



Clarke Square

Equitable Neighborhood Development Action Plan

Milwaukee, WI

Developed in partnership with



Mission

To create a strong neighborhood with a variety of homes, public spaces, safe streets, landmark places (schools, churches, community centers, parks) and strong business community to create a vibrant, diverse neighborhood.

Clarke Square

Equitable Neighborhood Development Action Plan

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01 | Introduction

The goal of this action plan is to promote and preserve the neighborhood of Clarke Square in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This plan aims to consider the neighborhood comprehensively through the lens of the Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative (CSNI), including business corridors, housing development and community engagement. CSNI's vision is to transform, promote, and preserve housing and economic development opportunities in the Clarke Square neighborhood.

Since 2008, CSNI has convened major efforts with residents, business owners, clergy, school officials, public officials and financial institutions to determine the priorities of the neighborhood. During the inaugural phase of CSNI, the Clarke Square Quality of Life Plan promoted ten priorities. The areas of greatest concern were education, partnerships, employment, recreation, social connections, public safety, housing, economic development, neighborhood beautification and commitment. From 2008 to 2020, CSNI convened stakeholders to work on these priorities:


1. Secure economic development opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs in the Clarke Square neighborhood to create vibrant commercial corridors.
2. Stabilize housing by empowering a strong homeownership community.

3. Increase community engagement for the purpose of strengthening resident and business connections within the Clarke Square neighborhood.
4. Solidify and strengthen community partnerships, leveraging catalytic projects for a prosperous community.

About Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative

Founded in 2008, Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative (CSNI) is a backbone organization of a collective impact effort that focuses on the Clarke Square neighborhood in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. CSNI's vision is to be the catalytic presence in the community, a place for a thriving multi-ethnic community for entrepreneurs and residents. It is CSNI's mission is to create a strong neighborhood with a variety of homes, public spaces, safe streets, landmark places (schools, churches, community centers, parks) and strong business community to create a vibrant, diverse neighborhood. CSNI's Board of Directors is made up of members of the Clarke Square community and includes business owners, residents, financial service representatives and community development experts.

One of the strongest attributes of CSNI is the number of partnerships with other nonprofit organizations, schools, businesses and health centers. These strong




partnerships allowed CSNI to leverage resources to community partners. For one partner, Vecinos Unidos/ United Neighbors (community organization focused on families, workers and immigrants), CSNI identified the need of timely distribution of materials and purchased a large message board to be placed at the community garden. The message board allows residents to learn about community events in a centralized location, especially because many in the neighborhood might not have access to technology or WiFi.

"[We transformed] an empty lot used for trash dumping into a garden and gathering place and information hub for neighbors. These funds will be used specifically to add a bulletin board to facilitate neighborhood communication and plant fruit trees that can be enjoyed by neighbors facing food insecurity. Thanks to CSNI for helping us share information."

Another partner, Pa'Ti Mujer (workforce development agency) needed training supplies for women to learn the essentials of knitting and sewing. CSNI provided a grant to Pa'Ti Mujer staff to assist in basic resources to begin classes. La Familia de Arte (art gallery) partnered with CSNI on the Bollard Project, whereby monuments will be created on one of the commercial corridors to honor the "heroes of the pandemic." This community-wide effort resulted in having inscribed tiles from teachers, parents, students and others who want to give thanks to the heroes of the pandemic and those loved-ones who unfortunately lost their lives to COVID-19.

Last, CSNI has strengthened a 10-year partnership with the Cesar E. Chavez Business Improvement District by co-sponsoring neighborhood clean-ups, promoting arts and culture and sharing information about the resources available at the local, state and federal levels.

Educational partners include anchor institutions Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, who opened their new \$33 million facility in August 2020; Longfellow Elementary School, the largest and oldest elementary school in Wisconsin; and Prince of Peace Catholic School. CSNI operates as a liaison, advocate and resource to build capacity for each of these organizations and to make connections with residents, businesses and elected officials.




"A place where residents care not just about their individual property but that of their neighbors, where children can play outside."

After 12 years of working within the neighborhood, CSNI Board of Directors, staff and volunteers have realized the importance of a strong neighborhood.

CSNI is beginning a rebuilding stage. After 12 years of being co-located with our partner, Journey House, CSNI is finally leaving the nest of security. The expertise of the current executive director led to Phase 1 of strategic planning for the organization that identified three key issues: board governance changes, conflicts of Interest and organization identity. The executive director utilized her 25 years of experience in community and economic development and partnership development to create a smooth transition between the agencies.

In Phase 2, the executive director is strengthening the CSNI Board of Governance team. A series of webinars took place in February 2021 to address the roles and responsibilities of the board and recruit members to four committees: Governance, Finance, Economic Development and Programs. In addition, CSNI will be posting a position for an Economic Development Manager. The ED Manager will assist in managing, administering and strategically planning key programs in support of CSNI economic development interests.

The final stage of the Equitable Development Action Plan is to review an action plan that was created prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and revise it to highlight activity in the next 12 to 24 months. Given the fluid



situation of the pandemic, CSNI focused on being a catalytic presence in the community by identifying parcels of land for development that offer community development real estate opportunities. The development of vacant parcels is being explored with developers, architects, CSNI staff and the board of directors to meet the needs of the community. One of the vacant city-owned lots could be developed into affordable housing with other retail space at the street level.

