

BRIDGING VALLEY COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MARKETING PLAN

MAY 11, 2007



URBAN
Strategies

DRAFT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The creation of this report and the development of the strategies herein would not have been possible without the participation of businesses, community organizations, Valley employees and residents. The time that each of these groups contributed and the input they provided was invaluable. Specifically, Urban Strategies would like to thank the following entities:



16th Street Community Health Center, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Avenues West Business Improvement District, Blessed Sacrament, City of Milwaukee Department of City Development, Community Baptist Church, Concordia University, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail, Hillside Resource Center, Hmong American Peace Academy, Lad Lake, Merrill Park Neighborhood Association, Milwaukee Academy of Science, Milwaukee Christian Center, Mitchell Park Domes, Mitchell Elementary School, Mitchell Street Business Improvement District, Nativity Jesuit High School, Neighborhood House, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Saint Rafael School, Saint Sebastian, School for Early Development and Achievement, Seeds of Health, Silver City Main Street, SOHI Main Street, South Town Points, Spotted Eagle, Straightway Vineyard, Three Holy

Women, and West End Development Corporation.

Urban Strategies wishes to express gratitude to the four Valley businesses that were intimately involved in the research for the Bridging Valley Communities Project. Their willingness to dedicate their time and that of their employees to provide us with information and perspective was essential. Special thanks to the management teams of Cargill Taylor Beef, P&H Mining, Palermo's Pizza, and Potawatomi Bingo Casino.

Urban Strategies would also like to acknowledge the involvement of our clients, Menomonee Valley Partners, Inc., its Executive Management Committee and Board of Directors, and Layton Boulevard West Neighbors. Their input, insight, and passion guided us through the creation of this plan.

Finally, this work would not have been possible without the generous support of the Helen Bader Foundation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bridging Valley Communities is a joint project of Menomonee Valley Partners, Inc., Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, and West End Development Corporation. The main goal of the Bridging Communities project is to improve connections between the Valley, its employers, and employees and community residents. Both business and government entities have made significant investments in the redevelopment of the Valley: \$148 million in public investment and \$541 million in private investment. To maximize these investments to their fullest potential, MVP and its partners wanted to increase the impact that the Valley's redevelopment will have on surrounding neighborhoods.

Urban Strategies, a research, training, and facilitation firm based in downtown Milwaukee, was hired to create a community outreach and marketing plan that would guide MVP and community partners in attempts to make the above vision a reality.

The findings, recommendations, and strategies included in this report to MVP, community partners, and businesses can serve as a road map for how to move forward to "bridge Valley communities." The report focuses on strategies for how to connect people, businesses, and organizations on a social, human level; strategies to "bridge" neighborhoods and businesses, people, and organizations. In the development of these strategies, Urban Strategies was driven by the following questions:

- 1. Where and how should MVP invest its time and money?**
- 2. How can MVP best collaborate with corporations and community agencies?**
- 3. How can community agencies leverage investments in the Valley to serve their own distinct missions?**

To answer these questions, Urban Strategies began by conducting primary research. We asked neighborhood residents, Valley employers and employees, community organizations, and commercial districts about their perception of the Valley, their habits, and their motivations. The research process was based on five targeted behaviors that, if are adopted, will successfully bridge Valley communities:

- Employers recruit workers from surrounding neighborhoods
- Employers implement worker retention practices and programs
- Valley employees purchase homes near to the Valley
- Valley employees and residents frequent retail, dining, and service establishments in surrounding neighborhoods
- Valley employees and residents make use of green space amenities

THE MEMOMONEE VALLEY VALUE PROPOSITION

The Menomonee Valley has a competitive advantage over other locations. It offers businesses value in a number of ways:

- Menomonee Valley Partners provides business attraction and retention services;
- The Valley has an active Business Improvement District that collaborates to maintain, develop, and promote Menomonee Valley businesses;
- Residents in surrounding neighborhoods can meet the labor needs of Valley businesses;
- A network of community based-organizations provides a connection to employees, and offers services aimed at employee retention;
- The Hank Aaron State Trail and other green space amenities offer unique opportunities for employers and employees.



SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

When Urban Strategies began the research process, MVP thought that perhaps it would be most effective to invest in technology and infrastructure. For example, MVP could invest in a web-based system through which community partners could upload their information and share it directly with employers. Research revealed that initially these “systematic” approaches would not be effective. Due to differences within subjects of the target population, no “one” approach will be effective. Rather than investing in technology, MVP and community partners should invest in developing social marketing efforts (i.e. staff time).

Community residents and employees iterated again and again the importance of personal contact to make them act. At the present time, the time of MVP and community partners will be most effectively used in communicating face to face with community members and employees. Once the relationship is established, a more systematic approach can be considered. Leveraging the contacts in the community who have the ability to engender trust and spread the word to particularly constituent groups is key to a successful marketing strategy.

A large majority of research participants expressed confusion regarding the location and boundaries of the Menomonee Valley, and were unaware of the amenities available for their use. Participants articulated feelings of unfamiliarity and insecurity in “charting a course” to and through the Valley. Signage, both outside and within the Valley, will be essential to encourage larger numbers of people to use green space amenities in the Valley.

IMPLICATIONS OF BRIDGING VALLEY COMMUNITIES

The Bridging Valley Communities project has significant implications for business and neighborhood development not only in the Valley, but elsewhere in Milwaukee (e.g. 30th Street Industrial Corridor) and in other cities undertaking major redevelopment efforts of industrial spaces proximate to neighborhoods.

The Bridging Valley Communities project is unique in that it focuses on the human side of business recruitment and attraction. Rather than an economic development plan, the plan for Bridging Valley Communities is a social plan: what encourages individuals and organizations to try something new? What are the human connections and motivations that can be leveraged to maximize investments in the Valley and in surrounding neighborhoods?

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

From research findings, Urban Strategies identified three main strategies that target a range of behaviors in which MVP is interested.

A. MVP, Community Partners Work within Mission

As the goal of the Bridging Valley Communities project is to connect the Menomonee Valley to neighborhoods and residents, the project is more likely to succeed by leveraging existing resources and programs. As such Urban Strategies recommends that MVP work within its mission “to promote redevelopment of the Valley for the benefit of the entire Milwaukee community” with a focus on attracting and retaining businesses.

This recommendation does not hold only for MVP, but for community partners as well. Using existing programs and channels to bring about changes in behavior will be the most effective, least expensive approach to bridging Valley communities. Some community partners will choose to take an active approach in implementing “bridging” strategies, while others will choose to play a more passive role according to their distinct missions and resources.

Both MVP and active community partners will require additional resources to support Valley businesses in the ways outlined in this report.

To ensure that MVP maintains its focus and most effectively coordinates resources, Urban Strategies suggests that MVP’s board form an Outreach Committee that would oversee the implementation and further development of the strategies included in this report.



B. Brand the Valley

Urban Strategies’ research revealed that very few people in surrounding communities have a clear understanding of the Valley’s location, how to access the Valley, and what they’ll find once there.

As a starting point, government entities and other interested parties need to work together to install signage in and around the Valley. This will serve a multitude of informational purposes crucial to encouraging pedestrian traffic.

