

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Hello, Milwaukee Downtown-ers!

While it was sad to see the [holiday decorations](#) be put away, we're keeping spirits bright with another edition of Taste & Toast, March 6-10. Get the skinny on this year's participants and stay tuned for five fantastic nights of sampling and sipping.



Yesterday, we released a Request for Creative to spruce up ten utility boxes along Wisconsin Avenue. The project is part of Arts on Wisconsin Avenue--a summer initiative to build downtown's identity through the enhancement of spaces and places with sculpture, mural and lighting installations. Read more about this exciting proposal below.

Valentine's Day is just around the corner! If you're looking for sweet ways to celebrate, we've rounded up some lovely options.

Also, learn how you can make your building more energy efficient through Milwaukee's Better Buildings Challenge. Plus, get the scoop and a discount code on next week's Governor's Conference on Economic Development.

Thanks for reading!

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● TASTE & TOAST TO LIFT SPIRITS MARCH 6-10

Taste & Toast, a happy hour event featuring specially priced small plates, appetizers and libations, returns March 6-10 to over 20 downtown establishments. Promotional prices are available from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Among this year's participants are: Bacchus, The Brown Bottle, Carson's Prime Steaks, CLEAR Bar & Lounge, Coquette Café, Distil, Harbor House, Karma Bar & Grill, The Knick, Matador Taco + Tequila Bar, Mi*key's, Millioke, Milwaukee ChopHouse, Monarch Lounge, Onesto, Pier 106, The Pub Club, Rumpus Room, SafeHouse, Smoke Shack, Swig, Upper 90 Sports Bar, Water Buffalo and Who's On Third.



As an extra incentive for participating in Taste & Toast, Milwaukee Downtown will again award \$300 in dining gift certificates to two patrons. To enter, diners will be encouraged to complete an online Taste & Toast survey following their experience. At the conclusion of the event, two completed surveys will be randomly drawn.

So round up your friends and belly up to the bar! Menus of Taste & Toast

participants will be posted at www.milwaukeedowntown.com in mid-February.

DESIGN COMPETITION ANNOUNCED FOR WISCONSIN AVENUE UTILITY BOXES

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21, with input from the Downtown Placemaking Task Force, is proud to announce a design competition for a mural installation on Wisconsin Avenue utility boxes. The utility box mural installations will serve as the pilot initiative for Arts on Wisconsin Avenue. The utility boxes offer unique canvases for the visual arts in a dynamic and urban context. The project is intended to heighten awareness of the creative community and reflect Wisconsin Avenue's prominent stance as Milwaukee's main street.



The Request for Creativity allows artists to explore creative design concepts for ten identified Wisconsin Avenue utility boxes. Artists are encouraged to submit mural ideas for one (1) box, several boxes, or all ten (10) boxes. Artists can submit an idea(s) as an individual, or put together a team. Final designs will successfully reflect Wisconsin Avenue's rich history of commerce, diversity of architecture and people, and its undoubtedly bright future. Installations will take place in June.

[Click here](#) to learn more or contact Gabriel Yeager at gyeager@milwaukeedowntown.com. All inquiries must be submitted no later than Wednesday, Feb. 15.

GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Next week, Milwaukee will host the 2017 Governor's Conference on Economic Development, Feb. 8-10. Held at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center, the conference focuses on lessons learned, proven models, and strategies that planners and development professionals can use to advance their local communities.



Don't miss this opportunity to meet other planners and economic professionals who are working to strengthen Wisconsin's future! This conference also provides continuing education credits for EDFP, CEcD and AICP certifications. [Register today](#) and use code [MKEBID](#) to receive \$50 off your registration!

[Click here](#) to view the conference agenda.

MILWAUKEE EXPANDS ITS BETTER BUILDINGS

CHALLENGE

The Better Buildings Challenge is a national initiative that calls on buildings to reduce energy use by 20% over 10 years.

In 2012, the City of Milwaukee led the charge by pledging to reduce energy use in municipal buildings. To date, energy usage is down 11 percent from 2009.

To further this momentum, the City was awarded a grant by the U.S. Department of Energy to expand its efforts to the private sector. With new incentives in its toolkit, the City is rallying private commercial building participation. The program expansion was launched at a kick-off event in September, and 30 buildings have already pledged to take the challenge. The goal is to increase the number of participating commercial buildings to 200 by July 2018.

Green buildings decrease operating costs, increase building value and increase occupant satisfaction. If you're not a participant already, we encourage you to take the pledge, and join many of Milwaukee's Class B & C buildings in increasing efficiency and competitiveness in the marketplace.

To learn if your building qualifies for an assessment, contact 877.775.7256 or BBC_Program@franklinenergy.com. More information on the Better Buildings Challenge is also available at milwaukee.gov/BBC.



LOVELY WAYS TO CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY

What better way to love your friends, family or significant other than spending time in the city you love! Downtown offers many sweet ways to celebrate Valentine's Day. From ice-skating and fine dining, to concerts and crafts, let downtown be your picturesque backdrop for the occasion. [Click here](#) for a round-up of sweet things.



Stay in the loop! Follow us and get the latest info on downtown news and happenings.