The Clarke Square community consists of one of the top three commercial corridors at a neighborhood level in Milwaukee. Cesar E. Chavez Drive is a vibrant district with over 50 businesses in retail, restaurants, financial services, grocers, sporting, and travel agencies.

The goal of CSNI and the Cesar E. Chavez Business Improvement District 38 (BID 38) is to create gateway signage for visitors and residents when they enter Cesar E. Chavez Drive. On the north side of Cesar E. Chavez Drive is National Avenue, or Highway 59. The State of Wisconsin appropriated \$26.5 million for the reconstruction of this major arterial road in the Clarke Square neighborhood. Approximately 25 businesses are located on National Avenue, but it is a prime spot for redevelopment of existing properties for new commercial use. To the south is Greenfield Avenue, where approximately 30 businesses are located. All this to say that nearly 150 small businesses are operating in a one-mile radius.

02 | About the Neighborhood

Almost 8,000 neighbors live, work, worship, play and study in the Clarke Square neighborhood on Milwaukee's near southside.

A small but dense neighborhood, Clarke Square comprises approximately 40 square city blocks of residential properties, two linear miles of commercial and mixed-use properties along four principal commercial corridors and over 60 acres of publicly accessible green space.

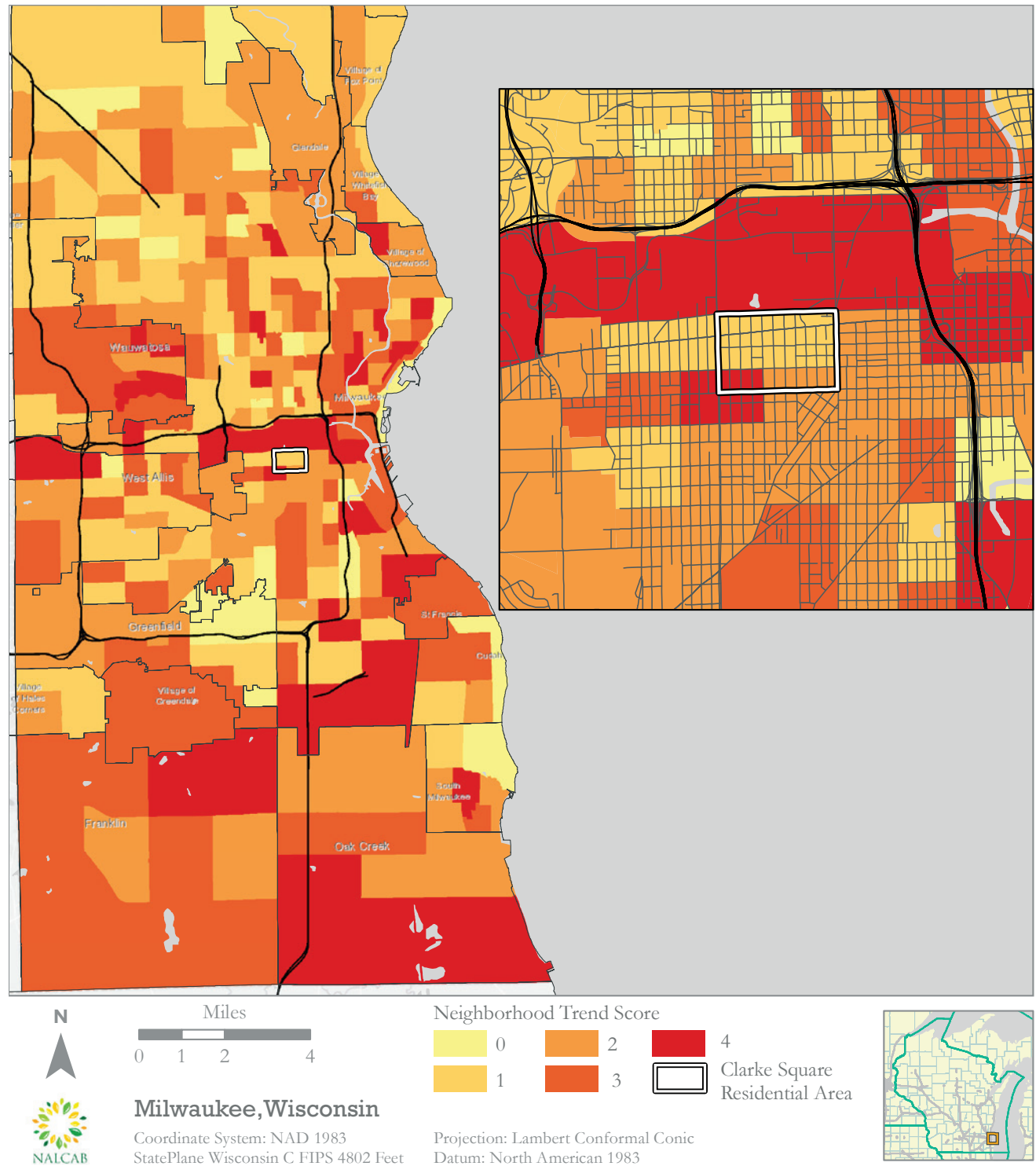
Historically, Clarke Square was the residential community south of Milwaukee's Menomonee Valley, the industrial area which employed thousands in the manufacturing industry. The city of Milwaukee transitioned from being the "Machine Shop of the World" in the 1880s to a rust-belt city and now to a city of world-renowned entertainment, major employers, walkable neighborhoods and festivals. The Clarke Square neighborhood is located in the heart of Milwaukee's Hispanic community, acting as a cultural destination that draws people from across the city and state. Residents are drawn to the area because of the affordability of housing and its proximity to cultural foods, shops and Spanish language religious services.