C. Build Menomonee Valley Business Resource Program

MVP, working with community-based organizations, has a range of resources to offer Valley businesses. MVP should institutionalize and brand a business resource program that would include some of the following elements:

- MVP staff meet with Valley employers and facilitate larger employer group meetings to understand employer needs and challenges around issues of recruitment and retention.
- MVP staff work with partners to create a community-based organization network that can add value to business retention practices and make the Valley a good place for business overall.
- MVP staff coordinate the creation of a “Welcome to the Valley” packet for new employees.
- MVP invests in a database system that maintains information on community contacts and employers, with the ability to “flag” key individuals who are particularly effective at getting the message out.
- MVP and community partners use extant channels of communication to share information. For example MVP publishes a monthly e-newsletter, Menomonee Valley Enews that goes to all Valley employers and key community partners. Many community organizations publish a newsletter and other marketing documents. Cross promoting events in these publications is a recommended strategy.

I. BACKGROUND

A. MENOMONEE VALLEY PARTNERS, INC

Menomonee Valley runs west from 6th Street to Miller Park, and is bounded by St. Paul Avenue to the north and Pierce Street to the south. Historically home to manufacturing businesses, in 1998 the City of Milwaukee adopted the Menomonee Valley Land Use Plan to guide the Valley's redevelopment. This plan focused on many goals, including maximizing job creation, environmental improvement, and community impact.

Since that time over 2,000 jobs have been created in the Valley, and an additional 2,000 are expected in coming years. Significant resources have been invested in the Valley in the past ten years: \$148 million in public investment, and \$541 million in private investment.

Menomonee Valley Partners, Inc (MVP) was created in 1999 to coordinate investments in the Valley, recruiting new businesses and implementing plans for creation of green space and related amenities. MVP looks to collaborate with community agencies and businesses to ensure that public and private investments made in the Valley are maximized. These investments rely on community access, use, and involvement to drive up their worth and provide consistent value to Milwaukee residents.

B. BRIDGING VALLEY COMMUNITIES



The idea for the “Bridging Valley Communities” project emerged from informal gatherings between community partners: Menomonee Valley Partners, Layton Boulevard West Neighbors (a community development corporation located south of the Valley) and West End Development Corporation (a community development corporation located north of the Valley). The executive directors of each of these organizations, meeting over coffee, discussed the potential for synergies represented by their target populations.

Businesses in the Valley were in need of workers. Residents living in surrounding neighborhoods needed jobs. Could MVP share information about job opportunities in the Valley?

Leading Questions

- Layton Boulevard West Neighbors and West End Development Corporation create and sell affordable homes as part of their missions. Could employees working in the Menomonee Valley be a market for these homes?
- Layton Boulevard West Neighbors and West End Development Corporation were both attempting to revitalize commercial districts in their neighborhoods – National Avenue and N. 27th Street, respectively. Were employees working in the Menomonee Valley frequenting businesses on these commercial districts? How could they be encouraged to shop on these streets?

- MVP is in the process of working with Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail to develop a bike and walking path winding through the Valley, and making plans for park space and recreational opportunities. Would neighborhood residents think of the Valley as their “backyard,” and use green space amenities?

The executive directors came to the conclusion that developing relationships between the Valley and surrounding communities would result in benefits for all parties involved. MVP and LBWN presented a grant proposal to the Helen Bader Foundation requesting funds to implement strategies that would enable partners to work together and share information more effectively.

The Foundation suggested that it would be worthwhile to conduct initial research and lay out a plan before implementing strategies so that resources would be dedicated in the most suitable way. What would be the best, most effective way to communicate information? With whom, beyond the partners at that table, should they collaborate? How would they allocate staff time and ensure that time was being dedicated to worthwhile tasks?



The idea was to “bridge” the ongoing efforts of MVP, community organizations, and Valley businesses in order to improve the overall effectiveness of ongoing approaches. The Bridging Valley Communities project seeks to form bridges between residents and employers (jobs), employers and community organizations (services), employees and small businesses (goods and services), and residents and green space (outdoor experiences).

These “bridges” are anchored by “connectors” – those in the community, or at Valley businesses, who are able to share information using their personal networks.

Connectors are represented both by those who are in positions of leadership with significant recognition in their communities, and those at the grass roots level who are trusted by their immediate constituents. By forming these bridges, organizations can stay within their missions and also expand their reach and/or improve their level of service by virtue of connecting and partnering.

C. URBAN STRATEGIES

MVP and LBWN contracted with Urban Strategies, a research, training, and facilitation firm based in Milwaukee to conduct research and develop a marketing plan that MVP, Valley businesses, and community agencies could use to guide their coordinated efforts. Urban Strategies began its work in November 2006 and completed recommendations in April 2007.

This report details the findings of Urban Strategies' research and presents recommendations in the form of strategies that MVP and community partners can implement to ensure that the public and private investments that have been made in the Valley are maximized, i.e. are used to their full potential. The report focuses on strategies for how to connect people, businesses, and organizations on a social, human level; strategies to "bridge" neighborhoods and businesses, people and organizations. In the development of their plan, Urban Strategies was driven by the following questions:

- 1. Where and how should MVP invest its time and money?**
- 2. How can MVP best collaborate with corporations and community agencies?**
- 3. How can community agencies leverage investments in the Valley to serve their own distinct missions?**

II. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

MVP, LBWN, and WEDC, in their discussions regarding opportunities for synergy, created the following vision for Bridging Valley Communities. This vision led Urban Strategies in developing the methodology and approach for the project.

- Residents have access to family supporting jobs;
- Valley employees are a market for affordable home buying and renting in nearby neighborhoods;
- Residents and workers shop in neighborhoods that serve all of their needs;
- Strong commercial districts offer entrepreneurs and retailers a place to invest and thrive;
- Prospective and existing employers value the Valley because of its strong neighborhood connections making it easy to find qualified employees; and
- The Hank Aaron State Trail and the new Menomonee Valley Community Park serve as the backyard for neighborhood residents and Valley workers.

A. METHODOLOGY

This initial research was designed to be descriptive and exploratory in nature. Urban Strategies started with the approach that the client was ultimately interested in changing behaviors of individuals living and working in and near the Menomonee Valley. For example, MVP is asking residents to consider using the Valley for recreation, something that the overwhelming majority of residents are not currently doing.

Urban Strategies identified the following behaviors to serve as the basis for the research process:

In relation to employment practices:

- ***Employers recruit workers from surrounding neighborhoods***
- ***Employers implement worker retention practices and programs***

To encourage homeownership:

- ***Valley employees purchase homes near to the Valley***

In respect to neighborhood purchasing habits:

- ***Valley employees and residents frequent retail, dining, and service establishments in surrounding neighborhoods***

Regarding the Valley Community Park:

- ***Valley employees and residents make use of green space amenities***

The research approach, findings, recommendations, and outreach strategies presented later in this report are categorized based on these behaviors to ensure alignment with the broader goals of the Bridging Valley Communities project.

The research is primarily inductive work from qualitative responses. Urban Strategies' goal was to describe what the targeted groups think, feel, and believe about the Valley and the surrounding neighborhoods. Urban Strategies studied the relationships among a few key variables in an effort to make recommendations to improve the level of visibility and perceptions of individuals living and working in and near Menomonee Valley.

Based on the interest in changing behaviors, and the belief that involved parties would benefit by doing so, Urban Strategies saw a fit in the theories of social marketing. Understanding that social relationships and connections provide the basis for changes in behavior, social marketing is the application of marketing concepts to achieve behavioral changes that are related to a broader social good.

