



Construction: Surviving the Mayhem

EMERGING TOPICS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THURSDAY AUGUST 7, 2025

Let's Get Acquainted!



1. State your name & who you're with.
2. Share your favorite beverage to start your day.

Today's Agenda



- ❖ Welcome | Introductions
- ❖ Session Overview & Program Highlights
 - The Problem
 - The Idea
- ❖ Other Resources & Announcements
- ❖ Thank You & Wrap

Emerging Topics Series

This educational series brings relevant learning and training opportunities to those active in Wisconsin's economic and community development sector.

Our goal is to engage a broad range of people in purposeful dialogue, shared learning, and the exploration of best practices and potential collaboration.

Examples:

- Growing Creative Industries in Wisconsin
- Voter Registration & Civic Engagement
- Local Resources for Milwaukee Homeowners (Inflation Reduction Act/Energy Efficiency)
- Workforce Development – filling talent pipeline for construction trades

Save the Date!

Wednesday, November 5th (9-11am) will be our third session for 2025.



UEDA

Kristi Luzar

Executive Director

Debbie Knepeke

Member Engagement
Manager



OUR GOALS WITH THIS SERIES

- 1) An opportunity to bring together public, private, and nonprofit sectors to solve a complex problem.
- 2) Feature an innovative idea that needs the support of the community & economic development network.
- 3) Gather ideas and input on how we could move forward with this.
 - *What do we hope to accomplish?*
 - *What would it look like?*
 - *Who do we need?*
 - *How can this be replicated in the future?*

Thank you to our Sponsors!



JPMorganChase



Through our membership network, community partnerships, and program areas, we facilitate effective, cross-sector collaboration, meaningful connections, and strengthen capacity in Wisconsin's community and economic development sector.

Our vision is that the members and communities we serve are inspired and thriving, with equitable access to investment and opportunity.

The Rocky Road Ahead

THE PROBLEM

A solid teal horizontal bar spanning the width of the slide at the bottom.

JoAnna Bautch

Executive Director

viacdc.org



A portrait of a middle-aged man with a shaved head, a grey beard, and black-rimmed glasses. He is wearing a bright blue polo shirt and a gold-toned watch with a black face on his left wrist. His arms are crossed over his chest. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a dark, mottled grey.