At a Glance: Clarke Square and Milwaukee in 2020

	Clarke Square Neighborhood (primarily Tract 158)	Milwaukee
Median Household Income	\$29,041	\$41,838
Median Owner-Occupied Home Value	\$74,265	\$122,100
Median Contract Rent	\$610	\$695
Population 25 Years+ with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	5.1%	24.6%
Total Population	7,724	590,157
Hispanic or Latino	81.6%	19%
White Alone	46.2%	44.4%
Black or African American Alone	10.1%	38.7%
Asian Alone	1.3%	4.3%

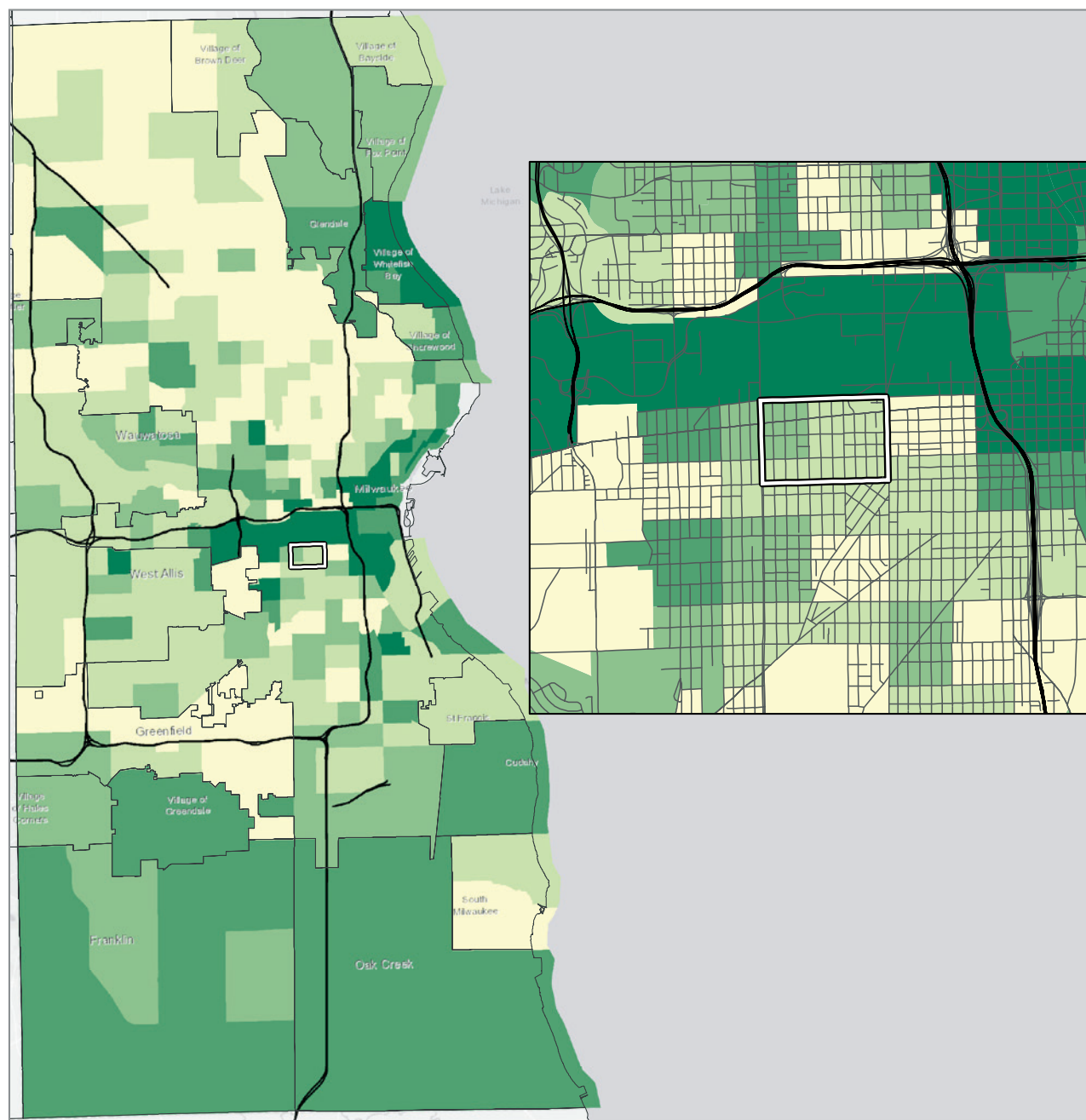
Source: Esri Community Analyst, ACS Population Summary 2014-2018, Clarke Square Neighborhood Boundaries

Neighborhood Trend Analysis 2013-2018



NALCAB's Neighborhood Change methodology identifies census tracts vulnerable to neighborhood change. Tracts that score higher (up to a 4, indicated with the darker red) are changing faster than the urban area as a whole. Those higher scoring tracts are typically already experiencing or are at significant risk for neighborhood change/gentrification. This map demonstrates that the areas surrounding the Clarke Square neighborhood are seeing change, which is further supported by the examples included in this action plan that Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative has identified as the organization works within the neighborhood.