Social marketing is used to address issues that are “bigger” than one organization. Therefore, *a strong social marketing campaign holds as its center strategy the most personal contact possible with a positive message, and relies on various actors within the community to deliver the message.*

Social marketing is:

- Based on research to understand the view of the target audience
- Develops interventions that integrate audience needs with needs of sponsors – focuses on the *exchange*
 - Highlight or increase the benefits
 - De-emphasize or decrease the barriers
 - Change the product, price, place, or promotion to meet the exchange
- Considers competition
 - Target audience can go somewhere else, do something else, or maintain their current behavior
 - Modify program, delivery, service provider or product to make competing behavior less attractive, less available, or more costly

Social marketing uses a continuum to pinpoint an audience's desire to change. Applying the theories of social marketing, Urban Strategies began by conducting primary research to determine how the target populations act and their motivations.

Desire to change	Unaware/Maintaining Behavior (low resistance)	Aware, but not considering change (medium resistance)	Entrenched, no desire to change (high resistance)
Intervention	Inform	Educate on the benefits of change	Persuade regarding advantages compared to other options

Urban Strategies recommendations address those populations in the “unaware” and “aware” categories. Based on social marketing theory, “unaware” individuals are not cognizant of potential opportunities that exist for them. In this case, informing them of these opportunities is the first step. Lack of awareness was frequently expressed by participants in Urban Strategies’ research process.

Another population of focus for the Bridging Valley Communities Project is those who are aware of opportunities, but not considering taking advantage of the opportunities. Educating this population on the benefits of changing their behavior is an appropriate next step.

In focusing on these two groups, the “unaware” and the “aware,” MVP and community partners are allocating limited resources that can have the greatest impact. For example, instead of trying to persuade Valley employees who live outside of the City to move into neighborhoods surrounding the Valley, community partners should target their efforts on educating and informing employees who rent in the city of homeownership opportunities near to the Valley. This population is far more likely to purchase homes near to the Valley because they are not “entrenched” against doing so.

Strategies stemming from the social development philosophy will be elaborated in later sections of this report. Following are some specific examples of how social marketing can be applied to the Bridging Valley Communities project.

When meeting with school principals surrounding the Valley, they expressed the leadership role they play with parents and families in their community. Events in the Valley, and information about jobs in the Valley, should be shared with school principals who can then share this with parents and students. Principals are viewed as individuals whom families can trust, and families will therefore be more likely to act on information from them rather than reading about it in the newspaper.

In some communities, the “leader” is well-known and trusted by the community, but in other cases, the individuals on the ground, such as support group leaders at 16th Street Health Center, have the influence to change behaviors. Sharing the message with both formal and informal “connectors” who can share information and encourage change is key.

Social marketing focuses on the exchange - the intersection of mutual benefits. For example, if a commercial district near to the Valley is hosting an event, employees may want to attend for good food, music, and the experience. The commercial district wants them to attend so that they will be exposed to the businesses in the district, and will be hopefully be repeat customers.

For the Bridging Valley Communities Project, social marketing approaches should be used along with traditional marketing. Installing signage in and around the Valley will support the effectiveness of social marketing, and vice versa. For larger events in the Valley, advertising in a range of media, such as radio stations and community newspapers, is also appropriate.

B. APPROACH

Urban Strategies completed tasks in several phases in order to develop informed recommendations and strategies for the Bridging Valley Communities Project:

1. Clarifying meetings with MVP and LBWN staff
2. Reviewing secondary demographic data
3. Interviewing management staff of four businesses in the Valley
4. Conducting six focus groups with employees of Valley businesses
5. Facilitating ten focus groups with community members
6. Synthesizing and analyzing primary research
7. Developing recommendations and strategies

Secondary research on demographic data and other projects around the country was reviewed and determined by Urban Strategies and MVP and LBWN to have the least value in understanding the barriers to Valley Communities' awareness and engagement.

Interviews and focus groups provided the following benefits:

1. Opportunity to market to target audience even prior to formulating the marketing plan;
2. Chance to develop more "buy-in" to the Bridging Valley Communities project; and
3. Ability to capture very specific recommendations for marketing the Valley from each target audience, increasing the likelihood of effectiveness of the adopted strategy.

The questions for focus groups were designed to flow from one subject to another in a logical, conversational manner. However, in the process of allowing the discussion to proceed naturally, topics were not always covered in the same order. As a result, this may have inadvertently had an effect on some responses.

Generally, the interviews and focus groups were conducted in an environment familiar to the participants and, in the case of focus groups, always included refreshments.

In total, there were

- 70 individuals that participated in 7 resident focus groups,
- 5 individuals that participated in a focus groups representing commercial districts,
- 20 individuals in 2 groups of churches and schools,
- 15 individuals representing 4 employers, and
- 44 individuals in 6 employee focus groups.

B.1. Valley Employers

MVP offered suggestions for key Valley employers who could aid in informing the marketing approach. Four companies were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Likelihood that employees living surrounding neighborhoods
- Likelihood of sharing information on homeownership opportunities with employees
- Likelihood that employees frequent nearby businesses
- Likelihood that employees utilize Valley amenities
- Number of employees (employers with larger employee bases were targeted)
- Strength of relationship of MVP staff with the employer

Based on these criteria, the following companies were selected for inclusion in Urban Strategies' research process:

- Palermo's Pizza
- Cargill Taylor Beef
- Potawatomi Bingo Casino
- P&H Mining



Management staff from each of these employers was sent a letter requesting an interview. During December 2006, Urban Strategies and MVP staff met with management staff of each employer. The group of staff was different at each employer, but consistently included a human resources representative and high level management staff. At two of the employers, marketing staff were also part of the discussion.

Below is a sampling of the questions asked of employer representatives:

- Employee recruitment and retention: What process do you use to recruit employees? What are your workforce needs? Would you be willing to provide information about Earned Income Tax Credit and other services to your employees? How do you communicate information to your employees?
- Homeownership: Are you willing to provide information about homeownership opportunities to your employees?
- Neighborhood purchasing: Would you be willing to share information about services in nearby neighborhoods that could benefit your employees, such as information about day care services? About retail and dining options?
- Valley amenities: Would you be willing to organize team building events that make use of the Valley, such as participating in Valley clean-ups and plantings, holding company picnics, organizing soccer teams? Do your employees use the Canal Street bus? What would increase ridership?

Each employer was asked the same set of questions and all responses were recorded. At these initial meetings, Urban Strategies discussed the possibility of meeting with employees in a focus group format.

B.2. Valley Employees

Following employer interviews, Urban Strategies facilitated focus groups with six groups of employees, totaling 44 employees:

- P&H Mining: 1 focus group with shop employees; 1 focus groups with salaried employees
- Cargill Taylor Beef: 1 focus group with first shift staff; 1 focus group with second shift staff
- Palermo's Pizza: 1 focus group with mix of first and second shift
- Potawatomi Bingo and Casino: 1 focus group with mix of staff across departments

Employees were asked the following types of questions:

- Employee recruitment and retention: How did you find out about your job? If you were to recruit workers, what resources would you use?
- Homeownership: Do you live near to work? Would you consider purchasing a home near to work? How would you like to receive information about homeownership opportunities?
- Neighborhood purchasing: Do you frequent neighborhoods near to work for retail, dining, or services? Do you feel adequately informed about these options close to work?
- Valley amenities: Do you use the Hank Aaron State Trail? Would you use playing fields? Would you fish? What would you like to see in the park space that will be created? Are you interested in volunteering? Do you use the Canal Street bus?

