

REAL RESULTS

Building Investment, Jobs & Prosperity in Milwaukee's Downtown



BID #21

Good Afternoon,

2017 is picking up right where 2016 left off! The momentum surrounding downtown Milwaukee and the stream of project announcements continues.

In this edition of Real Results, we focus on a couple key developments that are game changers for the Westtown neighborhood. First, we sit down with Blair Williams to discuss his exciting new assignment leading the real estate development for the Milwaukee Bucks in Park East and arena district. Get his take on what we can expect to see as this former freeway corridor evolves into a new neighborhood.

We also share updates on the approval process for the funding mechanism that will help ensure Bon-Ton continues their commitment to downtown, assist the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra to develop their new home on West Wisconsin Avenue, and fund a number of lighting and streetscape improvements in the area. The year of Wisconsin Avenue indeed!

Speaking of new development, we highlight two Milwaukee-area organizations that received grants to continue working with entrepreneurs and startups to drive more job creation in southeastern Wisconsin.

In the By the Numbers section, we showcase the quick successes of the city's participation in the Better Buildings Challenge. With 30 buildings already participating and reaping the benefits of lower operating costs through energy efficiency improvements, let us help you be next to participate in the program!

Don't forget to sign up for the Governor's Conference on Economic Development being held in downtown Milwaukee, February 8-10. With the promotional code in this edition of Real Results, you can save \$50 on registration. We look forward to seeing you there!

As always, thanks for reading!



In This Issue

[Project Spotlight: West Wisconsin Momentum Mounting](#)

[Downtown Tools: Entrepreneurship Program Grants Awarded](#)

[Event Spotlight: Governor's Conference on Economic Development](#)

[By The Numbers: Property Owners Reap Benefits from Better Buildings Challenge](#)

[Stakeholders Spotlight: Blair Williams of WIRED Properties](#)



Since launching the Better Buildings

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PROJECT SPOTLIGHT - WEST WISCONSIN AVENUE MOMENTUM MOUNTING

A tax incremental financing package that includes funds to support public infrastructure projects and other improvements in the West Wisconsin Avenue corridor received support from the Redevelopment Authority as well as the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee. These positive votes are key steps in gaining approval for the fourth amendment to Tax Incremental District 37 (TID 37) that is proposed to provide the following:

- \$750,000 facade grant for the \$80 million redevelopment of the former Grand Theater into the new home for the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra
- \$1.9 million loan that is forgivable over ten years for Bon-Ton to extend its corporate office and department store lease, and maintain at least 750 employees
- About \$4.4 million for street improvements on Plankinton, Wells, 2nd and 4th streets, and Kilbourn and Wisconsin avenues
- \$750,000 for new LED harp lights, sidewalk repairs, improvements to Postman Square, upgraded lighting on West Wisconsin Avenue, and a new Bublr Bikes share station



The \$7,865,000 in proposed project costs are important in order to implement the vision outlined for the West Wisconsin Avenue corridor in the [2010 Downtown Master Plan](#) update. In addition, as Dan Casanova, senior economic

Challenge in September 2016, Milwaukee's commercial property owners are already seeing significant benefits. Check out some of the remarkable statistics below, and don't forget to [take the pledge](#) and take advantage of this new program and its incentives.

LOCAL PROGRESS REPORT

30



BUILDINGS PLEDGED

Within four months, 30 buildings pledged to take the challenge. Our goal is 200 by July 2018.

11/100



ASSESSMENTS GIVEN

With up to 100 free energy assessments available to pledges, this valuable evaluation provides a helpful list of recommendations to operate a building at optimum levels.

\$191,019

POTENTIAL ANNUAL SAVINGS



Nearly \$200,000 in potential annual savings is projected for Milwaukee's current pledges.

220



CARS REMOVED FROM THE ROAD FOR ONE YEAR

Milwaukee's potential energy savings to date is 1,482,229 kWh, which is equivalent to taking 220 cars off the road for one year.

Visit the City of Milwaukee's Better Buildings Challenge website by [clicking here](#) to learn more about the program and all of its benefits.

STAKEHOLDERS SPOTLIGHT - BLAIR WILLIAMS

Founder and President of WIRED

development specialist for the City of Milwaukee, recently stated, "With nearly 800 employees, Bon-Ton is one of the largest employers in Westtown, and this proposal goes a long way to securing their corporate offices and department store as neighborhood anchors for years to come."

Public support for this package is also strong. According to the recent Milwaukee Business Journal [survey](#), nearly 75% of the respondents supported the incentive package to keep Bon-Ton department store and headquarters in downtown. The full Milwaukee Common Council is expected to take action on this plan at their February 7th meeting.