Assessed Total Value 2020



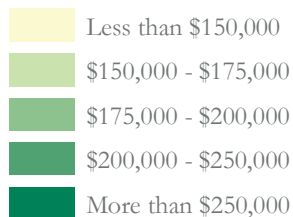
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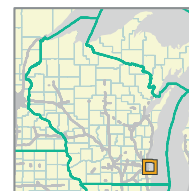
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Coordinate System: NAD 1983
StatePlane Wisconsin C FIPS 4802 Feet
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: North American 1983

Assessed Total Value




Clarke Square
Residential Area



Source: DataTree

This map of assessed total land value demonstrates the clear creep of high costs of living around Clarke Square originating from the downtown and Menomonee Valley areas.



Milwaukee's downtown spans from Lake Michigan to the east, the Milwaukee River to the west, Clybourn Street to the south and Ogden Street to the north.

The red zone north/Menomonee Valley is an area that has undergone incredible transformation from the time when it was a natural marsh stretching four miles long and a half mile wide. In the 1700s, Native Americans were the primary residents of the area because of the "good land." Over time they were pushed out, and the fur trade industry blossomed. Developers filled the marsh with soil, gravel and waste to create land. By the early 1900s, Milwaukee was an industrial powerhouse and became known as the "Machine Shop of the World." A large part of this economy was driven by the industry in the valley: farm machinery, rail cars, electric motors, and cranes; cattle were processed at tanneries and leather processed from their hides. The valley employed over 20,000 people, many of whom walked from the nearby neighborhoods north and south of the valley (Clarke Square). The Menomonee Valley was a place where residents and newcomers to the city could find jobs, but the precipitous decline of the valley occurred with the decline of the manufacturing industry. The Menomonee

Valley became an area with contaminated land and abandoned property, a place that one did not visit.

In 1999, the City of Milwaukee embarked on reimagining the valley as a place of recreation, light manufacturing, dining and entertainment. On the western boundary is the home of the Milwaukee Brewers, the National League baseball team; in the center is the Potawatomi Casino, where nearly 2,000 people were employed prior to the pandemic; and on the eastern boundary is the Harley Davidson Museum. Each one of these major corporations invested in the Menomonee Valley, creating catalytic projects throughout the area. The result has been a valley with a recreational trail that connects to Milwaukee's lakefront and to the Ice Age Trail to the west, and a resurgence of industry back to the valley.

Neighborhood Concerns

Over the past 20 years, the area surrounding the Clarke Square neighborhood has begun to see a shift in investment and development. The neighborhood is surrounded by robust and growing residential real estate markets to the


east and west and a vibrant entertainment, industrial and recreational district to the north. The Menomonee Valley neighborhood to the north is home to breweries, restaurants, casinos, a baseball stadium and trails, driving investors to vacant lots for new construction and historic buildings for renovations in the surrounding areas. To the east and west, new housing development and industry are shaping those areas as well. Being less than a mile to downtown has raised concerns for the Clarke Square neighborhood: downtown Milwaukee is experiencing a commercial real estate boom with high-end apartments, high-end hotels, eateries and new developments immediately south and north of downtown. Additionally, 75% of the Clarke Square neighborhood is located within the boundaries of a federal Opportunity Zone. Although there has not been significant change yet within the specific boundaries of Clarke Square, the significant activity in the areas surrounding the neighborhood coupled with the physical attributes of the neighborhood, including historic housing and its central location, have highlighted a need for preemptive action in the face of potential gentrification and displacement resulting from these hotspots.

Beyond the neighborhood's built environment there are also considerations about the social cohesion of the neighborhood. Concerns have been raised about a seeming lack of investment in the neighborhood by members of the community as well as the impact of criminal activity, such as sex trafficking, on the perception of the neighborhood. Efforts to remedy

these situations carry the benefit of improving quality of life in Clarke Square but also potentially make the neighborhood an even more attractive area for developers and investors.

In one initiative, the community determined that they wanted to create an event with the purpose of keeping the neighborhood clean. They called for Basura (Garbage) Bash Days, a partnership between CSNI, Safe and Sound, and other neighborhood organizations that will take place monthly from April to October. The partnership team will coordinate with the City of Milwaukee on garbage pickup and special dumpster placements; all who participate will wear a vest highlighting our project. Basura Bash Days is a community-building activity, where residents can meet each other and informally have discussions

The City of Milwaukee published its *Anti-Displacement Plan (2018)* to address the growing concerns of families being pushed out of Milwaukee neighborhoods. CSNI's Action Plan is intended to supplement the City's plan with a specific focus on the Clarke Square neighborhood and consider the impact of gentrification and displacement more broadly to include the potential impact on small businesses. Although there are other efforts to prevent displacement led by non-governmental stakeholders, Clarke Square does not qualify to be served by those resources. The following are areas where the Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative sees a capacity to have an impact.