Thai Bar-B-Que
Ometochtli Mexican Folk Dance
Salsabrosa Dance Company
Mamie's



Who's on National Avenue



Orenda Café
NTS Jewelry & Gifts
Plascencia Auto Sales



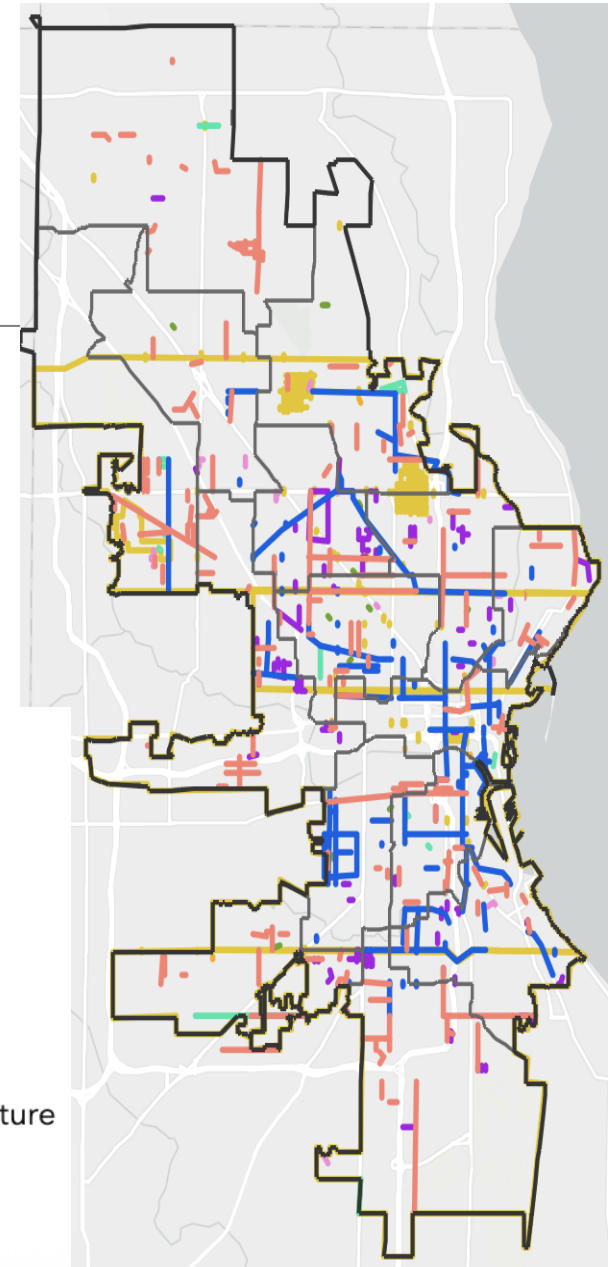
Street Construction

The good, the bad, the ugly

- ❖ 380 street construction/rebuilding projects are planned for the City of Milwaukee.
- ❖ W. National Avenue is slated from 2026-2028, with more projects planned.
- ❖ Phase 1 - 39th to 27th St. from April/May 2026 for 1 year

Projects by Type

- Street Paving
- Traffic Safety
- Bridge
- Alley
- Park
- Green Infrastructure
- Sewer
- Street Lighting



Construction Impacts & Schedule



- ❖ Traffic will be one way during construction; westbound traffic open during eastbound construction and vice versa.
- ❖ Temporary side street closures may occur.
- ❖ Parking will be limited on National Ave.

Matt Rejc

Neighborhood Business
Development Administrator

City of Milwaukee
Dept. of City Development



Existing Programs for Small Businesses

*City of
Milwaukee*

Commercial Revitalization Grant:

Facade, Signage, Storefront Activation & Retail Investment Fund

Pilot Programs through Partnerships:

Cluster Facade Grant Programs

What these programs don't provide:

Currently there is no support for business owners during the reconstruction to:

- Create alternative entrances
- Establish new parking/lighting
- Address deferred capital expenses

Existing Resources

*City of
Milwaukee -
Department of
Public Works*

Support is currently provided through information for businesses and the public.

The Support for Business Program

- General resource page with action items.

National Ave. specific:

- Multiple project presentations along Phase 1 of the reconstruction.

*Doing this
differently,
to fully
support
businesses...*

- There is a need to develop ***a grant program to help businesses offset impacts*** such as loss of sales or revenue due to the street projects.
- This has been done before! West Racine Business Recovery Program (WRBRP) to support businesses along the Washington Avenue reconstruction project.
 - Businesses were eligible to receive up to \$10,000 based on the level of impact that they received from the road construction.
 - Six grants were offered for an array of business expenses including payroll, inventory, equipment purchase and rent/mortgage payments.
- ***What could this look like here in Milwaukee?***



What can be done?

THE IDEA

JoAnna Bautch

Executive Director

viacdc.org



Expected Impacts

- ❖ **Reduced Foot Traffic & Parking:** Construction will limit the visibility and complicate customer access to more than 50 active businesses.
- ❖ **Increased Risk of Business Closure:** Smaller, single-location businesses face higher rates of sales decline, employment loss, and closure.
- ❖ **Common Disruption:** A typical business can expect 300 days of disruption—150 days in front of their establishment and 150 days across the street from their establishment.

VIA's Multifaceted Approach

Oct 2024 identified

VIA CDC's three areas of focus:

- ❖ **Small Business Grants** - help small business owners offset revenue losses, cover operating expenses, and implement alternative customer access strategies during construction disruption.
- ❖ **Tailored Technical Assistance & Convenings** - small business continuity coaching and advocacy for shared needs.
- ❖ **Alternative Access & Activation** - activation of City & private infrastructure to enhance small business accessibility.

