

MKE BLUEPRINT



Downtown Milwaukee's Changing Landscape

Fall/Winter 2016

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 | 600 East Wells Street | 414.220.4700 | MilwaukeeDowntown.com



Creating new lodging destinations in historic structures and new construction in East Town, Westown and the Historic Third Ward.



220-room Westin opening in 2017



158-room Kimpton Journeyman in the Historic Third Ward



Proposed hotel for the Humphrey Scottish Rite Masonic Center

The Room Boom – Growing Number of Hotels Stake Claim in Downtown Milwaukee

Since 2008, downtown Milwaukee’s hotel room inventory has increased by 44%, growing from 3,125 to 4,501. What’s causing the room boom? The increase in hotel rooms reflects a strong weekday corporate demand, high leisure travel (particularly during the summer months and festivals), under representation of several national hotel brands, and the unaccommodated peak season demand that has historically been pushed out to suburban hotels.

Among the newest downtown hotels is the 155-room **SpringHill Suites**. Located adjacent to the Wisconsin Center, the property is the latest historical building that has seen new life as a hotel. Since 2010, the **Iron Horse**, **Hilton Garden Inn** and **Brewhouse Inn & Suites** have also capitalized on this growing national trend. **Homewood Suites** will also open in early 2017 in the historic Button Block building. The 94-room, extended-stay hotel will enliven a mostly vacant seven-story building, and create contiguous activity between the Historic Third Ward and central business district.

New downtown hotels are focused on providing tremendous visitor experiences as well. Wisconsin’s first **Kimpton** brand hotel opened early summer in the Historic Third Ward. The Journeyman features 158 rooms, a rooftop lounge called The Outsider, and Tre Rivali – a street-level Mediterranean restaurant. Through its comfortable, but sophisticated amenities, the hotel has emerged as a new downtown social hot spot.

In June 2017, guests will be able to stay in Wisconsin’s first **Westin** Hotel. Adjacent to the U.S. Bank Center and connected via skywalk to the complex and 833 East Michigan, the 220-room hotel will include Chicago-based Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises’ debut Milwaukee restaurant.

Several other hotel projects could soon be added to this tally to meet the growing downtown demand. On the drawing board are a **Cambria** hotel at Plankinton Avenue, an adaptive reuse of the **Humphrey Scottish Rite Masonic Center**, as well as a **Hyatt Place** at The Brewery. In addition, the first submittals to the City’s 4th Street and Wisconsin Avenue request for proposals include major hospitality components, with a project from the Marcus Corporation and a second proposal from White Lodging Services.

As business and leisure travel grows in downtown Milwaukee, so will our nighttime economy. Watch for updates on reconvening the responsible hospitality task force in 2017.



94-room Homewood Suites



155-room SpringHill Suites




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.



**BETTER
BUILDINGS
CHALLENGE**
**ecoCITY of
MILWAUKEE**



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 the toolkit, the City is rallying private commercial building participation. The program expansion was launched at a kick-off event in September, and 27 buildings have already pledged to take the challenge.

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 available at milwaukee.gov/BBC.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS:

- Total
- Single point of contact to help develop energy efficiency projects
 - Free building energy assessments to qualifying buildings (\$1,500+ value)
 - Setup of free ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager® account to help track energy use
 - Introduction and hand-off to other relevant resources, including Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing, Focus on Energy incentives, operations reviews and more
 - Marketing opportunities for participants
 - Awards for participating buildings that complete projects and reach their goals
 - Access to operations and maintenance support resources

LONG-TERM BENEFITS FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS:

- Streamlined experience from intake to preparing to develop projects
- Quantified savings through the assessment report
- Insight into building energy use
- Market differentiation from competing buildings through marketing and awards
- Opportunities for building operations staff to expand knowledge of building technologies and for buildings to network and learn from one another
- Create a more comfortable and enjoyable environment for tenants/employees
- Access to financing and financial incentives for projects through partners

Improving Downtown's Connectivity

Buses, bikes, trains and streetcars create a well-connected transportation network

Like many cities, Milwaukee is implementing several transportation initiatives to create a more balanced, multimodal system for downtown and its neighboring communities.

The Milwaukee Streetcar is perhaps most transformational. The 2.5-mile Phase 1 and Lakefront Line Extension are slated to be operational by 2018 and 2019, respectively. While encompassing East Town, the Historic Third Ward, lakefront and Lower East Side, these initial routes will enhance connectivity between major activity hubs, and unlock the economic development potential of underutilized sites and buildings near the routes.



Construction milestones for the service remain on track. Most recently, Kiewit Infrastructure Co. was selected to lead the first phases of the streetcar. This includes the maintenance facility and installation of the rail, overhead contact system and streetcar stops.

Another transportation initiative making headway is bus rapid transit (BRT). Preliminary engineering has begun on an east-west BRT route that would connect Downtown Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) and Milwaukee County Research Park (MCRP). Portland, Grand Rapids and Cleveland have already demonstrated success with BRT where corridor ridership has expanded by 45%-60% over existing levels. A similar increase would add more than 3,300 daily round trips by transit in Milwaukee.*

Milwaukee's bike-share system, BublR Bikes, is also improving connectivity in the greater downtown area. Nearly 50 stations have opened in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa since its launch in 2014. With increasing ridership, BublR Bikes is offering direct neighborhood connections to the growing multimodal transportation network. In addition, incentives such as 30-day and annual passes are helping to make the service habitual for residents and employees.

Topping it all off, the Milwaukee Intermodal Station recently enhanced its accessibility. In June, the transit hub unveiled a new \$22 million passenger concourse and train shed. The new facility includes a mezzanine spanning five tracks and three boarding platforms; stairways, escalators and an elevator; and improved ventilation, lighting and signage. The renovations allow the new facility to meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The new structure provides comfort, safety, efficiency and modernization for the more than 1.3 million passengers who connect at the hub annually. Officials are now exploring adding more daily trips to accommodate the growing ridership between Milwaukee and Chicago.

*East West BRT – A Feasibility Study, prepared by AECOM with HNTB, April 6, 2016



Growing the Milwaukee Startup Community

Held in early November, the inaugural Milwaukee Startup Week was met with rave reviews. The entrepreneur-led event brought together entrepreneurs, investors, local leaders and startup enthusiasts for thought-provoking sessions and idea-sharing.

Featuring over 25 events produced by over 30 community partners, including gener8tor, Startup Milwaukee, NEWaukee, Ward 4 and more, the week highlighted the momentum in Milwaukee and southeast Wisconsin's high-growth, digital startup community.

As Milwaukee's economy evolves, digital startups will play an increasingly critical role in creating new jobs. Technology companies can be major tenants and drivers in the downtown office, retail, and residential markets as technology workers prefer to live and work in urban areas, which creates demand for additional commercial services.

"Creating a balanced economic development strategy that promotes growth in all sectors, especially in the high-tech industry, is critically important for communities to advance," said Matt Cordio, founder of Startup Milwaukee. "Tech companies have the highest job creation multiplier effect. Having a strong tech ecosystem here is critical to spurring job creation in other sectors such as retail, hospitality and professional services."

