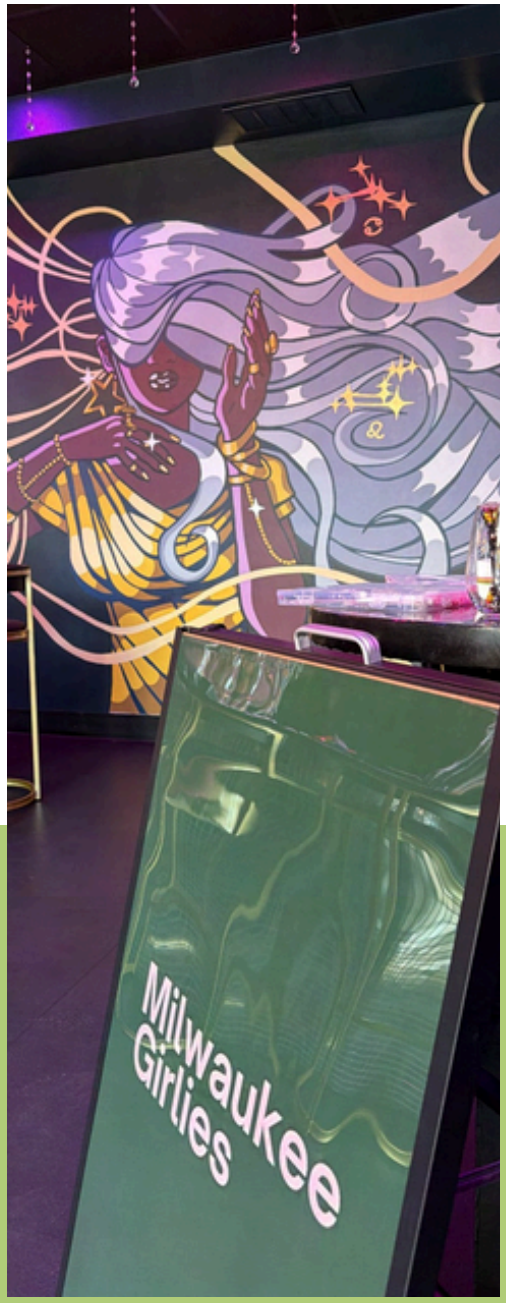
THE EASTSIDE
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

NOVEMBER 2026

East Side BID Newsletter

Heading into the Holidays







Letter from the Executive Director



THE EASTSIDE
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Hi East Siders,

It's hard to believe we're already heading into the holiday season! The past few months have been busy on the East Side, with events filling Ivanhoe Plaza, Halloween celebrations around Black Cat Alley, and new businesses opening their doors.

Now, we're turning our attention to the holiday season, and there's no better time to show some love to the businesses that make the East Side such a special place. With **Small Business Saturday** right around the corner and **Shop Local Weekend** coming up in December, we hope you'll keep the East Side in mind as you shop for gifts, grab a meal, and make your holiday plans.

Our **Holiday Gift Guide** is here to help you discover local gifts and businesses, and we'll have even more ways to shop local throughout the season. Every purchase matters and supports the local businesses and people who make the East Side such a welcoming place.

Thank you for being part of the East Side community, and happy holidays! We hope to see you around the neighborhood this season.

See you around the neighborhood,
Ryan Laessig
Executive Director, East Side Business Improvement District

Building a coalition to create Milwaukee's most vibrant neighborhood.

East Side Business Improvement District

P.O. Box 510197 Milwaukee, WI 53203 | director@theeastside.org

Planning a Holiday Party?



Looking for a spot to celebrate? The East Side has plenty of options for holiday gatherings. Here are a few ideas:

Make it a game night: Landmark Lanes offers bowling, arcade games, pool, darts, and more for a holiday party with a little friendly competition.

Go speakeasy-style: Shanghai MKE is an intimate spot for cocktails and a festive night out.

Gather around good food: Smokin' Jack's BBQ offers group reservations and private parties, plus catering for holiday gatherings.

Get creative: Studio B & Co offers a fun setting for a hands-on celebration with your group.

EXPLORE ALL BUSINESSES

MKE Vegan Restaurant Week

Milwaukee Vegan Restaurant Week brought a little extra attention to plant-based dining November 2–8, and the East Side had plenty to offer. **Temple Goddess**, **Ian's Pizza Milwaukee**, and **Strange Town** all joined in with vegan specials and promotions throughout the week.

With Temple Goddess serving up its 100% vegan menu, Ian's offering $1 off vegan slices, and Strange Town featuring its entirely vegan menu, the East Side was well represented during this citywide celebration of plant-based dining.

Photo by Strange Town



Celebrations

Celebrating Milestones on the East Side!

Congratulations to these East Side businesses on their anniversaries over the past few months! We're proud to have you as part of the neighborhood.

3 YEARS

SEÑOR GORDITOS

Congrats on another year of birria tacos, loaded fries, sweet treats, and late-night cravings!

9 YEARS

STRANGE TOWN

Celebrating nine years of plant-based food, creative dishes, and being a favorite neighborhood spot.

90 YEARS

HOOLIGAN'S SUPER BAR

Cheers to nine decades of Hooligan's! Here's to 90 years of cold drinks, good food, and plenty of stories.

99 YEARS

LANDMARK LANES

One year away from the big 100! Landmark Lanes is celebrating 99 years of bowling, games, and good times!



Ivanhoe Plaza: Moving Forward

Ivanhoe Plaza continues to make exciting progress, with key city and public approvals helping move the project one step closer to reality. These milestones reflect strong community engagement and support, bringing the vision for a vibrant, shared gathering space on the East Side into clearer focus.

Want to learn more about what's ahead and how to get involved? Check out the full project updates later in this newsletter for the latest details.

THE BREWERS ARE WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS!

Milwaukee, we did it! Congratulations to the Brewers on winning their first World Series title in franchise history. What a season, what a team, and what a moment for our city!



"Wild Bill" | Brent Schoonover & Hannah Tews

Two Years, A Lot to Celebrate!

Two years ago, Ryan Laessig stepped into the role of Executive Director of the East Side BID. Somehow, in just two years, he's managed to squeeze a whole lot of ideas, events, murals, new businesses, bike rides, plaza parties, and ambitious neighborhood projects into the mix.

In honor of Ryan's second anniversary, we're taking a look back at a few of the things that made this past year such a big one for the East Side.



A Plaza That's Becoming a Place to Be

One of the biggest shifts this year has been the way Ivanhoe Plaza has become a true gathering place for the neighborhood.

Ryan has worked to expand the use of the plaza, encouraging community groups, businesses, artists, and event organizers to bring their ideas into the space. Over the past year, Ivanhoe Plaza has hosted markets, music, community events, and plenty of reasons to stop by, hang out, and see what's happening. It's been exciting to watch a space that started as a temporary project become part of the everyday rhythm of the East Side. And this year, Ryan, the East Side BID Board, and Korb Architecture took a major step toward imagining what comes next.

The **Ivanhoe Plaza fundraising project** officially kicked off this year, launching an effort to turn the temporary plaza into a permanent community space. Through deep collaboration with the BID Board and Korb Architecture, Ryan has helped develop plans for the future of the plaza and what this space can become for the East Side.

The vision includes a permanent concrete plaza, seating and landscaping, shade, improved accessibility, infrastructure for performances and events, and signature features like the Leaf Canopy, Community Stage, and Flex Park.It's a big project, but it also reflects something that has been at the heart of Ryan's work this year: thinking beyond what the East Side is today and helping build what it can become tomorrow. Interested in making your mark on the Plaza? Explore ways to get involved: **ivanhoeplaza.theeastside.org/**.

Celebrations

A Year Full of Reasons to Get Out

If you spent any time on the East Side this year, you probably noticed something, there was a lot going on.

A few highlights from this year's full event calendar include Summer Soulstice Music Festival, the Rolling Bike Party, East Side Gallery Night, Black Cat Alley After Dark, and Doors Open Mural Fest. Each gave people a reason to get out and experience our neighborhood.

A big part of what makes these events special is that they're free and open to the community. They give people a reason to come to the East Side, explore a little, grab dinner, shop at a local business, check out a new mural, and meet up with friends. And for the businesses, artists, and organizations that call the East Side home, these events create opportunities to welcome new faces and be part of the larger community.

Many of these events also continue the East Side's long-standing identity as Milwaukee's "creative crossroads." Art and creativity are woven into so much of what we do, from Gallery Night and Doors Open Mural Fest to the ever-changing walls of Black Cat Alley and the creative programming that fills Ivanhoe Plaza. It's a tradition Ryan has continued to build on, creating more opportunities for people to experience the East Side as a place where art, culture, business, and community all meet.

Keeping Black Cat Alley Fresh

Black Cat Alley has had a busy year, too. Ryan has continued working to improve and care for the outdoor gallery, from adding another new mural to restoring existing artwork and installing plaques that help visitors learn more about the artists and murals throughout the alley.

It's easy to think of Black Cat Alley as a finished project, but keeping a public art space like this vibrant takes ongoing work. Want to show your support for the Alley? Consider donating to help provide art supplies, protect murals during winter, fund general maintenance projects, and support alley security at blackcatmke.com/support.





Celebrations





Growing the East Side Community

A thriving neighborhood needs great places to go, and in Ryan's second year of leadership, we had the pleasure of welcoming even more businesses to the East Side, including Lowwstock Vintage, Jalisco's Cocina y Bar, Smokin' Jack's BBQ, Studio B & Co., Blue Hour Coffee, The Waxwing, and Star Bar.

Ryan has continued building relationships with businesses throughout the district and finding ways for the BID to support the people who make the East Side what it is. One example is Poppy Bakery, which secured a BID Security grant this year, helping support safety and security efforts for the business.

And There's More on the Horizon...

Because, naturally, Ryan didn't stop there. This year also saw the fundraising effort for the North Avenue Mural Project come together, bringing us one step closer to adding another piece of public art to the neighborhood. The mural itself is still ahead, which means we get to save that celebration for another day!

Two years into Ryan's leadership at the East Side BID, there's always another project underway, another idea taking shape, and another reason to be excited about what's next. So today, we're celebrating two years of work that have already made an impact, and the many projects still waiting around the corner.

Happy second anniversary, Ryan!
We can't wait to see what year three brings!

Business and Economic Development

NEW BUSINESSES

Please join us in welcoming these new businesses to the East Side!

STAR BAR

Looks like a new star is already shining on the East Side at 2011 E. Ivanhoe Plaza. **Star Bar** may be new to the neighborhood, but they've already been making their mark. They've participated in several events at Ivanhoe Plaza, bringing their energy to the space and becoming a familiar presence in the community.

Inside their space, they've also been busy building a calendar of their own events, including Tarot Tuesday, Poetry & Spoken Word Open Mic, and Service Industry Night. And if you've stopped by, you've probably noticed their amazing mural, too!

The astrology-themed cocktail lounge will offer cocktails, light bites, seasonal patio seating overlooking Ivanhoe Plaza, DJs, live music, and plenty more to come. We can't wait to see what they have in the stars for us next.

ECONOMY STUDIO

ECONOMY STUDIO

Economy Studio is a small boutique packed with trendy, affordable finds and seriously good scents. Located at 1812 E. North Ave., the shop features thoughtfully curated, frequently rotating inventory, so there's always something new to discover, from weekend outfits to going-out pieces and fun finds. And don't sleep on the perfume selection! Economy Studio carries a curated lineup of unique scents that are a little different from what you'll find at the usual department stores. Stop in, browse with a friend, and see what catches your eye!

DONUT HEADZ

Got a sweet tooth? **Donut Headz** is now serving up scratch-made doughnuts, wild specialty creations, and the kind of over-the-top treats that are made for your camera roll. Think Biscoff and cobbler-inspired doughnuts, tanghulu, loaded shakes, noodle boils, fresh fruit refreshers, coffee, and more. Located at 2264 N. Prospect Ave., this colorful new spot from Malaka Bland and Jay Ragsdale is all about big flavors, bright colors, and giving customers a chance to try something a little different. Welcome to the East Side, Donut Headz!

COMING SOON

BONJOUR CREPES

Bonjour Crepes is bringing its made-to-order sweet and savory crepes to 1806 E. North Ave. The menu features both classic and creative combinations, from sweet crepes filled with strawberries and whipped cream to savory options loaded with eggs, cheese, meats, and vegetables. The menu goes beyond crepes, too, with waffles, croffles, boba tea, and Thai and Vietnamese iced coffee. Located near UWM, the new spot is planning early morning hours and late-night service, making it a convenient stop for breakfast, a study break, or a late-night treat.

COMING SOON



TALLOW 52

Tallow 52 is coming soon to 2315 N. Murray Ave., bringing a new concept from Jack Holt of neighboring **Smokin' Jack's BBQ**. The forthcoming spot will fuse smoked meats with Latin American flavors, with a focus on craft cocktails, tequila, whiskey, and nightlife.

We don't know all the details just yet, but we have a feeling Tallow 52 is going to bring a whole new flavor to the neighborhood. Stay tuned!

NADI PLATES

This year, **Nadi Plates**, a family-run Italian food truck and catering business, will open its first brick-and-mortar restaurant in the former Pomona Cider Co. space. The new establishment will feature Italian small plates, a European-style espresso bar, and a full bar with cocktails and wine, all with a focus on plant-based and gluten-free options.

COMING SOON



IL GRANDE BAMBINO

Il Grande Bambino is coming soon alongside Nadi Plates, expanding the Nadi Plates family with a new café and daytime concept. Translating to “The Big Baby,” Grande Bambino is named after a playful nickname from a well-meaning relative in Italy and will feature an espresso bar, freshly prepared lunches, and a mini Italian market offering imported wines, pastas, and other specialty goods.Operated by the team behind Nadi Plates, this new addition will open alongside the restaurant, with more details to be shared as opening day approaches.

STREET COFFEE COLLECTIVE

Street Coffee Collective is bringing its first permanent home to 2008 N. Farwell Ave. this summer. Building on its popular mobile coffee catering business, the new Milwaukee HQ will feature a coffee bar, tasting room, classroom, and the behind-the-scenes hub dedicated for catering. We're excited to welcome this unique new gathering space to the East Side!

Ivanhoe Plaza: A Place to Gather

This year, Ivanhoe Plaza continued to prove just how much can happen in a space designed for the community. From shopping and makers markets to creative pop-ups and neighborhood gatherings, the plaza has become a regular destination for events on the East Side.



The Cream Fresh market series hosted by Jungle Gems brought shoppers and vintage lovers together for days of browsing, shopping, and finding something special. The events filled the plaza with racks of vintage clothing, local vendors, food and drinks, and plenty of people ready to dig for a good find.

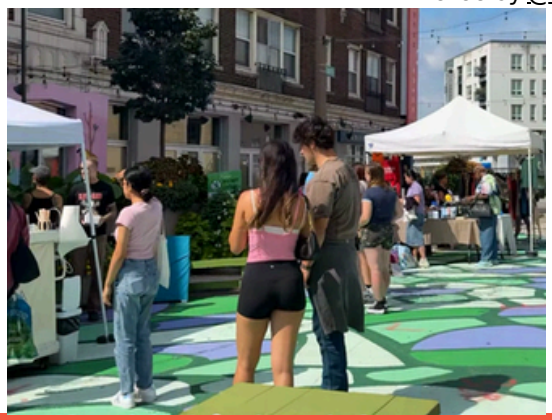
The Milwaukee Girlies Garage Sale and Fall Flea brought a different kind of creative energy to the plaza, with a lineup of local vendors and makers. The series gave shoppers a chance to discover new artists and small businesses while enjoying a market atmosphere right in the heart of the East Side.



And this is just the beginning. With plans underway to transform Ivanhoe Plaza into a permanent community space, we're excited to see even more events and ideas take shape here in the years ahead.

Photos by @melaina_zetley and Milwaukee Girlies









Doors Open Mural Fest

A Weekend of Art, Music, and Community to the East Side

Doors Open Mural Fest brought two days of art, music, shopping, and exploration to the East Side on September 26 and 27, giving visitors plenty of reasons to wander the neighborhood and experience what makes the East Side Milwaukee's creative crossroads.



With beautiful weather setting the scene, the weekend brought people out to explore Black Cat Alley, Ivanhoe Plaza, North Avenue, and the many businesses and public spaces in between.





House Circuit Takes Over Ivanhoe Plaza

Saturday night brought one of the weekend's biggest highlights as House Circuit transformed Ivanhoe Plaza into an outdoor dance floor.



The free concert featured Chicago selector Ivanolima and Milwaukee legend Moorhaus, who brought house music to the plaza for an evening that had people dancing, hanging out, and enjoying the East Side after dark.

With Black Cat Alley just steps away, the surrounding murals provided the perfect backdrop. The concert was also a great example of how Ivanhoe Plaza has grown into a flexible community space where music, art, and neighborhood events can come together.



Photos by House Circuit

Event Recaps



Sunday at the East Side Makers Market

On Sunday, Ivanhoe Plaza took on a completely different feel as the East Side Makers Market filled the space with local artists and makers.

Sponsored by Milwaukee Makers Market, the event gave visitors a chance to shop local while enjoying the plaza and exploring the surrounding neighborhood. It was a fitting way to close out a weekend centered on creativity and discovery.





East Side Businesses Join the Fun

East Side businesses also played a big role throughout the weekend, creating even more reasons to explore beyond the main events.

Lowwstock Vintage hosted its own party, Jalisco's Cocina y Bar offered a special for visitors, and The Oriental Theatre welcomed guests as part of both Doors Open Milwaukee and the Dialogues Documentary Festival. In Black Cat Alley, Shanghai Speakeasy opened its gate for walk-up service, putting visitors just steps from both the murals and the House Circuit concert.

Together, these businesses helped extend the weekend throughout the neighborhood and showed just how much there is to discover on the East Side.







Photos by @melaina_zetley and Lowwstock Vintage

Stay up-to-date with the latest BID happenings!

Visit **theeastside.org/events/happenings** for the latest events and updates.

Event Recaps





Celebrating the Creative Crossroads

At its heart, Doors Open Mural Fest was a celebration of the East Side itself. Public art, local businesses, and the energy of everyone who came out to Ivanhoe Plaza made for a weekend that was distinctly East Side.
Thank you to our participating businesses, East Side Makers Market vendors, the House Circuit crew, Ivanolima, Moorhaus, and everyone who helped make the weekend happen.

And, of course, thank you to everyone who stopped by, danced, shopped, explored the murals, grabbed a bite, and spent part of the weekend on the East Side. We loved seeing you out there!











Photos by @melaina_zetley

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black cat alley

Spooky Season in Black Cat Alley

October brought plenty of Halloween fun to the East Side, with two big events taking over the spaces around Black Cat Alley and Ivanhoe Plaza.

Photos by @getlotza









Black Cat Alley After Dark

Black Cat Alley After Dark: Yacht Week Experience brought an afternoon of music, movement, wellness, and art to the neighborhood. The event kicked off with a community 5K before moving into outdoor yoga, DJ sets, complimentary saunas and cold plunges, local vendors, fire pits, and a Halloween costume contest. With the murals of Black Cat Alley as the backdrop, it was a pretty memorable way to spend an October afternoon and evening.

The Halloween Show

Just a week later, **The Halloween Show** took over Ivanhoe Plaza, right next door to Black Cat Alley. Presented by Run Along Forever and On What?! MKE, the free event featured live music from Milwaukee artists and plenty of Halloween costumes. With both spaces coming together for the festivities, it was the perfect spot to celebrate Halloween on the East Side.

It was another great example of how Black Cat Alley and Ivanhoe Plaza can work together to create unique experiences in the heart of the neighborhood.







Let Art Soar: A Familiar Motif, A New Twist

"Let Art Soar," created by Milwaukee-based artist **Michael Change**, features a playful combination of paper airplanes and Change's signature "Peace Pencil" motif. The mural sits directly above "Paper Airplanes" by artist Byada Meredith, creating a visual connection between the two pieces through their shared paper airplane imagery.

Change's design features a hand flashing a peace sign with a pencil held between its raised fingers. For this mural, he replaces the pencil with a paper airplane, adding a new twist to his recognizable symbol. As Change explains, "It is a 'Disney-esque' hand flashing the peace sign with a pencil between the two raised fingers; reminiscent of someone smoking. Instead of getting high, though, it represents that spark of creativity." The design also forms an inverted capital "A," which he describes as "the alpha; the beginning with a flip."

The paper airplane imagery was inspired by a childhood memory.After misunderstanding a teacher's instructions, Change once brought 100 paper airplanes to school. Years later, that memory found its way into this mural, alongside the influence of Meredith's artwork below. Stop by Black Cat Alley and see it for yourself!

Future Artists in the Making







Last month, we had the pleasure of welcoming Lakeview Elementary to Black Cat Alley! The students spent the morning exploring the Alley, taking in the murals, and creating some artwork of their own inspired by what they saw.

We're always excited to see young artists getting curious about public art, and this visit was extra special thanks to the Milwaukee artists who took the time to meet with the students, answer their questions, and share a little about their own creative journeys.

A huge thank-you to these Black Cat Alley artists:

- **Alain Poma**
- **Adam Melster**
- **Arcadia Melster**
- **Hannah Tews**
- And our Executive Director, **Ryan Laessig**

Thank you for sharing your time, stories, and creative expertise with these young artists. Your willingness to connect with the students and give them a behind-the-scenes look at the people who make the art they were exploring means so much.

Photos by Jim Sinicki

Black Cat Alley Winter Prep

The **Wild Bill mural** by Brent Schoonover and Hannah Tews has been reinstalled with some extra reinforcement to help it weather the winter ahead! Winterization is an important part of caring for outdoor murals, especially here in Wisconsin, where our weather can be tough on public art. Want to help keep Black Cat Alley looking its best? Consider making a donation on Giving Tuesday, or anytime, at **blackcatmke.com/support**.



THE EASTSIDE
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

East Side Gift Guide

GIVE THE GIFT OF LOCAL!

As the holiday season approaches, we're excited to share our gift guide, featuring a curated selection of unique gifts from our amazing local businesses in the East Side BID.

This year, we encourage you to shop small and support our vibrant community by exploring special deals and distinctive offerings from talented artisans and shop owners right here in Milwaukee.

Let's make this holiday season memorable by giving the gift of local!

YogaSix Milwaukee Class Pack Sale



Give the gift of wellness this holiday season! From November 1 through December 1, **YogaSix Milwaukee** is offering a special class package: buy 10 classes for $249 and get 6 additional classes FREE. That's 16 classes to enjoy, valid for six months.

20% off Wiskullsin Clothing



Get a head start on your holiday shopping with **Wiskullsin**'s Black Friday through Cyber Monday sale! Enjoy 20% off your purchase when you use code BFCM20 at checkout, November 27-30.

Gift some edge! Score 20% off site-wide at **United Skulls of America** from Black Friday through Cyber Monday using code BFCM20. Shop state-inspired skull tees for some hardcore hometown pride.



20% off United Skulls of America

50% off Kind Oasis

Shop small, save big, and sip kindly this holiday season! From Small Business Saturday, November 28, through December 11, enjoy 50% off **Kind Oasis** Seltzer and Spritz Singles, 4-packs, bundles, and Spritz 6-packs. Stock up on your favorite flavors for holiday gatherings, cozy nights in, and plenty of good vibes all season long! Offer valid in-store only.





25% off Bublr Bikes Annual Pass

Give the gift of two wheels! **Bublr Bikes** is offering 25% off a 2027 Annual Pass, which includes unlimited one-hour Bublr rides throughout the year. To receive your discount, create a Bublr BCycle account by December 31, 2026, and email support@bublrbikes.org to request your promotional code. Bublr will send you a beautifully designed discount certificate by email or mail.

Tasty Treat at Vier North

Your local shopping comes with a tasty little bonus! Through December 23, visit **Vier North**, purchase any beverage, and enjoy a FREE cloud bread when you show proof of purchase from another participating local business. It's one more reason to shop local and support your East Side favorites! Limit one per table or party.





Lowwstock Vintage Party

Celebrate Small Business Saturday at **Lowwstock Vintage** on November 28! Stop by for a special in-store party featuring a limited-edition merchandise drop, a DJ, and coffee. Gift cards will also be available throughout the holiday season. Lowwstock knows how to throw a good party, so come join the fun this Small Business Saturday!

Smokin' Jack's BBQ Gift Card Deal



Give a little something delicious this holiday season! From November 28 through December 31, purchase $50 in **Smokin' Jack's BBQ** gift cards and receive a $10 bonus voucher to enjoy for yourself. Gift cards are available in person at the Murray Avenue location or online, and bonus vouchers can be redeemed January 1 to March 31, 2027. Planning your holiday meals? Smokin' Jack's is also taking orders for smoked Thanksgiving turkey breast and Christmas prime rib, complete with all the fixings!

Need a little pick-me-up while tackling your holiday shopping? Stop by **Baya Bar** for a refreshing smoothie, açaí bowl, or one of their decked-out holiday drink specials. And while you're there, grab a Baya Bar gift card for someone on your list. It's a fun little gift they'll be happy to sip on!



Holiday Sips at Baya Bar

Milwaukee Mix & Cobalt Glassworks Handmade Holiday Gift Market

Find something truly one of a kind at the **Milwaukee Mix** & **Cobalt Glassworks** Handmade Holiday Gift Market! Shop an assortment of locally crafted art, jewelry, glassworks, and unique treasures made right here in Milwaukee on Sunday, December 20, from 11 AM-3 PM. It's the perfect opportunity to find thoughtful gifts while supporting local makers. Free to attend!





Little Monsters 20% off Holiday Sale

Get a jump on holiday shopping at **Little Monsters**! On Small Business Saturday, November 28, enjoy 20% off holiday clothing, plus a FREE gift with purchases over $100. Complimentary gift wrapping makes checking off your gift list even easier! Little Monsters will also be open Sundays from Thanksgiving through Christmas Eve, from noon to 3 PM, for additional holiday shopping hours. Plus, a portion of sales on Friday, December 4, will benefit Maryland Avenue Montessori.

Give the Gift of Choice



Gift cards are always a good idea, especially when they support a favorite local business! They make easy, thoughtful gifts for anyone on your list and give recipients something to look forward to after the holidays. **Blue Hour Coffee** is one local option for the coffee lover on your list, with gift cards starting at $15 and available throughout the holiday season. Pick up a gift card from a favorite East Side spot and let them choose their own treat!

Sometimes the best gift is a good meal! Treat someone on your list to dinner, plan a lunch date while you're out holiday shopping, or take visiting friends and family out to coffee or dessert. There are plenty of local favorites to choose from, including **Strange Town**, **Smokin' Jack's BBQ**, **Yo Factory Yogurt**, **Ian's Pizza**, **Von Trier**, **Allie Boy's Bagelry & Luncheonette**, **Kawa Ramen & Sushi**, **Señor Gordito's**, **Frankies Restaurant & Catering**, **Jalisco's Cocina y Bar**, **Poppy Bakery**, **Vintage**, and **Tsaocaa**. Pick a new spot to try together or revisit an old favorite. Either way, a little extra time around the table is always a welcome gift!



Gifts for the Foodie

Gifts for the Creative Type

Shopping for someone who always has a project in the works? The East Side has plenty of inspiration for the creative minds on your list. Browse unique finds at **The Waxwing**, pick up something crafty at **Magic Hands Creative Reuse**, or find a creative experience at **Studio B & Co**.

Jewelry Gifts That Make a Statement

Looking for something they'll love wearing long after the holidays? Explore unique jewelry and accessories at **Paloma Wilder** and **Artist Friends**, where you'll find plenty of beautiful pieces to add something special to their holiday wish list.

Gift an Experience

Sometimes the best gifts are experiences you can enjoy together! Catch a movie at the historic **Oriental Theatre**, book a pottery class at **Murray Hill Pottery Works**, or gift a yoga or movement class at **The Moving Galaxy**. Looking for a little friendly competition? **Landmark Lanes** has bowling and arcade games, too.

Gifts for a Little Self-Care

Give someone on your list a little time to relax, recharge, and treat themselves! Pick up a gift card for a manicure at **Bisou Nails & Spa**, a spa day at **Neroli Salon & Spa**, a salon appointment at **Studio D'Angeli**, a little glow at **Sun Tan City**, or a brow refresh at **Wink Browtique**. It's a thoughtful way to give someone a little time for themselves!

Holiday Events



This Small Business Saturday, the East Side invites you to explore, indulge, and enjoy everything our vibrant neighborhood has to offer. Whether you're getting a jump on holiday gifting or simply spending a cozy November Saturday supporting your favorite local spots, there's no better place to be than right here on the East Side.

Make a day of it:

- Grab a meal at one of our local restaurants, cafés, or breweries
- Kick off the holidays with a movie, bowling night, live show, or mini-golf at one of our entertainment venues
- Get your holiday shopping started at our unique retailers, boutiques, and art galleries
- Renew or purchase a membership at our fitness studios or museums – or gift one to a friend
- Attend a neighborhood makers' market and shop handcrafted goods
- Plan a Friendsgiving gathering at a local venue, then stroll the neighborhood for Small Biz Saturday finds
- Treat yourself to a little self-care and a seasonal glow-up at East Side salons and spas

From gifts that feel personal and meaningful to meals that bring people together, your support makes a difference. **Thank you for shopping local and supporting our East Side businesses.**



Give Back to Public Art This Giving Tuesday

This Giving Tuesday, we're inviting our community of art lovers, neighbors, and supporters to help keep creativity thriving on the East Side. Your generosity can support two important projects: caring for Black Cat Alley and bringing new public art to North Avenue.

Keep Black Cat Alley Creative

Since 2016, Black Cat Alley has transformed an ordinary alley into one of Milwaukee's most celebrated outdoor art galleries. Keeping it that way takes ongoing care and community support. Donations help fund mural maintenance and winterization, landscaping, security, and opportunities for local artists to create new work. Every contribution helps protect the artwork and keep the Alley welcoming for everyone who visits.

Bring More Art to North Avenue

We're also continuing to raise funds for a new mural along the E. North Avenue corridor! This project will support a local Milwaukee muralist while adding another colorful piece of public art to the neighborhood. Building on the creativity found throughout Black Cat Alley and Ivanhoe Plaza, the mural will help create a welcoming space, inspire community pride, and bring more visitors to the area.

Every Contribution Makes a Difference

Whether you're helping care for an existing mural or supporting the next piece of public art, your donation helps shape the creative spaces that make the East Side special. Gifts of all sizes are appreciated, and you don't have to wait until Giving Tuesday to make an impact!

Donate today at blackcatmke.com/support

Shop Local Weekend

Saturday, December 12, and Sunday, December 13

'Tis the season to shop small and spread cheer! This holiday season, celebrate Shop Local Weekend by exploring Milwaukee's East Side for thoughtful gifts, cozy vibes, and festive finds. From charming boutiques and unique treasures to seasonal menus and warm neighborhood spots, our local businesses are here to help you make the holidays merry and meaningful. Come support your favorite shops and discover a few new ones along the way!



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Building the Future of Ivanhoe Plaza

Ivanhoe Plaza began as a temporary experiment in placemaking. Today, it has the opportunity to become something lasting: a permanent, concrete public gathering space designed to serve the East Side for decades to come.

Led by the East Side Business Improvement District, with design by Korb Architecture and support from Alderman Alex Brower, community partners, and city leaders, this project will transform Ivanhoe Plaza into an accessible, all-season civic space. The new plaza will support neighborhood businesses, strengthen community identity, and help drive the district's continued growth.

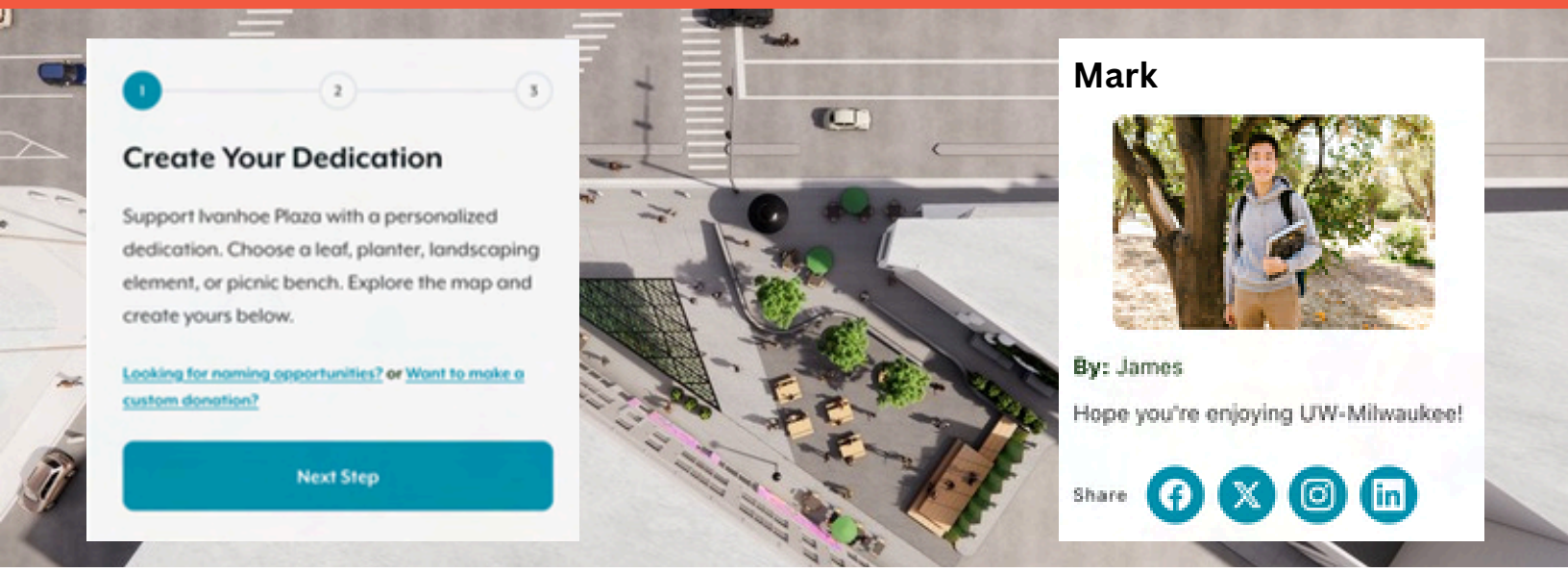
The redesigned plaza will include:

- **A permanent concrete plaza surface**
- **Integrated seating and gathering areas**
- **Landscaping and shade elements**
- **Infrastructure to support performances and events**
- **Improved accessibility and pedestrian connectivity**
- **Flexible space for daily use and large-scale community programming**

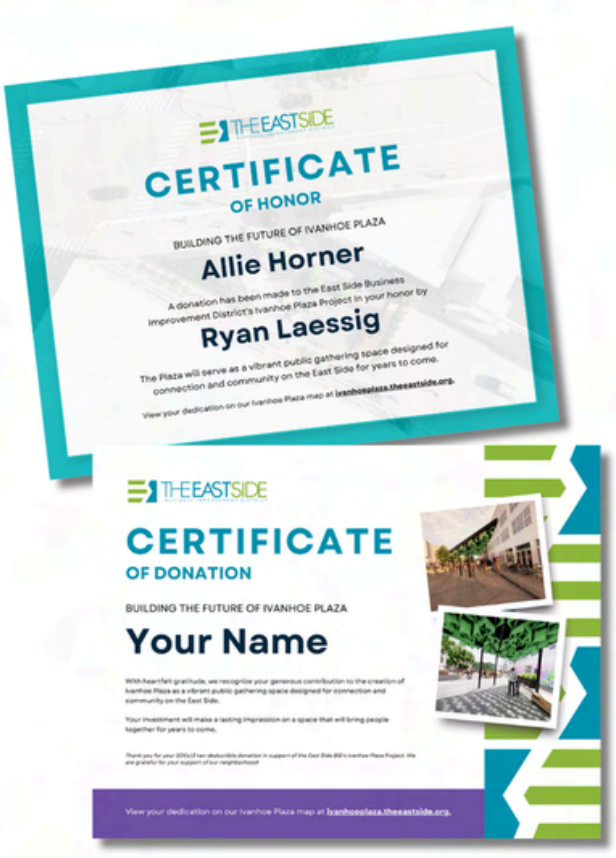


Be part of bringing Ivanhoe Plaza to life. From small contributions to larger sponsorship opportunities, there are many meaningful ways to leave your mark on this future community space. Whether you choose to make a digital dedication or support a physical element of the plaza, your contribution helps shape a lasting place for connection on the East Side.

IVANHOE PLAZA



Make a Digital Dedication



Our [digital dedication program is now live,](#) giving you a simple and meaningful way to support the future of Ivanhoe Plaza while honoring someone special or something you care about.

When you make a dedication, you'll receive a featured spot on our interactive plaza map along with keepsakes based on your donation level:

- $25: Digital map spot + certificate
- $50: Digital map spot + certificate + postcard
- $100: Digital map spot + certificate + postcard + keychain

You can dedicate your contribution to a person, organization, or cause and choose which part of the plaza it supports, from canopy leaves to planters, landscaping, or picnic tables.

IIf applicable, you will receive any ordered items by mail once the fundraising goal has been met. Digital certificates will be emailed within one week of your donation.

Start Your Dedication

Every dedication helps bring this space to life and creates a lasting connection to the East Side.

Follow along to be the first to hear about the latest news and upcoming events.

theeastside.org