B.3. Community Residents

In addition to employers and employees, neighborhood residents were another group of interest. Urban Strategies and the client tried to maintain equal representation from residents on the north and south side of the Valley. Urban Strategies facilitated focus groups with seven different groups (four south side and three north side); in total, seventy residents participated:

Layton Boulevard West Neighbors
Recent homeowners
Neighborhood volunteers

Merrill Park Neighborhood Association
Neighborhood residents

West End Development Corporation
Neighborhood residents

Neighborhood House
Parents of children using youth services

Journey House and Milwaukee Christian Center
YouthBuild participants (ages 19-24)

16th Street Community Health Center
Members of diabetes support group, clinic clients

For resident groups, questions focused on the following areas:

- Employee recruitment and retention: Do you see any benefit to working in the Valley? If you had a friend looking for a job, what would you advise them to do?
- Homeownership: What are the benefits and costs of living in your neighborhood? How will Valley redevelopment impact your neighborhood?
- Purchasing power: What businesses do you frequent in the neighborhood? What businesses are lacking? What would attract people to spend their dollars in your neighborhood?
- Valley amenities: Are you aware of amenities in the Valley? Do you or would you make use of these amenities? What is the ideal way for you to receive information about events and developments in the Valley? What would you like to see in a Valley Park?

B.4. Community School and Church Leaders

In addition to meeting with the resident groups described above, Urban Strategies, MVP, and LBWN agreed that input from leaders of places of worship and school principals would provide value. Both of these groups maintained relationships with large constituencies who could potentially be interested in using Valley amenities and may benefit from access to jobs.

Urban Strategies facilitated two groups of community leaders, one on the north and one on the south side. The events were attended by twenty leaders, in total representing 9,000 Milwaukee families. These leaders were asked about the best way to share information to their constituents and about ways that they could benefit from Valley developments.

B.5. Commercial District Representatives

Given that MVP and LBWN were interested in impacting the use of retail, dining, and service establishments surrounding the Valley, Urban Strategies suggested meeting with commercial district representatives. Ten commercial district leaders were invited who are involved with commercial districts surrounding the Valley; five attended representing businesses on the north and south sides of the Valley.



Attendees were present representing the following commercial districts:

- Silver City Main Street, National Avenue
- Southtown Points, Walker's Point
- SOHI Main Street, N. 27th Street
- Cesar Chavez Business Improvement District
- West Avenues Business Improvement District

These individuals were asked questions to gauge the effectiveness of their communication networks:

- How do you normally communicate with your businesses?
- What are the marketing practices of your businesses?
- What have you done to assist your businesses in marketing and has this been successful?
- What has been your experience in convening business owners?
- What are some of your ideas for exposing your businesses to companies in the Valley?

In each interview and focus group, Urban Strategies recorded all data. This data was then analyzed for significant findings around which recommendations for the marketing plan were built.

III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings and related recommendations are compiled in this section of the report. Findings are arranged according to desired outcomes identified in the research planning phase. The following section of the report will detail the marketing plan, including priorities and phases for implementation. Below is some summarizing information that provides an introduction to the remainder of the report.

A. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

When Urban Strategies began the research process, the client thought that perhaps it would be most effective to invest in technology and infrastructure. For example MVP could invest in a web-based system through which community partners could upload their information and share it directly with employers. Research revealed that initially these “systematic” approaches would not be effective. Due to differences within subjects of the target population, no “one” approach will be effective. Rather than investing in technology, MVP will need to invest in staff time.

Community residents and employees iterated again and again the importance of personal contact to make them act. At the present time, the time of MVP and community partners will be most effectively used in communicating face to face with community members and employees. Once the relationship is established, a more systematic approach can be considered. Leveraging the contacts in the community who have the ability to engender trust and spread the word to particular constituent groups is key to a successful marketing strategy.

A large majority of research participants expressed confusion regarding the location and boundaries of the Menomonee Valley, and were unaware of the amenities available for their use. Participants experienced feelings of unfamiliarity and insecurity in “charting a course” to and through the Valley. Despite the lack of awareness, the majority of focus group participants expressed enthusiasm regarding the future of the Valley upon being informed. Signage, both outside and within the Valley, will be essential to encourage larger numbers of people to use green space amenities in the Valley.



B. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

From research findings, Urban Strategies identified three main strategies that target a range of behaviors in which MVP is interested.

1. MVP, Community Partners Work within Mission

As the goal of the Bridging Valley Communities project is to connect the Menomonee Valley to neighborhoods and residents, the project is more likely to succeed by leveraging existing resources and programs. As such, Urban Strategies recommends that MVP work within its mission “to promote redevelopment of the Valley for the benefit of the entire Milwaukee community” with a focus on attracting and retaining businesses.

This recommendation does not hold only for MVP, but for community partners as well. Using existing programs and channels to bring about changes in behavior will be the most effective, least expensive approach to bridging Valley communities. Some community partners will choose to take an active approach in implementing “bridging” strategies, while others will choose to play a more passive role according to their distinct missions and resources.

Both MVP and active community partners will require additional resources to support Valley businesses in the ways outlined in this report.

To ensure that MVP maintains its focus and most effectively coordinates resources, Urban Strategies suggests that MVP’s board form an Outreach Committee that would oversee the implementation and further development of the strategies included in this report.



2. Brand the Valley

Urban Strategies’ research revealed that very few people in surrounding communities have a clear understanding of the Valley’s location, how to access the Valley, and what they’ll find once there.

As a starting point, government entities and other interested parties need to work together to install signage in and around the Valley. This will serve a multitude of informational purposes crucial to encouraging pedestrian traffic.

3. Build Menomonee Valley Business Resource Program

MVP, working with community-based organizations, has a range of resources to offer Valley businesses. MVP should Institutionalize and brand a business resource program that would include some of the following elements:

- MVP staff meet with Valley employers and facilitate larger employer group meetings to understand employer needs and challenges around issues of recruitment and retention;
- MVP staff work with partners to create a community-based organization network that can add value to business retention practices and make the Valley a good place for business overall
- MVP staff coordinate the creation of a “Welcome to the Valley” packet for new employees
- MVP invests in a database system that maintains information on community contacts and employers, with the ability to “flag” key individuals who are particularly effective at getting the message out.
- MVP and community partners use extant channels of communication to share information. For example MVP publishes a monthly e-newsletter, Menomonee Valley Enews that goes to all Valley employers and key community partners. Many community organizations publish a newsletter and other marketing documents. Cross promoting events in these publications is a recommended strategy. Current modes of communication used by MVP are listed in Appendix A.



C. EMPLOYERS RECRUIT WORKERS FROM SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS

"We want our workers to reflect the community and to be drawn from our physical location."

"Word of mouth is our most reliable recruitment tool."

"We want to reduce our training time, so we try to hire qualified workers from the start."

"We need to cast a wide net to find workers because we have strict requirements due to our industry."

"How do I get a job down there? Should I just walk around and knock on doors? Where do I get information about the jobs?"

"I would love to be able to walk to work."

C.1. Findings

Only one of four employers that we interviewed *specifically* target their recruitment efforts to surrounding neighborhoods. With other employers, this targeting occurs organically, largely through employee referrals. All employers have employees that reside in surrounding neighborhoods. The percentage of these employees living in surrounding neighborhoods varies across employers; the employer with the highest percentage intentionally recruits from the neighborhood.¹

All employers use different means of recruitment, and have different hiring criteria. Below is a sample of recruitment methods currently utilized by Valley employers. Employers expressed that their current hiring methods were adequate, but that they were interested in utilizing new channels to find employees.

Sample of recruitment methods utilized:

- Staffing agencies
- Employee referrals
- Milwaukee Area Technical College
- Billboards
- Internet
- Poster campaign
- Classified advertising in major newspapers
- Job fairs

All employers are currently hiring. One employer will be significantly increasing its employee pool due to an expansion. Another employer will likely experience labor shortages due to an aging employee base. Yet another expressed that they experienced a high rate of turnover.

