet Connie's Café+**

1031 N. Dr. Martin Luther

King Jr. Drive

800.873.1440

sweetconniescafe.com



Visit [milwaukeedowntown.com](https://milwaukeedowntown.com) to discover summer events and more!



Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21

301 W. Wisconsin Avenue

Suite 106

Milwaukee, WI 53203

414.220.4700

[MilwaukeeDowntown.com](https://MilwaukeeDowntown.com)



## State of Downtown to Honor Downtown Achievers on October 16

Once again, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 is excited to recognize Downtown's resilient leaders. The Downtown Achievement Awards honor the trendsetters, game changers, and cheerleaders of our central business district. Whether they be businesses, developers, individuals, or organizations, we request your nominations for the 2025 Downtown Achievement Awards.

Milwaukee Downtown's executive committee will review all nominations and will determine this year's class of star achievers. All award winners will receive recognition at our State of Downtown Meeting, slated for the morning of Thursday, October 16, at the Milwaukee Public Museum.



Please send your nominations by Friday, August 15, to Isabel Ullrich, Marketing, Events & Social Media Director, via [iullrich@milwaukeedowntown.com](mailto:iullrich@milwaukeedowntown.com).