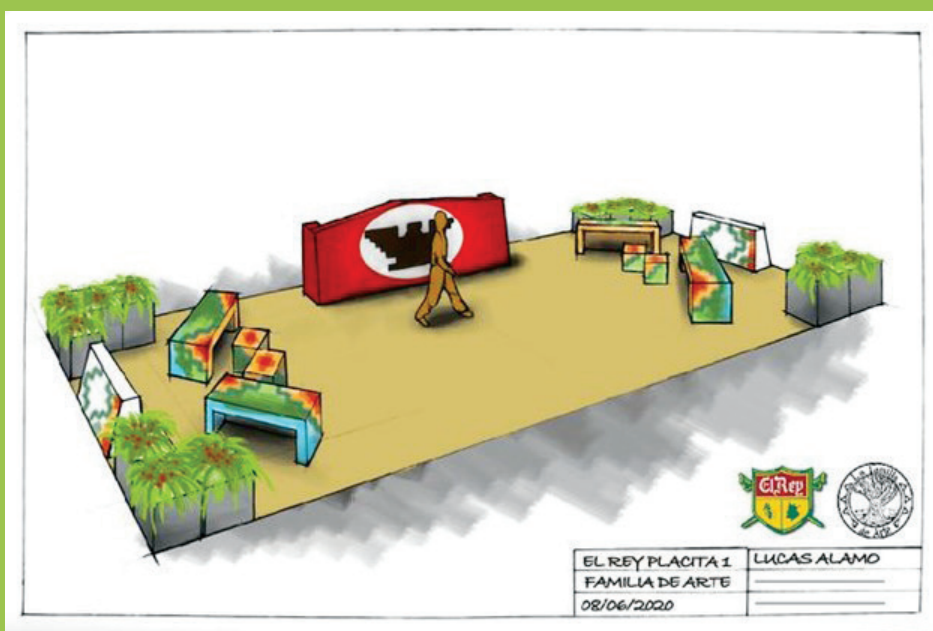


Part of CSNI's intent with this action plan is to facilitate opportunities for residents and business owners within the neighborhood to connect with each other and resources to help overcome some of these barriers while also protecting the residents and business owners.

Cesar E. Chavez Sculpture at El Rey Grocery Store | Phase 1 — Before (left), Phase 2 — In progress (June 2021)



Completed Project, Rendering of La Placita Project



Commercial Corridors and Creative Art Space

There are three primary commercial areas in the Clarke Square Neighborhood: the Business Improvement District (BID) along Cesar E. Chavez Drive on the neighborhood's eastern border, the National Avenue commercial corridor to the north and Greenfield Avenue to the south. The *Cesar E. Chavez BID* is one of the city's most vibrant commercial corridors, with over 70 businesses in retail, service and entertainment providing culturally specific services and products to Milwaukee's Latino community.

CSNI believes infusing arts and culture in the economic corridors of Milwaukee's most vibrant community will attract residents and visitors to the area. To this end, the main street was originally called 16th Street but was renamed to Cesar E. Chavez Drive in 2016, in honor of the United Farm Workers (UFW) founder and leader, Cesar E. Chavez. Supporters in the community raised the money to create a life-like sculpture of Cesar E. Chavez to honor the labor leader's work and influence of local activists in Milwaukee.

Three major art projects that will infuse creative arts and economic development are the creation of Cesar E. Chavez Plaza, the Bollard Project and Artist in Residence — Year 3. All three projects will be implemented in the summer of 2021.

Cesar E. Chavez Plaza

A life-size statue of renowned labor and civil rights leader Cesar E. Chavez was unveiled on March 31, 2016. The reveal coincides with Cesar Chavez Day (his birthday) in Milwaukee and celebrates an ongoing effort to seed arts, culture and small business in the Clarke Square neighborhood and the Cesar E. Chavez Drive business corridor.

Chavez Drive is a vibrant commercial corridor promoting culture and commerce in the area with the goal to continue to connect the business and residential communities. The Cesar E. Chavez Plaza was always intended to be a gathering space for all who live near or visit the commercial corridor. The second phase of the project was to create a green space with landscaping around the plaza, install benches and lighting, and create a commemorative wall to the United Farm Workers founders, Cesar E. Chavez and Dolores Huerta. CSNI and La Familia will create a commemorative wall in the shape of the UFW thunderbird logo with tiles inscribed with messages of love, hope and courage.

CSNI and La Familia de Arte organized a "tile-making" workshop on site, over 400 tiles were created with message of love, hope and inspiration. We asked residents to write a phrase about what the United Farmworker Movement meant to them. Messages that said, "Never Give Up, Gracias, Viva La Causa, Si Se Puede (Yes we can)... These tiles were glazed and fired on to the wall creating the symbol of the United Farmworker Workers (UFW) union. At left is a series of pictures to show the before and after.





The Bollard Project

CSNI created a partnership with a local art gallery, Familia de Arte, to create bollards, or monuments. This collaborative program prepares young apprentices who live in the Clarke Square community to become creative leaders, learning the process of a project from inception to the final product. The apprentices explain to both younger and older students the project and the process of inscribing. They will be part of the firing, glazing and installation of the bollards, and will observe the placement of the bollards on Cesar E. Chavez Drive. In addition, many of the apprentices will actively engage in the day of the celebration with local public officials, business owners and residents.