All employers were interested in maintaining control of their hiring processes.

All employers expressed that there is a benefit in workers being able to walk to work.

¹At one employer, over 75 percent of the workforce lives in surrounding neighborhoods. At another employer, twenty percent of employees live within walking distance of their work.

Of neighborhood residents, about half seemed to be aware that there may be jobs available in the Valley.

At least one employer expressed interest in accessing public training dollars to offset the cost of training new employees.



C.2. Recommendations

Employers are interested in retaining control over their hiring processes, and feel that their current hiring processes are adequate. All employers are hiring and each is interested in maintaining control over hiring processes. There are strategies that MVP and community partners can employ to increase the number of employees who are residents of surrounding neighborhoods.

Residents in surrounding communities do need jobs. From focus groups, it is estimated that at least fifty percent of the population is not aware that Valley companies are hiring. Even if residents are aware that there are jobs in the Valley, they are not sure of how to access further information about these job opportunities.

MVP and community partners can play an important role in getting the job message out to community residents. As part of the Business Resource Program assembled by MVP, staff should gain an understanding of the recruitment practices and hiring needs of Valley companies, and can share pertinent information with the community about how to access Valley jobs.

For example, MVP may know that a certain Valley company uses a specific temporary agency for their main means of recruitment. They can share this information with community partners who can in turn share it with their constituents.

In addition to “high touch” strategies of communicating directly with employers and community groups, MVP can provide a timesaving service to employers and community and workforce development agencies by convening at an annual event. At this event employers can provide presentations on their hiring needs and recruitment practices for the coming year. This way information can be shared at one time. Employers will not have to be approached separately by many different agencies, and community, workforce development agencies can act on the information that they receive.

MVP can also assist companies in accessing public training dollars by providing information on grant opportunities.

D. EMPLOYERS IMPLEMENT WORKER RETENTION PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS

“Any way that we can deliver no-cost benefits to our employees, we want to do it. It creates an ‘esprit de corps’.”

“I personally don’t know where to go to find the community resources that our employees need.”

“Retention is an issue for us; anything we can do to improve the onboard experience of our clients is worth looking at.”

“We want to be an employer of choice.”

D.1. Findings

All employers are interested in low-cost ways to provide added “services” or “benefits” to their employees. The types of services they would like to provide vary across employers, and the information shared must be consistent with the organization’s culture.

“Benefits” discussed consisted of the following:

- Information about homeownership opportunities
- Information regarding earned income tax credit
- Information regarding nearby service businesses
- Information about educational services and opportunities
- Collaborating with other Valley companies for health and wellness programming

Employers use different methods to share information with employees. The method of communication depends on the message.

Communication methods include:

- Company newsletters
- Posters
- E-mail (for management level staff)
- Staff/shift meetings
- Flyers
- Closed circuit television
- Bulletin boards

Based on focus groups it is estimated that seventy percent of employees indicated that they preferred to receive information verbally in a one-on-one communication or in a seminar format. They considered shift meetings and employee meetings to be the most effective way to reach them.

There is not one main contact at any of the employers for sharing information. For example, not all information flows through HR personnel; in some cases the marketing department and other staff is involved, and it is not the same across employers.

It is estimated that less than fifty percent of employees expected to receive information about services such as those listed above through their employer, but stated that they would be more trusting of the information if it came from their employer.

D.2. Recommendations

Retention services should be packaged and offered to Valley businesses as part of the Business Resource Program. MVP should continue to meet with each employer to determine the appropriate contacts there. As not all employers will be interested in providing the same types of services to their employees, MVP will need to determine what services would be of interest to which employers and respond accordingly by either:

1. Arranging for a community partner to come to the employer and present information on their services, or
2. Getting written information from the community partner that can be shared with the employer who will pass it on to employees.

For example, throughout the research process, two employers expressed interest in homeownership seminars and providing information on Earned Income Tax Credit. MVP can follow up with these employers and relevant community partners to “connect the dots.”

MVP should create a list of services that can be shared with employers to help them connect their employees to needed services. Services would include information on daycares, mental health services, literacy services, and services offered by community based agencies. This information should be updated by MVP staff (an intern could lead this project) on a quarterly basis so that employers can expect that the information is timely.

E. VALLEY EMPLOYEES PURCHASE HOMES NEAR TO THE VALLEY

"Homeownership would be an exciting retention tool."

"I want to buy a home here, but I don't know where to go for help."

"I wouldn't purchase a home near here. I want to be in place where I can raise a family."

"This neighborhood is a like a crossroads – it's a unique spot in the city and ten or fifteen minutes from anywhere else. The neighbors are great and I have a beautiful home that was affordable."

E.1. Findings

Based on focus groups, approximately 85 percent of employees who live in neighborhoods surrounding the Valley and do not own homes would be willing to buy homes in their current neighborhood.

Most employees who currently live outside of the city of Milwaukee are not interested in moving back to the city.

All Valley employers felt that providing information about homeownership opportunities to their employees would be a useful retention tool.

Three out of four employers expressed willingness to have community members speak about homeownership opportunities in a seminar format.



While many employees were interested in homeownership assistance programs, there is a range of different incomes among Valley employees so types of assistance will vary.

E.2. Recommendations

MVP should work with community partners to coordinate the provision of homeownership opportunities for employees. As part of the Business Resource Program, homeownership opportunities can be viewed as an extension of employers' retention program.

To avoid overwhelming employers, community partners could coordinate their contact and limit the frequency of presentations each year, and follow up with more specific information about homes for sale in a flyer format. Messages will have to be somewhat tailored to the population. For example, employees at one employer make higher wages, disqualifying them for down payment assistance. At other employers, downpayment assistance is appropriate based on pay scales. Some employers will require material to be shared in Spanish.

Additionally, community partners could supply employers with written information regarding homeownership opportunities and programs that could be shared with new employees during their orientation period.

Arranging neighborhood tours for employees would provide a means to expose them to the charms and attributes of the surrounding neighborhoods. Doing so may entice certain residents to frequent businesses in these neighborhoods or consider purchasing a home there.

F. VALLEY EMPLOYEES AND RESIDENTS FREQUENT RETAIL, DINING, AND SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS IN SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS

“There’s nowhere to shop or eat around here. There used to be, but all those businesses have left.”

“We go out to lunch at the places on National Avenue, Miller Parkway.”

“Small businesses do not have the means to invest in marketing.”

“I don’t really feel safe shopping in this area.”

“There is nothing around here that is open 24 hours for second shift staff.”

“I love the diversity of shopping and eating options in this neighborhood.”

F.1. Findings

All employees felt that they were not adequately informed about retail, dining, and service options in nearby neighborhoods.

Some employees felt uncomfortable frequenting ethnic restaurants and businesses near to their place of work.

Businesses in surrounding districts struggle to allocate funds to market their business.

Efforts of commercial district leaders to mobilize businesses and encourage their participation in marketing opportunities have not been as successful as they hoped; lack of time and money limits their level of participation.



F.2. Recommendations

Small business and retail development is not an expressed focus of MVP’s mission. However strengthening surrounding commercial districts benefits Valley employers and their employees.

As part of the Business Resource Program, MVP should continue to maintain relationships with commercial district leaders surrounding the Valley if opportunities for synergy do arise. For example, when events are hosted in the Valley, neighborhood restaurants could be invited to cater.

