

Green Infrastructure Elements Enhance Milwaukee's 30th Street Industrial Corridor

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

EPA's Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization and EPA Region 5 are working in partnership with other federal, state, local, and community stakeholders to revitalize Milwaukee's 30th Street Industrial Corridor. The corridor is a five-mile long by half-mile-wide swath of land that bustled with manufacturing activity until the 1980s. When manufacturing declined, many industries along the 30th Street Industrial Corridor downsized or left, leaving behind blight, significant environmental issues and a community faced with high unemployment.

Revitalization of the 30th Street Industrial Corridor now underway is a comprehensive effort to clean up and redevelop brownfields; help manage stormwater and reduce CSOs; eliminate blight; develop the workforce; and improve public health, housing, and multimodal transportation. The initiative calls for several green infrastructure elements to enhance stormwater management, while adding wetlands, recreational amenities and greenspace that will make the area more attractive and improve the quality of life for residents.

The multi-faceted effort began with a series of EPA brownfields assessment grants that enabled the city and its partners—the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and The Corridor (formerly the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation)—to inventory and prioritize contaminated sites for further assessment and cleanup. The goal was to clean up and help return brownfield sites to productive use as industrial, commercial, residential or mixed-use properties. If successful, these redeveloped properties also will catalyze additional public, private and non-profit reinvestment in the 30th Street Industrial Corridor.

The effort dovetails with the Milwaukee's community-wide comprehensive planning process, which includes four area plans that address this part of the city. The city's 30th Street Corridor Economic Development Master Plan includes a detailed market study and examines the larger projects that are expected to spur further redevelopment along the corridor. While the focus of the comprehensive planning process is on economic development to restore the area's economic vitality, plans for the area also include the creation of an urban agriculture zone and numerous green infrastructure features to promote sustainable stormwater management.

For example, one of the area-wide plans, for the Century City area of the 30th Street Industrial Corridor, envisions a green, linear park that will buffer the new industrial redevelopment planned for the area from an adjacent residential area. The long greenway will



Perspective view of linear park with industrial buildings in the background. Source: Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee.

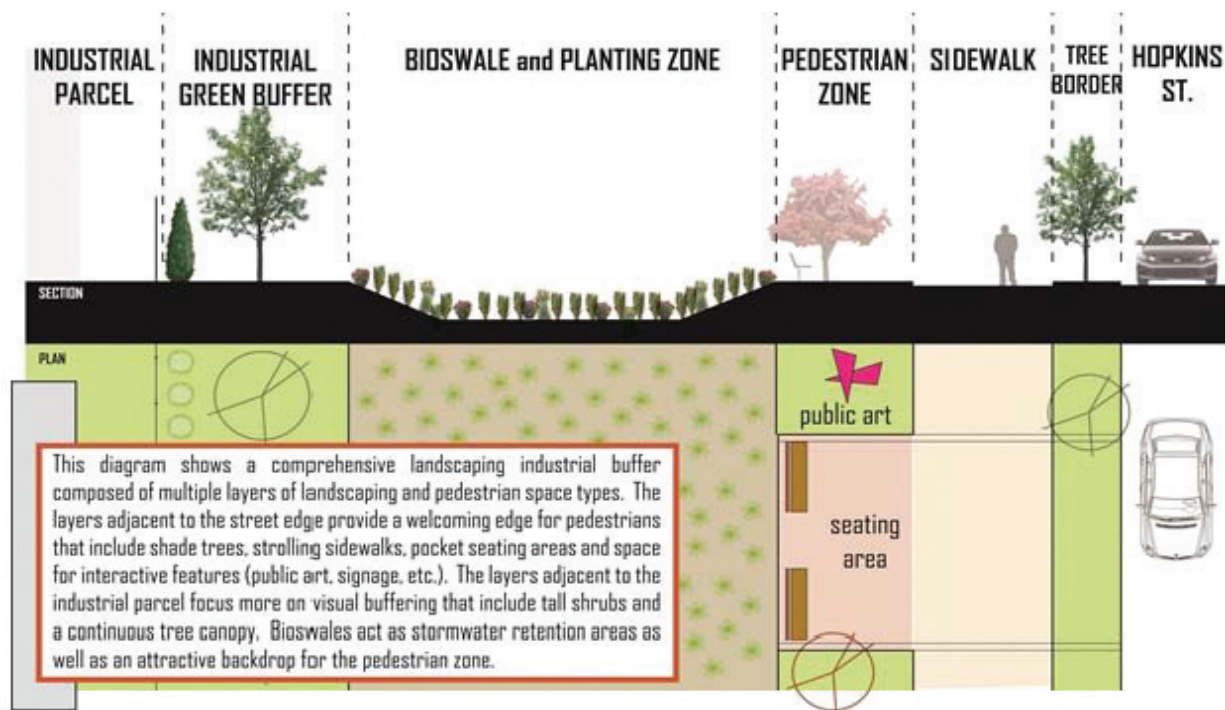
be created by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sanitary District (MMSD). It will connect two waterways and include strategically placed bioswales, wetlands, and infiltration areas. The greenway also will connect to major bike trails and provide an amenity for residents while contributing to the revitalization nearby neighborhoods, which currently have many vacant industrial properties.

The Century City brownfields redevelopment plan includes the removal of more than two million square feet of impervious surface and a number of other green infrastructure elements designed to significantly reduce stormwater runoff. Overall, the Century City brownfields redevelopment plan is expected to remove runoff from about 30 acres of land in Milwaukee's combined sewer area.

Other accomplishments of the Century City brownfields redevelopment project include:

- 1,500,000 square feet of hazardous and blighted structures were demolished.
- 255,703 tons of concrete were recycled for use onsite and for other street/sewer projects in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa.
- 60,000 tons of contaminated soil were removed from the site.
- More than 40 underground storage tanks, vessels, and vaults were removed from the site.
- 80% of demolition materials were recycled from the site. This includes all metal, brick, concrete, furniture, computers, and light fixtures.
- Achieved cost savings by partnering with the Department of Public Works saved on construction and demolition waste disposal costs.

Landscaping Diagram for the Century City Greenway and Gate



Source: Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee.