

# INTRODUCTION

Since 1985, the East North Avenue Association, (merchants group), has worked to promote commercial activities along the East North Avenue commercial corridor in the general area bounded by the Milwaukee River on the west, Greenwich venue on the north, N. Prospect avenue on the east and the Oak Leaf Bike Trail on the east side of Milwaukee. Recognizing the significant competition from surrounding shopping centers and other City shopping / entertainment destinations this organization of savvy building owners, businesses and institutions took a major step forward in 1998 by forming a Business Improvement District #20, (BID #20). The BID structure provides the fiscal support to increase the organizations presence and impact on the East Side. This has allowed the organization to hire professional support, to launch District promotions, to retain and recruit new businesses and with the help of the City to leverage streetscape improvements including unique and attractive street furnishings, plantings, graphics, public art, etc helping to cultivate the District's image and atmosphere as distinctly "Milwaukee's Great Eastside".

The BID's efforts have paid off by raising the profile of the area. This has helped to attract major reinvestment during the recent real estate development cycle. A number of these projects have raised the bar for design quality in the neighborhood. Encouraged by these successes but with much more now at stake, BID #20 has begun to look for additional tools to pursue their mission: to strengthen

the District as a shopping / entertainment experience and to maintain the current economic growth and development momentum.

As a follow up to the City's Northeast Side Plan process, BID Board members began to consider Design Guidelines as a way to set quality expectations for physical change in the BID and a Design Review Board to manage change. In the fall of 2008 the BID contacted James Pivoni, AIA, author of the Third Ward Neighborhood Design Guidelines and member of the Architectural Review Board for the Third Ward. Discussions ensued and in May of 2009 Jim was engaged to lead a process and draft a document to be submitted for review and adoption by BID #20 and the City of Milwaukee. Over the summer of 2009 six workshops were held with BID property owners and City planning staff to discuss design issues large and small, urban design, architectural design and street level design with the pedestrian in mind.

While the diversity and in some cases extraordinary quality of the architecture in the District warns against stifling creativity the most memorable and valued places in the neighborhood also exemplify successful time tested urban design principles. Most fundamental is the forming of clear and activated street spaces with urban building types selected from the neighborhood. These urban concepts rather than architectural stylistic preferences form the structure of this document.