For the past six months, the team has partnered with schools, churches, and nonprofit organizations asking individuals to participate in the inscription of the tiles. The purpose of the project is to honor heroes of the pandemic. For instance, our team has visited local

schools and asked students from first grade to seniors in high school, “Who are the heroes of the pandemic?” Responses are written on a bulletin board and then inscribed with a pencil on a tile. At right is a picture of some tiles created by a second-grade class.

It is the goal of CSNI to create mutually benefiting spaces highlighting the work of local artists, everyday people, and honoring those heroes of the pandemic, by creating and placing 10 tiled ceramic posts (using 12" x 12" x 32" concrete bollard bases) along the pedestrian “brick” right of way in the first few blocks north of National Avenue. The ceramic posts will be made of 2" x 2" tiles inscribed by individuals of all ages who either work, study, live or worship in the area.

Next, the tiles will be fired and glazed and fastened onto 300-pound bollards that will be placed at the northern end of Cesar E. Chavez Drive. This will be Phase 1 of the three-phase project. At right is a schematic drawing of how the drive will look when completed in August 2021.

[illegible]



AIR — Year 1, Artist Erick Ledesma (2017)



*AIR — Year 2,
Artist
Isabel Castro
(2018)*

Artist in Residence

CSNI and the Cesar E. Chavez Business Improvement District (BID) plan to seed arts, culture, and small business in the Clarke Square neighborhood. Cesar E. Chavez Drive is the heart of Wisconsin's Latino community. Since 2017, a collaborative effort has allowed artists to create imagery on Cesar E. Chavez Drive.

Chavez Drive is one of the city's few major arterial streets that is well connected to many different neighborhoods (Menomonee Valley, Walker Square, Clarke Square, Muskego Way and Layton Boulevard West Neighbors). It is the epicenter for Latino business and residents to access ethnic food, music and merchandise. Chavez Drive is at the center of the state's densest zip code, 53204, with almost 10,000 residents within a 10-block radius. The Clarke Square neighborhood is the epicenter of mural art in Milwaukee, with over 50 art projects including murals, monuments, tile signs, repurposed rail ties and sculptures.

CSNI and BID 38 have completed several successful projects, from the installation of a significant public art piece in the shape of a six-foot bronze Cesar E. Chavez Sculpture to the successful planning and completion of Artist in Residence murals by Erick Ledesma (2017) and Isabel Castro (2018). The Artist in Residence program was postponed in 2019 and 2020 due to funding and the pandemic.

Artist in Residence — Year 3, Summer 2021

The mural will be a symbol of women's empowerment, anchored by imagery of Dolores Huerta, a civil rights activist and co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association. The community-organizing efforts by Huerta allowed her to spend over six decades fighting to improve the standard of living for farmworkers, a call for civil rights and an insurmountable attitude of "Yes, We Can," or "Si Se Puede." The mural will serve as a visual tribute to Huerta and to other women who have made significant contributions toward social and economic justice. It is our intent to have this mural elevate women's involvement in past, present and future social justice movements.

The mural will be located at 1247 S. Chavez Drive, the south exterior wall of the U.S. Cellular building. Artists are encouraged to bring their full breadth of creativity to transform this space into a masterpiece.

The selection committee will be finalizing the artist by July 1, 2021, and the project will be implemented by the end of the summer 2021. CSNI has received support from the corporate headquarters of U.S. Cellular, who will create a plaque to be placed on the wall.

The commercial corridor of Cesar E. Chavez Drive has changed immensely in the past two decades by being the epicenter of cultural art infused into spaces at the street level and on buildings.

Blank wall for Artist in Residence — Year 3 (2021) — Before



Muralists — Girl Mobb and Nyia Luna were selected as Artists in Residence — Year 3.





Impact of the Pandemic

A handful of restaurants remained opened during the COVID-19 pandemic, but many of the small businesses required emergency support for economic survival, including revising business plans and applying for resources at the local, state and national levels. As of June 2021, Cesar E. Chavez Drive is fully operational and excited about the grand opening of the three partnerships in progress.

Neighborhood Amenities and Attractions

The Clarke Square neighborhood is home to a number of desirable amenities. The area around Clarke Square has seen several potentially catalytic investments over the past couple of years, particularly in housing. Approximately 150 units of mixed-income housing is in the development or construction process in the area as well as two major school developments. Affordable units are prominent within these developments and continue to be a priority for the neighborhood.