There are many non-profit service businesses that offer services that could be useful to Valley employees. Many of these businesses would also serve as locations for volunteer opportunities

for Valley employees. Some of these businesses include Penfield's Children Center, Milwaukee Center for Independence, the Red Cross, Literacy Services, and United Community Center.

Arranging neighborhood tours for employees would provide a means to expose them to the charms and attributes of the surrounding neighborhoods. Doing so may entice certain residents to frequent businesses in these neighborhoods or consider purchasing a home there.

G. VALLEY EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYEES, AND RESIDENTS MAKE USE OF GREEN SPACE AMENITIES

"I don't know what's down there. I don't see anything happening."

"Work is work and play is play. I'd rather recreate when I get home at night, not here."

"I think it would be great if we could have bikes available for our employees to use on their breaks."

"How will I know that it is safe?"

"How do I get down there?"

"I like to go out on my lunch break and sit on a bench. It's really beautiful out there."

"How do I get down there? Where do I park?"

G.1. Findings

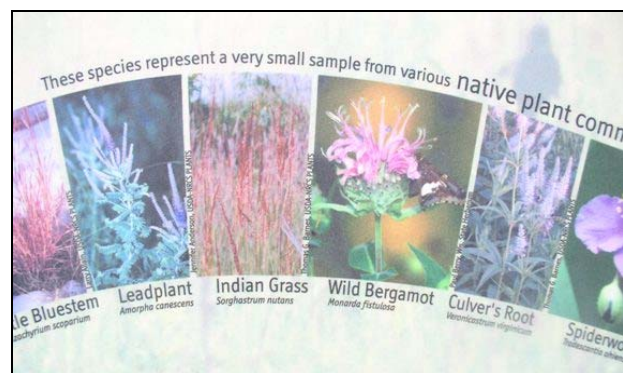
Approximately ninety percent of residents and employees do not use the Valley for recreation and are not aware of the recreation opportunities.

The majority of neighborhood residents feel that the Valley is not accessible. They do not have the sense that there is anything in the Valley worth seeing or experiencing.

The majority of residents, once informed of Valley developments, are excited about the impact these developments will have on their neighborhood and their quality of life.

All residents, employees, and community leaders expressed that safety and security are concerns in using Valley amenities.

Nearly all employers were willing to consider hosting company picnics, organized sports, or other events for their employees, using the Valley for these activities.



G.2. Recommendations

The Valley requires a more focused marketing and branding effort. Installing signage both to direct people and to inform people will help to brand the Valley as a unified place. By seeing signs, people will begin to make the connection that, “This is the Valley. This is the Hank Aaron State Trail. This is what I can do in the Valley. There are businesses in the surrounding neighborhood that I can frequent . . . “ Both gateway and directional signage is recommended – to invite people into the Valley and to help them navigate their way when there.

In terms of safety and security, perception is at issue. None of the individuals we spoke with had a negative experience in the Valley. To combat perception, getting people down to the Valley to become familiar with it will be key. Organizing community events is one way to do this.

IV. COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MARKETING STRATEGIES

The plan described below lays out areas in which MVP and community partners can invest time and money to better bridge Valley communities. This plan also includes a prioritization of approaches, focusing on those that will be most effective and efficient, from a time and funding perspective. The plan provides a guide for involvements that MVP and community partners should undertake, and suggested methods for how to market these involvements.

A. PRIORITY STRATEGIES

Below is an inventory of ideas generated from the primary research process. They are arranged according to areas of behavior. Costs and benefits are listed for each strategy.

Ideas that are worth exploring and implementing immediately are assigned a **Phase I** priority rating; what can MVP and community partners do now with existing resources?

Ideas that are worth implementing later on – a year from now – are assigned a **Phase II** priority; what can MVP do in the future once additional resources have been assembled?

Those ideas that should be implemented as part of a broad business support effort are marked with Business Resource Program (BRP).

There are strategies that would require a significant amount of resources to implement, and the investment in these strategies may not be worth the outcome at this time. These ideas may be worth considering at a later point and are included in Appendix F.

B. ENGAGEMENT OF MVP, VALLEY BUSINESSES, COMMUNITY PARTNERS

As the strategies included in this report require the support and involvement of Valley businesses and community partners, but in a large part are led by the coordinating efforts of MVP staff, Urban Strategies felt it was important to clearly define involvements and expectations.

To more clearly delineate the roles that should be played by businesses and community, Urban Strategies has included a specific set of recommendations for Valley businesses, community partners, government entities, Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail, and commercial districts. These can be found in Appendices B through E.

A.1. Employers recruit workers from surrounding neighborhoods

Strategy	Cost	Benefits to Valley Businesses	Benefits to Community Partners	Priority
Meet with employers to determine labor needs	Employer time, MVP time	Can share accurate information that can be disseminated to community at no cost to them	Can receive accurate information about jobs in the Valley	Phase I – BRP
Host annual employer-directed presentations at which employers explain their hiring process and labor needs to community and workforce development groups	Employer time, MVP time, Event costs (minimal)	One-stop approach that saves time for employers; employer controls their message	Can receive accurate information about jobs in the Valley without needing to approach each employer separately	Phase I - BRP
Host quarterly HR roundtables for Valley employers	Employer time, MVP time, event costs (minimal)	Draws employers together to discuss issues, concerns, ideas		Phase I – BRP
Coordinate tours of Valley businesses for schools, develop mentorship opportunities, curriculum (long-term recruitment tool)	MVP time, employer time, school staff time, student transportation costs	Expose students to the Valley; long-term retention strategy; publicity as a community partner	Students receive hands-on exposure to career opportunities	Phase II – BRP
Provide employers with information on public training dollars, other workforce development programs	MVP time	Provides potentially meaningful service to employers	Requires research by MVP	Phase II – BRP

Priority Recruitment Strategies

MVP should create a Business Resource Program that would be comprised of the following elements to support businesses in their recruitment efforts and increase the number of employees residing in surrounding neighborhoods.

1. Meet with employers to determine their labor needs

MVP staff should continue to meet with management level staff at each Valley business to determine their labor needs and understand their recruitment practices. These meetings should occur once per year. MVP staff should work with the employer to determine ways that they can piggyback onto their recruitment practices. For example if MVP knows that Potawatomi will be recruiting at a particular job fair, MVP can share that information with other community partners and encourage community residents to attend that job fair.

2. Host employer presentation events

MVP should facilitate employer presentations at which Valley employers can provide brief presentations on their labor needs and recruitment practices for the coming year. Invitees to this presentation would include community organizations, workforce development organizations, and

other community members who are interested (school principals and places of worship could also be invited). MVP should facilitate one employer roundtable per year. MVP staff should record the information provided and have it on hand to share other community partners throughout the year.

3. Host quarterly HR roundtables for Valley employers

As a pilot project, Urban Strategies recommends that MVP host quarterly roundtables for HR representatives of Valley businesses during the first year. At these roundtables, representatives can share best practices regarding recruitment and retention strategies, and discuss possible ideas for collaboration. Based on interest and attendance, these roundtables could be offered less frequently as time progresses.

4. Coordinate tours of Valley businesses for schools, Phase II

MVP staff should work with employers and community schools to create “in the field” experiences for students. MVP should identify two schools that have a curriculum focus relevant to some Valley businesses. Possibilities include Bradley Technical and Trade School and the Milwaukee Academy of Science; on the employer side, P&H and Falk may be good fits. The opportunity should be sold as a long-term recruitment strategy. MVP can also propose other partnerships for schools and businesses, such as mentorship opportunities, although these arrangements should be facilitated between the business and the school directly. These ideas can first be broached in one-on-one employer meetings or at HR roundtable events.