Ensuring Success

Strengthening the approach:

- ❖ Advocated for and secured:
 - An outreach consultant contract with DPW, ensuring project communication to those most impacted.
 - Secured first donation from a banking partner to support grant funds.
 - Began the development of a pathway to ensure connectivity.

Alternative Access & Activation

35th St. Hill Accessibility Project:

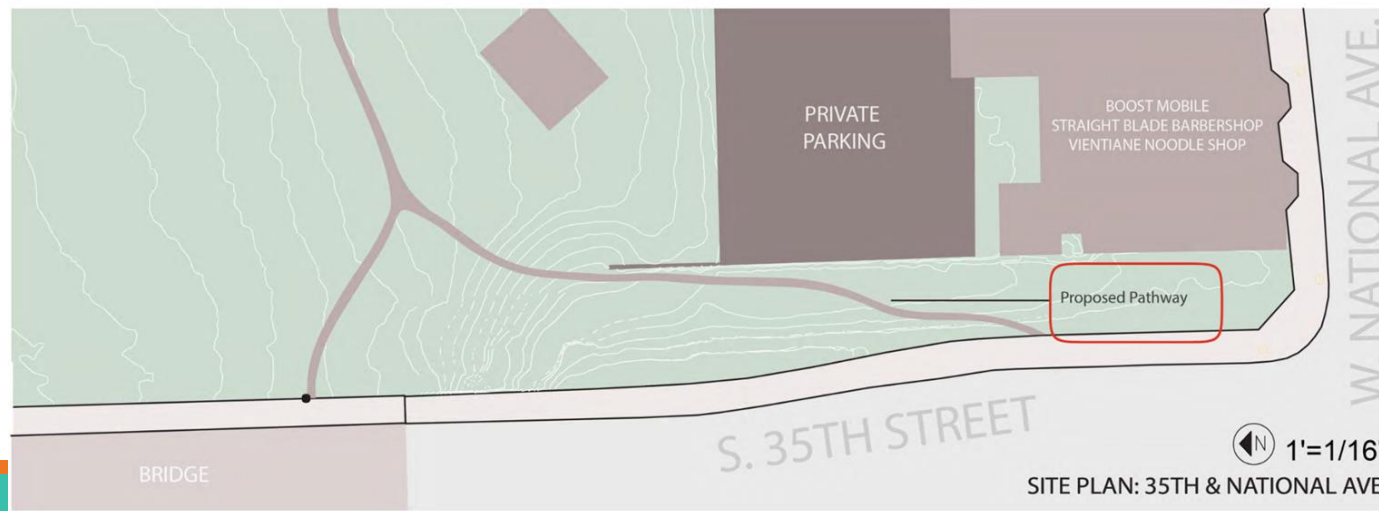
Current view of project site



35th street under viaduct



SITE OF PROPOSAL



Alternative Access & Activation

35th St. Hill Accessibility Project:





*How could this work in
Milwaukee?*

LET'S DISCUSS

Our Panel

Moderator: **Natanael Martinez**, Regional Economic Development Director, WEDC

Participants:

- **JoAnna Bautch**
Executive Director, VIA CDC
- **Matt Rejc**
*Neighborhood Business Development Administrator
City of Milwaukee Dept. of City Development*
- **Leticia Muñoz**
Business Owner, Orenda Café
- **Willie Smith**
Executive Director, Northwest Side CDC

What are we really talking about?