*The Clarke Square
Neighborhood Initiative
and Cesar E. Chavez
Business Improvement
partnership demonstrate
how collaboration in
creative spaces drives
economic development.*

Clarke Square Assets



Meters
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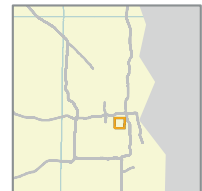


Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Coordinate System: NAD 1983
StatePlane Wisconsin C FIPS 4802 Feet
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: North American 1983

- + Health Clinics
- Grocery Stores
- ▲ Schools
- Catalytic Investments
- Parks

 Clarke Square Residential Area



Source: PolicyMap, Google



CSNI future headquarters in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

“The deep historical significance of this site makes it special, and an auspicious location for continued neighborhood development in this, now, vibrant Latinx community,” said Dr. Patricia Najera.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, August 25, 2021

Catalytic Projects in or near Clarke Square Park

Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative purchased one of the city’s older historic homes for its new headquarters. Located in the heart of the neighborhood, this cream-city brick home was created by George Burnham. The Burnham Brickyard became a large brick producer making Milwaukee famous for its cream colored bricks — known as cream-city brick. George Burnham founded Burnham Brickyard with his brother John in the mid-19th century. It was located in the nearby Menomonee Valley.

“We are thrilled about the purchase of our first property,” said Charles Green, board president. “We are looking forward to the transformational community impact of the project in the Clarke Square neighborhood.”

Rule Enterprises is developing 90 units of new construction of affordable apartments. This project has a \$17 million preliminary budget and is funded primarily by the Wisconsin Housing Economic Development Association (WHEDA). The project is located .2 miles outside of the CSNI boundary.



Rule Enterprises Development, Expected Grand Opening Fall 2021, \$17 million



Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Opened Fall 2020, \$33 million



Notre Dame Middle School, Opened Fall 2020, \$7 million



Clarke Square Apartments, Opened January 2020, \$8 million



School Sisters of St. Francis, Senior Housing, \$17 million

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School

Located in the center of the Clarke Square neighborhood, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School opened its doors in fall 2020. The management team and donors raised \$33 million for a state-of-the-art facility.

Notre Dame Middle School

Located on the southern boundary (across the street) of Clarke Square neighborhood, Notre Dame Middle School added a \$7 million addition to house over 500 students.

Clarke Square Apartments

Clarke Square Apartments is a 40-unit complex for young adults who aged out of foster care and who can live in the Clarke Square neighborhood. It is managed by a partner organization called Journey House.

School Sisters of St. Francis

A historic former convent of St. Joseph plans to convert living space for senior apartments. The plan is to have 58 one- to two-bedroom units for independent seniors; this would complement 10 townhomes recently developed on the campus.

03 | Action Plan

Community Engagement

An integral aspect of CSNI is to identify residents in the neighborhood who want to improve their neighborhood. This process requires community-organizing staff to knock on doors and talk to residents on their porches, at the corner store or in the neighborhood park. It requires partnerships with the area schools and churches to identify the most immediate needs of the community.

Through this process we have engaged with hundreds of families facilitating neighborhood virtual meetings in Spanish and English, we have learned about the technology needs of families, and we have secured funding to provide 35 chrome books and 10 laptops to residents. In addition, we have held resident leadership training via a remote learning platform in bilingual sessions. It is our goal to have at least 10 block clubs in the 40-square block area of the CSNI neighborhood footprint.

Goals, Strategies, and Actions

CSNI's vision is to transform, promote and preserve housing and economic development opportunities in the Clarke Square neighborhood for existing residents. CSNI envisions a neighborhood in which businesses thrive, homeownership is empowered, residents are actively engaged in community activities and local organizations work together. CSNI will accomplish this by focusing on securing and managing economic development opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs in the Clarke Square neighborhood, encouraging residents

to build the necessary portfolio in purchasing a home, and facilitating residential community engagement to strengthen resident block clubs within the Clarke Square neighborhood. We will continue to solidify organization goals and community partnerships that advance collaborative opportunities for all.

It is our goal to become a Community Development Financial Institution in the next five years.

Goal 1: Secure economic development opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs in the Clarke Square neighborhood.

Strategy: Provide opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs to access capital.

- **Action:** CSNI will become a US Treasury-certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI).
- **Action:** Provide information about available local, state and federal resources available to small business owners, including emergency relief opportunities. This will be done by going door-to-door with all business owners and setting up appointments with lenders.
- **Action:** Develop bank or credit union referrals/connections/partnerships.
- **Action:** Develop a process for following up with unsuccessful loan applications to identify areas of concern and refer the business or entrepreneur to financial education opportunities.

- **Action:** Provide greater ownership opportunity for small business owners along the commercial corridor and gain permanency of long-standing stakeholders. CSNI will build relationships with business owners, so they know we are trustworthy and can develop strategies against predatory lenders.

Strategy: Provide technical assistance to small business owners and entrepreneurs including digital literacy training, applications for financial assistance and business planning.

- **Action:** Conduct regular assessments of small business owner needs and entrepreneurs through surveys and one-on-one conversations.
- **Action:** Provide specialized technical assistance at the location of the business.
- **Action:** Provide access to regular digital literacy training opportunities by working with partner organizations, including the local women's business center, around basic and specialized technology training.
- **Action:** Provide support for translation of important documents.
- **Action:** Develop a guide and/or advertising campaign to online and other resources that could improve economic opportunities for neighborhood businesses.

Strategy: Further develop the commercial corridor as a destination by having new entry signage at the northern and southern end of the drive stating "Welcome to Cesar E. Chavez Drive." Cesar E. Chavez Drive will be the epicenter of infusing creative art to spur economic development.