With all of this, 2017 promises to be a hallmark year for West Wisconsin Avenue and the Westtown neighborhood. For more information on the unprecedented momentum in the corridor and to see a list of available commercial spaces, visit www.WisconsinAve.com.

DOWNTOWN TOOLS - ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM GRANTS AWARDED

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) has announced that 11 organizations across Wisconsin have been awarded nearly \$500,000 in grants to help develop or expand innovative programs aimed at advancing the climate for entrepreneurship throughout the state. Two of the organizations receiving grants are focused on serving the Milwaukee area, the [Milwaukee 7](#) and the [University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Research Foundation](#).



Milwaukee 7 will receive a \$60,000 grant to support the efforts of numerous project collaborators representing entrepreneurs,

Properties

Blair Williams is a leader in Milwaukee's real estate development industry who strives to better connect the communities he works in. Read below to learn more about his company, WIRED Properties, as well as Blair's latest assignment with the Milwaukee Bucks.



What services does WIRED Properties provide to clients?

WIRED Properties is a full-service real estate development and consulting company. We execute at-risk development, and we provide consulting services to an array of clients including property owners, other real estate developers, and large-scale businesses like the Milwaukee Bucks. Our core expertise includes mixed use development and community creations, as well as hard-to-develop properties.

What types of development opportunities are most attractive to WIRED Properties?

We look very carefully at the surrounding community and work to identify underlying community dynamics that we can amplify through our developments. Placemaking and experience creation drive our approach. We believe overwhelmingly in diversity of use, diversity of user, density and intensity of use.

support organizations and academia to establish a strategic and entrepreneurial development initiative for the Milwaukee region.

The UWM Research Foundation will receive a \$33,000 grant to pilot an I-Corps for Health program to develop and support innovative health care ventures in Wisconsin.

In a previous statement, WEDC CEO Mark Hogan said, "Creating and expanding opportunities for entrepreneurs in Wisconsin will help us in our efforts to attract and retain top talent in Wisconsin. These grants reinforce the message that the state truly embraces innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit."

To learn more about the specific programs and organizations that these grants are helping to fund, [click here](#).

EVENT SPOTLIGHT - GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

February 8 - 10
Hilton Milwaukee City Center

Milwaukee is the 2017 host city for the Governor's Conference on Economic Development. The conference will be held at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center, which is near many projects that are transforming the skyline and enhancing the vibrant downtown that draws businesses and people to Milwaukee. [Register today](#) and use code **MKEBID** to receive \$50 off your registration!



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.

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

What downtown Milwaukee project that you are currently working on are you most excited about?

I have been hired as Managing Director of Real Estate for the Milwaukee Bucks. We're quarterbacking the development efforts for all of the parcels around the new arena. And, we own the National Ace Hardware building. We are terrifically optimistic and excited about the opportunity to help craft a new neighborhood in the Park East--one that is unique in Milwaukee and uniquely Milwaukee. The Park East offers an unparalleled level of critical mass and investment--and one that can now (hopefully) move ahead in a concerted manner towards sustainability.

What is key to keep positive momentum going in downtown and throughout Milwaukee?

We've hit the marks on housing development for this real estate cycle--but not yet for how the city will evolve. We need to identify mechanisms to retain our millennial population in the city as they move through their life cycle. Of note, we need solutions for a downtown high school and neighborhood schools. And, we need to continue to drive daytime population through effective employer attraction and office development.

What is Milwaukee's biggest challenge?

Self-consciousness. We seem to be plagued by self-doubt as to our validity as a world-class city. We need to continue to approach our market aspiration-ally, striving to become something greater than we see when we look in the mirror. Well, that and low economic growth. We need more jobs and we need to arrive at a path toward creating a capable and well-educated workforce that can attract employers.

What peer cities offer the best examples for Milwaukee to learn from?
Indianapolis is fascinating. Cleveland has rebounded in interesting ways through a commitment to downtown (plenty of mistakes there along the way). Oklahoma City also provides a good example to look at.

When you are not working, what are your favorite hobbies?

In winter, skiing. In summer, golf. Always, reading and family.

The Hilton Milwaukee City Center is offering special conference rates for overnight guests. Plus, if you make your hotel reservations now, you will receive daily conference parking for just \$10.

[Click here for the hotel's special conference rate.](#)
[Click here for the hotel's special government rate.](#)

For more information about WEDA's Governor's Conference on Economic Development and to register, [click here](#).

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