Sources

WEDC Road Construction Toolkit

UW Madison Division of Extension
Community & Economic
Development (Business Retention
& Expansion)

- ❖ Studies have shown that **68% of businesses experience some decline in business** due to road construction.
 - August 2024: [Howard Ave. reconstruction project throwing a wrench in sales, customers for some Milwaukee business owners](#)
- ❖ The most impacted are restaurants, bars, automotive, and general merchandisers.
- ❖ **Lost revenue ranges from 17-40%**, depending on industry and how much is done in advance to mitigate the impacts.
- ❖ Noise, vibration, dirt, dust, & short-term utility outages can negatively impact businesses.
- ❖ Loss of or limited access to loading, parking, etc. can impact vendors/suppliers.
- ❖ **Retaining & supporting existing businesses is typically less costly** (in both time and \$) than recruiting new businesses to replace those lost.

Small Business Financing 101

How do businesses usually access needed capital?

The average small business owner in our neighborhoods will attempt to secure financing in the following order:

1. **SBA Loan** (medium loan amounts & higher, interest, credit/collateral requirements, TA)
2. **Bank Loan** (standard/traditional commercial financing, larger loan amounts, interest, credit/collateral requirements)
3. **CDFI loan** (small-medium loan amounts with interest, credit/collateral requirements, TA resources)
4. **Microloan** (smaller amounts, no interest, unsecured, no interest or collateral, unsecured, no impact on credit.)
5. **Grant** (smaller amounts, no payment, no interest, TA resources)

The goal with this effort is **to minimize the financial impact on businesses**, making **option 5** the best fit.

Let's Discuss!

- ❖ Resources needed to help businesses
- ❖ Who can partner & invest
- ❖ Benefits of supporting this type of grant program
- ❖ Program design & implementation
- ❖ Next steps & timeline

How to Support

- ❖ ***Invest in VIA's Open for Business approach.*** In partnership with the Department of City Development, our goal is to raise at minimum \$750,000.00 to provide:
 - **Small Business Grants** - cover operating expenses, and implement alternative customer access.
 - **Tailored Technical Assistance & Convenings** - small business continuity coaching and advocacy for shared needs.
 - **Alternative Access & Activation** - activation of City & private infrastructure to enhance small business accessibility.



Questions?

THE MORE YOU KNOW



Resources

- City of Milwaukee Dept. of Public Works Projects List: city.milwaukee.gov/dpw/Infrastructure/Projects
- City of Milwaukee [Business Toolbox](#)
- Visit Milwaukee Foundation - [Emergency Relief Program](#)
- WEDC Road Construction Toolkit (contact them for PDF)
- WEDC [Small Business Development Grant program](#)
 - For technical assistance & service providers. Next cycle is Fall 2025.
 - Learn more at [August 13 webinar](#) (12:30-1:30pm CST)
- Surrounding neighborhood organizations & BIDs
 - Potential partner for neighbor outreach to support businesses, communicate information, etc.
 - City of Milwaukee Business Toolbox & BIDS/NIDS list: city.milwaukee.gov/DCD/BusinessToolbox/bids
- Kiva microloans (www.kiva.com/)

AUGUST IS NATIONAL NIGHT OUT MONTH!



Annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie.

Why do we celebrate?

The event is meant to increase awareness about police programs in communities, such as:

- drug prevention
- town watch
- neighborhood watch, and other anti-crime efforts

The events are typically organized by block watches, nonprofit organizations, companies, and police departments.

Special thanks to UEDA Member Safe & Sound for inviting us to table at Tuesday's District 7 MPD sponsored event at Harriet Tubman Park.

We spoke with almost 70 individuals about financial literacy and home ownership!

Upcoming UEDA Events **JOIN US!**



❑ **Annual Community Gathering**

Tuesday, September 9 | 4:30-6:30pm

❑ **Membership Did You Know webinar**

Tuesday, September 12 | 12-12:45pm

❑ **Emerging Topics Series Session 3**

Wednesday, November 5 | 9-11am

❑ **Membership Brown Bag Lunch & Learn**

Tuesday, November 18 | Noon-1pm

Take Root Milwaukee & Bank On Greater Milwaukee
Happy Hour events in December

*Sign up for UEDA's email list to receive our
monthly newsletter & stay connected!*



UEDA

Thank you for your time and interest!
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Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin

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