- **Action:** Identify vacant property owners' potential sale or use of the lot.
- **Action:** Develop the "Bollard" project, art monuments made by the community to be strategically placed along the corridor in installments.
- **Action:** Develop the "La Placita" project, creation of a plaza-like setting near the life-size Cesar E. Chavez sculpture, a gathering space for residents and visitors at a central location.
- **Action:** Act as a community liaison between landowners, residents, developers and the City for development on vacant properties.
- **Action:** Identify lots for purchase and future use as commercial or community spaces.
- **Action:** Develop a branding campaign that honors Clarke Square's history and culture.

Strategy: Collaborate with the State of Wisconsin and City of Milwaukee on the investment in updating National Avenue, a \$25 million project rebranding National Avenue as International Avenue, and a social media campaign to connect with community; looking to further this project through virtual convenings).

- **Action:** Placemaking efforts of making this neighborhood a destination:
 - » Cesar E. Chavez monument — tiles inscribed by community member
 - » Bollard project — monuments attributed to the “heroes of the pandemic”
- **Action:** Placemaking as a campaign: This strategy will demonstrate that creative art space can spur economic development because individuals are interested in patronizing small businesses with art made by the residents in the community.

Goal: Ensure Clarke Square residents have opportunities for safe and affordable housing through market stabilization and housing protections.

Strategy: Improve housing education opportunities for residents.

- **Action:** Work with partner organizations, the City of Milwaukee, and financial institutions on housing education, to include topics such as increased awareness of foreclosure prevention and forbearance agreements, home buyer assistance programs, one-on-one housing counseling and financial coaching.
- **Action:** Provide assistance to homeowners in applying for foreclosure prevention grant assistance.

Strategy: Increase opportunities for homeownership and affordable rentals.

- **Action:** Identify privately owned vacant properties that could be purchased and utilized for residential use.
- **Action:** Work with the City to identify opportunities for transitioning publicly owned properties to residential use.
- **Action:** Work with the City around home rehab programs (publicizing programs, advocating for resources to support home rehab, etc.).
- **Action:** Learn what partnerships we can build on.

Goal: Increase community engagement for the purpose of strengthening resident and business connections within the Clarke Square neighborhood.

Although community engagement was limited in 2020-2021 due to the public health restrictions resulting from COVID-19, community engagement is viewed as a vital part of how Clarke Square will shape itself in the future.

Strategy: Educate residents and business owners within Clarke Square about current and upcoming issues affecting equitable development within the neighborhood. Empower and encourage small business owners to be civically engaged at the local level, including by having a voice on decision-making boards and committees.

- **Action:** Share information through monthly newsletters.
- **Action:** Post announcements and resources available to residents and business owners on social media platforms such as Facebook.
- **Action:** Share information through emails, phone calls and door-to-door canvassing.

Strategy: Organize opportunities for residents, religious leaders, small business owners and landlords to engage in dialogue around community-related topics, including potential community benefit agreements.

- **Action:** CSNI launched a reimagined electronic newsletter that is distributed to approximately 2,000 individuals.
- **Action:** Community engagement activities have been planned for 2021, including: Basura Bash Days in the months of April to October, a beautification project with plants and vegetables for residents, yoga in the park, and community outreach with the Milwaukee Fire Department regarding smoke detector awareness programs.

Strategy: Develop neighborhood groups that host activities and social programming organized by block for the purpose of creating a more cohesive neighborhood network.

- **Action:** Develop a timeline and activity plan.
- **Action:** Identify the block groupings. Organize and provide ongoing technical assistance to block associations.

Strategy: Organize a group of community leaders who expressed an interest in becoming lead for block club.

- **Action:** Secured funding to support the purchase of 10 laptops and 30 Chromebooks for residents who live in the Clarke Square neighborhood.
- **Action:** During in-person meetings, 40 residents shared their interest in becoming resident leaders and identified key issues in the neighborhood from reckless driving to human trafficking.
- **Action:** CSNI will be hosting bilingual virtual sessions with the community in late February and early March.
- **Action:** Provide Chromebooks and laptops for resident leaders.

Goal: Solidify partnerships by elevating neighborhood and collective voices on building relationships, cooperation and building consensus for the common good.

Strategy: Act as a liaison/connector for local neighborhood organizations, identifying needs and opportunities.

- **Action:** Identify emergency response funds at the federal, state and local level, including PPP/CARES Act.
- **Action:** Develop processes and systems to ensure accurate and appropriate distribution of resources.
- **Action:** Increase understanding for recipients of resources about expectations for engagement with CSNI, including participation in community meetings, etc.

Strategy: Promote Housing Infrastructure Safety.

- **Action:** Partnered with Milwaukee Fire Department and bilingual volunteers to go door-to-door to install fire alarms and smoke detectors. This two-phased effort resulted in over 100 homes receiving life-saving equipment.

Strategy: Address health issues in the community.

- **Action:** Garden Chat: find out from community members how they've been impacted by COVID.
- **Action:** Build pride in place: monthly cleanups.

Strategy: Evaluate existing partners.

- **Action:** Discuss and develop joint proposals for the Clarke Square community, promoting events and recognition of the partnership.

Strategy: Build a formal coalition of partners in the neighborhood.

- **Action:** Communicate with developers and city staff to learn about upcoming developments in the neighborhood.

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