5. MVP should provide employers with information on public training dollars, Phase II

Research revealed that some Valley businesses are investing extensive resources in employee training. These costs can be offset with access to federal dollars for training purposes. Appendix G includes a list of potential resources that MVP can share with Valley employers.

A.2. Employers implement worker retention practices and programs

Strategy	Cost	Benefits to Valley Businesses	Benefits to Community Partners	Priority
Meet with employers to determine labor needs	Employer time, MVP time	Can share accurate information that can be disseminated to community at no cost to them	Can receive accurate information about jobs in the Valley	Phase I – BRP
Host quarterly HR roundtables for Valley employers	Employer time, MVP time, event costs (minimal)	Draws employers together to discuss issues, concerns, ideas		Phase I - BRP
Create “Welcome to the Valley” packet for employee orientations	MVP time, printing costs	All information is in one place and easily distributed	Can share information with all Valley employees without meeting with employers	Phase I - BRP
Compile information on community services and resources and provide this to employers electronically	MVP time	Provides employers with information at their fingertips, that they can access on an as-needed basis	Can get their information to Valley businesses without having to approach each businesses individually	Phase I - BRP

Priority Retention Strategies

MVP should create a Business Resource Program that would be comprised of the following elements to support retention and enhance the experience of Valley employees.

1. Meet with employers to determine their labor needs

MVP staff should continue to meet with management level staff at each Valley business to determine their needs in regards to labor retention. These meetings should occur once per year. By understanding the retention challenges that some businesses face, MVP can, through its community contacts, help to assemble assistance that will enable Valley businesses to address these challenges.

2. Host quarterly HR roundtables for Valley employers

As a pilot project, Urban Strategies recommends that MVP host quarterly roundtables for HR representatives of Valley businesses. At these roundtables, representatives can share best practices regarding recruitment and retention strategies, and discuss possible ideas for collaboration.

3. Create “Welcome to the Valley” packet for employee orientations

MVP can coordinate the creation of a “Welcome to the Valley” packet that can be included in orientation packages for new employees. Information would include key services located in the surrounding area that would potentially enhance the employee’s experience.



4. Compile information on community services and resources and provide this electronically to employers

Employers expressed that they were not knowledgeable about community resources that could be of use to their employees. MVP can compile a resource list that would include the following information:

Service provided: e.g. day care, mental health, health, youth services, literacy services, etc.

Service cost:

Hours:

Location:

Contact name:

Contact phone number:

This “database” should be e-mailed to appropriate contacts at Valley businesses. MVP staff should follow up after one month to determine if the database is being used by employers and if they would recommend any changes. If the database is thought to be a good resource by employers, MVP should update the list on a quarterly basis and send the updated list each quarter to ensure that the information remains timely.

A.3. Valley employees purchase homes near to the Valley

Strategy	Cost	Benefits to Valley Businesses	Benefits to Community Partners	Priority
Create “Welcome to the Valley” packet for employee orientations	MVP time, printing costs	All information is in one place and easily distributed	Can share information with all Valley employees without meeting with employers	Phase I - BRP
Offer homeownership presentations at Valley businesses	MVP time, community partner time, employer time	Provides personal connection that employees want; shows employer is invested in employees	Allows partners to advertise homeownership opportunities face-to-face	Phase I - BRP
Provide employers with flyers regarding homes for sale and open houses	Employer time, community partner time	Shows employer is invested in employees	Allows partners to get the word out about opportunities without investing a lot of time	Phase II - BRP
Host tours of surrounding neighborhoods for Valley employees	MVP time, community partner time, employer time	Increases comfort level and investment of employees	Allows partners to provide exposure to neighborhoods and control the message	Phase II - BRP

Priority Homeownership Strategies

MVP should create a Business Resource Program that would be comprised of the following elements, targeted to increasing the rate of homeownership of Valley employees and strengthening surrounding neighborhoods.

1. Create “Welcome to the Valley” packet for employee orientations

MVP can coordinate the creation of a “Welcome to the Valley” packet that can be included in orientation packages for new employees. Information would include information about homeownership opportunities and the contact information for relevant organizations. MVP would play the role of gathering this information and updating it on an annual basis.

2. Offer homeownership presentations at Valley businesses

LBWN has already conducted homeownership presentations at one Valley business and is in the process of planning another presentation. In the beginning, MVP can work with community partners and employers to coordinate these seminars with LBWN. In the future, MVP can provide guidance by informing community partners, such as LBWN, WEDC, and Esperanza Unida of the businesses in the Valley that would interested in such information. Not more than one such seminar per year is recommended at each business.



Ideally community partners will be able to coordinate their schedules to offer such seminars together. Messages will need to be tailored for each employer. Downpayment assistance should be downplayed at employers where wages are higher, and it should be emphasized at employers where wages are lower. At some employers, information will need to be provided in Spanish.

3. Provide employers with flyers regarding homes for sale and open houses, Phase II

Once community groups formulate a relationship with relevant Valley employers (by providing homeownership seminars), they can provide employers with flyers of current homes for sale that can be posted in break rooms. In most cases these flyers can be e-mailed to the appropriate contact at the business and printed out on their end. In other cases, particularly if producing the document in color, it would be best for the community partner to physically provide with the employer with the necessary number of flyers.

Urban Strategies recommends that MVP initially serve as the conduit for information to Valley businesses.

4. Host tours of surrounding neighborhoods, Phase II

Once employees and employers become accustomed to making use of Valley amenities, MVP should work with community partners to increase employees' knowledge of surrounding neighborhoods. Ideally, volunteers who live in surrounding communities would facilitate these tours. A pilot tour should be conducted in the West End and LBWN neighborhoods first. The approach, if successful, can then be spread to other neighborhoods. Tours should highlight area businesses, homes, and other neighborhood attributes. MVP should coordinate the tours with employers (choosing times that will work for their employees).

A.4. Valley employees and residents frequent retail, dining, and service establishments in surrounding neighborhoods

Strategy	Cost	Benefits to Valley Businesses	Benefits to Community Partners	Priority
Maintain communication with business leaders to determine areas for cross-promotion in the future	MVP time, community partner time	Allows for only the most relevant information to flow into business	Does not require an “extra” work; guides commercial districts to the opportunities that will be most efficient	Phase I – BRP
Compile information on community services and resources and provide this to employers electronically	MVP time	Provides employers with information at their fingertips, that they can access on an as-needed basis	Can get their information to Valley businesses without having to approach each businesses individually	Phase I - BRP
Host tours of surrounding neighborhoods for Valley employees	MVP time, employer time	Increases comfort level and investment of employees	Allows partners to provide exposure to neighborhoods and control the message	Phase II - BRP

Priority Strategies for Frequenting Neighborhood Businesses

MVP should create a Business Resource Program that would be comprised of the following elements targeting strengthening surrounding commercial districts.

1. Maintain communication with business leaders

MVP should remain in consistent contact with business leaders in order to remain open to any opportunities for cross promotion. Through monthly contact (via phone call or e-mail) with business association and Main Street leaders, MVP can stay abreast of any new businesses that are opening or relevant events. For example the Main Street on 27th Street will be hosting a promotional event in May. MVP can share information about this event with Valley businesses in the monthly e-news bulletin. For a step further, any new information can be e-mailed in a flyer to MVP that can be easily printed and posted at Valley businesses.

