



DOWNTOWN MILWAUKEE IS PUNCHING ABOVE ITS WEIGHT – LEARN WHY

Great cities start downtown. There's no doubt about it. No city or surrounding region can succeed without a strong, vibrant downtown.

Over the past few years, downtowns across the country have adapted to a multitude of factors. These changes have underscored the resiliency and attraction of downtown districts. People continue to love downtowns because that's where all the action happens, whether it's arts, culture, sports, festivals, dining or nightlife.

Downtown Milwaukee's vibrancy is unmatched. Our value as a sociable downtown is off the charts. According to the "Value of U.S. Downtowns and Center Cities" study by the International Downtown Association and Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21, we've transitioned from recovery to growth. The influx of new jobs, residents and visitors, as well as the swell of media attention that we've enjoyed over the past few years are tangible proof of that.

Below is a snapshot of the ways in which Downtown Milwaukee is propelling the city and region.



31% of all citywide jobs are located Downtown

7,800+ new jobs relocated or committed to Downtown since 2020

21.2% growth in residential population since 2010

144,618 sq. ft. of positive central business district office space absorption in 2024 YTD as a result of new employers moving Downtown



2-mile Lakefront Line and its eight stops opened in April 2024 marking The Hop streetcar's first extension

11,000+ new residential units added in greater Downtown area over the last decade



85% of all finance and insurance jobs in the City of Milwaukee are located Downtown

16th top city for young professionals to live, according to a July 2023 ranking by Forbes

\$5.4+ billion in completed development projects since 2015



15,000 theater seats, ranks Milwaukee's Theater District #1 in U.S. for highest number of theater seats per capita



5,879 Downtown hotel rooms, more than double the number since 2010 while continuing to drive high room rates



18th in the nation for the most office-to-apartment conversions, with more than 3,200 that are under construction or in the pipeline, according to Yardi Matrix

40 recommendations and action strategies in the recently adopted "Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040" aimed at building a Downtown for everyone

One of the ten "Friendliest Cities in the U.S.," according to a November 2023 ranking by Condé Nast Traveler



15th top city for the most beautiful skyline in the world, according to a June 2024 article by Architectural Digest

21% of the city's property tax base generated by Downtown, seven times more per square mile than the City on average



16,550+ attendees at summer placemaking events in 2024, including Big Truck Day, Heart(beats) of the City and Rainbow Summer: HIGHLIGHT

5th most competitive rental market in the U.S., according to an April 2024 report by Forbes



99: average WalkScore, making Downtown a walker's paradise

5th best city for college students and graduates, according to a July 2024 ranking by Forbes

96% of pre-pandemic activity has returned Downtown, according to Placer.ai, outpacing most peer cities with headline-worthy business wins, increased visitor travel and a growing residential base

3rd best big city in the U.S. to visit, according to an October 2023 ranking by Condé Nast Traveler

MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN, BID #21'S ROLE IN CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM

Milwaukee Downtown, Business Improvement District (BID) #21 has always been a dedicated supporter of Downtown businesses and initiatives that create and enhance unique experiences in Downtown Milwaukee.

The adoption last year of "Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040" redefined and re-envisioned the future of Downtown Milwaukee. Building on its excitement, Milwaukee Downtown engaged its stakeholders in the organization's own five-year strategic plan. It establishes a clear set of priorities, partnerships, programs and projects to ensure that the next phase of BID #21's growth is consistent with the needs, values and overall vision for Downtown Milwaukee.

While clean, safe and welcoming services will remain central to our operation, Milwaukee Downtown also has the opportunity to play a significant role in public space management, recruiting and retaining employers of all sizes, and convening partners for regional advancement.



Six areas of focus for 2025 and beyond:

CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

BID #21 will continue to provide services and expand programs that keep Downtown Milwaukee clean, safe and welcoming for all.

BIG MOVE: Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will act as the steward for Downtown's public realm – expanding beautification services, identifying and advocating for needed repairs and improvements, and activating the Riverwalk.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

BID #21 will strengthen Downtown's role as the best place in the region to grow and thrive for local businesses, large and small employers, startups, retailers, daytime and nighttime entertainment, and tourism.

BIG MOVE: Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will take the lead in establishing an Economic Development Coalition (peer organizations, government officials and business executives) that will prioritize recruiting, retaining and supporting employers of all sizes, and will help recruit, retain and support a strong, diverse and creative workforce.

PLACEMAKING, MARKETING & EVENTS

BID #21 will bring people together through new and exciting shared experiences, by activating Downtown's public and privately owned/publicly accessible open spaces.

BIG MOVE: Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will take the lead in establishing a public space management initiative to develop, maintain and activate inclusive public spaces in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner.

ARTS, CULTURE, ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS

BID #21 will grow Downtown Milwaukee's reputation as a premier location for arts, culture, entertainment, film, nightlife and sports.

BIG MOVE: Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will continue to increase its role in elevating and promoting Downtown as a world-class destination for public and performing arts, music, film and TV, and sporting events.

DOWNTOWN LIVING

BID #21 will engage residential developers and residents to help revitalize and activate Downtown through partnerships and activities in vibrant and accessible places.

BIG MOVE: Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will engage Downtown residential developers and residents to create and advocate for a complete Downtown neighborhood with vibrant, accessible and affordable programs, events, places and services.

NEIGHBORHOOD & DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS

BID #21 will leverage the exciting diversity of Downtown neighborhoods and the potential for collective action by strengthening existing partnerships and creating new relationships with neighborhoods, community organizations and other districts.

BIG MOVE: Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will continue to and further take the lead in convening partners and coordinating efforts to strengthen Downtown, community and district connections.



"Our five-year strategic plan sets Downtown Milwaukee on a course for continued investment. The resounding feedback from business executives, employees, residents and visitors demonstrates that BID #21's services are critical to maintaining a high quality of life and an attractive central business district."

Beth Weirick
CEO
Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21



For information on development incentives, market data or available commercial space, contact:

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ABOUT MILWAUKEE DOWNTOWN, BID #21

Founded in 1998, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 is a management district organization that oversees 150 square blocks representing approximately 500 property owners in the center of Downtown Milwaukee. The organization funds specific initiatives aimed at creating a clean, safe and welcoming Downtown, and is an economic catalyst in creating opportunities for all. Whether you need information on incentives or stats on our vibrant market sectors, we are happy to work with you as the ultimate Downtown resource.

To learn more about Milwaukee Downtown's projects, programs and initiatives, visit www.milwaukeedowntown.com.