Urban Strategies’ research efforts discovered that investing in programmatic efforts that would institutionalize the connection between Valley employees and neighborhood businesses would not be worthwhile at the current time. Commercial district leaders indicated that they experienced significant challenges in mobilizing their businesses for marketing and promotional efforts. For MVP to coordinate these efforts amongst relevant commercial districts would likely not result in an outcome aligned with the necessary level of inputs.

2. Compile information on community services and resources and provide this electronically to employers

Despite the belief that investing in coordinating marketing and promotion efforts on behalf of neighborhood businesses would likely not be worthwhile, employers expressed interest in having information about certain services. Commercial district leaders also expressed that it would be appropriate to connect a number of service-oriented organizations in their districts to Valley employees. MVP can compile a resource list that would include the following information (not exhaustive):

Service provided: e.g. day care, mental health, health, youth services, literacy services, etc.

Service cost:

Hours:

Location:

Contact name:

Contact phone number:

This “database” should be e-mailed to appropriate contacts at Valley businesses. MVP staff should follow up after one month to determine if the database is being used by employers and if they would recommend any changes. If the database is thought to be a good resource by employers, MVP should update the list on a quarterly basis and send the updated list each quarter to ensure that the information remains timely.

3. Host tours of surrounding neighborhoods, Phase II

Once employees and employers become accustomed to making use of Valley amenities, MVP should work with community partners to increase employees’ knowledge of surrounding neighborhoods. Ideally, volunteers who live in surrounding communities would facilitate these tours. A pilot tour should be conducted in the Merrill Park and LBWN neighborhood first. The approach, if successful, can then be spread to other neighborhoods. Tours should highlight area businesses, homes, and other neighborhood attributes. MVP should coordinate the tours with employers (choosing times that will work for their employees).

A.5. Valley employers, employees, and residents make use of green space amenities²

Strategy	Cost	Benefits to Valley Businesses	Benefits to Community Partners	Priority
Create and install signage throughout and around the Valley indicating points of interest and means of ingress and egress	MVP time, community partner time, signage costs	Employees increase comfort level and knowledge.	Residents increase comfort level and knowledge.	Phase I
Create “Welcome to the Valley” packet for employee orientations	MVP time, printing costs	All information is in one place and easily distributed	Can share information with all Valley employees without meeting with employers	Phase I - BRP
Provide information on Valley developments and events to community partners	MVP time, community partner time		Can share valuable information with their constituents	Phase I - BRP
Coordinate Valley walks for employers	MVP time, employer time	Increases familiarity with Valley and potentially improves work experience		Phase II - BRP
Organize events for local schools to conduct “in the field” ecology courses	MVP time, community partner time, school time	Activates Valley green space with another use	Provides an opportunity for hands-on experience	Phase II

Priority Strategies for Green Space Amenities

MVP, working with relevant community partners and government agencies, should focus efforts on marketing and branding the Valley to Milwaukee residents.

1. Create and install signage

Signage should be installed in and around the Valley indicating points of interest and means of ingress and egress. Signage should be simple, easy to read, and informative. The pictures below are examples of signs from downtown Milwaukee. Similar signage is suggested for the Valley. Investing in a signage system that can be “added to” as further amenities are added in the Valley is recommended.

In addition to directional signs within the Valley, installing gateway signage at key points of entrance from the neighborhoods is recommended.

²Focus group participants were asked about what would draw them to use the green space amenities that MVP is currently working on designing for the Valley. Their suggestions are included in Appendix H.



2. Create “Welcome to the Valley” packet for employee orientations

MVP can coordinate the creation of a “Welcome to the Valley” packet that can be included in orientation packages for new employees. Information would include maps, a description of current green space amenities and those to come, and any upcoming events. MVP would update this information on an annual basis and provide revised packets to employers.

3. Provide information on Valley developments and events to community partners

In the research phase MVP was introduced to many community partners. These partners are now better informed about what is going on in the Valley. MVP, moving forward, should meet one-on-one with relevant groups in the community. One-on-one meetings are suggested because it allows MVP to travel directly to the partner and meet with them on their time. MVP staff should aim to meet with three new community groups each month. Although Urban Strategies was able to convene groups of people, it was difficult to drive up the numbers for attendance given people’s schedules and uncertainty about whether it would be worth their time.

These discussions should focus on the identified behaviors. MVP should determine, together with the community partner, ways to reach its constituency to increase use of green space amenities.

For groups with which MVP has already formulated a relationship, MVP can send, via e-mail, a monthly update regarding events in the Valley based on the enews format that it already uses.

3. Organize walking tours for Valley employees, Phase II

MVP staff can lead walking tours of the Valley for employees. MVP should arrange a small number of tours to start and treat these as a pilot, targeting employers like P&H, Cargill, and Palermo’s. These tours will be arranged at a time convenient to employers and highlight amenities in the Valley. Ideas regarding these tours can be fleshed out during HR roundtable events.

4. Organize events for local schools for ecology classes, Phase II

School leaders expressed considerable interest in having students visit the Valley for science lessons. MVP should partner with five schools in Phase II to test and refine the approach. Suggested schools include Veritas High School, Notre Dame Middle School, Marquette University High School, and Milwaukee Academy of Science. MVP can partner with the Urban Ecology Center which already has curriculum that can be applied to the Valley environment.

Business Resource Program, Strategies

Strategy	Behavior Addressed	Priority	Resources needed
Create “Welcome to the Valley” packet for employee orientations	retention, homeownership, frequenting businesses, green space	Phase I	
Meet with employers to determine labor needs	recruitment, retention	Phase I	
Host annual employer-directed presentations	recruitment	Phase I	
Host quarterly HR roundtables for Valley employers	recruitment, retention	Phase I	
Compile information on community services and resources and provide this to employers electronically	retention, frequenting businesses	Phase I	
Offer homeownership presentations at Valley businesses	retention, homeownership	Phase I	
Maintain communication with commercial district leaders	frequenting businesses	Phase I	
Coordinate tours of Valley businesses for schools, develop mentorship opportunities, curriculum	Recruitment	Phase II	further research, demonstrated employer interest
Provide employers with information on public training dollars	recruitment	Phase II	further research, demonstrated employer interest
Provide employers with flyers regarding homes for sale and open houses	Homeownership	Phase II	community partner connection with employers, standard means of advertising houses
Host tours of surrounding neighborhoods for Valley employees	homeownership, frequenting businesses	Phase II	preparation by community partners
Coordinate Valley walks for employers	green space	Phase II	awaiting further development of park space . . .

Brand and Market Valley, Strategies

Create and install signage	green space	Phase I	
Provide information on Valley developments and events to community partners	green space, recruitment	Phase I	
Organize events for local schools to conduct “in the field” ecology courses	green space	Phase II	further research and development

B. MARKETING APPROACHES

Based on our primary research, it is clear that “traditional” marketing about the Valley is still required. Both neighborhood residents and Valley employees were not aware of everything that the Valley has to offer. Residents did not “see the point” of going down to the Valley. Many residents were not aware that there were jobs available in the Valley, or how to access those jobs. Employees were not aware that the Valley had something more to offer them besides their jobs. With the limited budget and staff of MVP, and of community partners, leveraging resources and connections of both entities will be key to getting out the message.

B.1. Leverage communications of community groups

MVP should work with community groups to include Valley information in their typical correspondence. Groups include Merrill Park Neighborhood Association, Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, West End Development Corporation, Neighborhood House, and Milwaukee Christian Center. MVP should also tap into community service organizations such as 16th Street Community Health Center (SSCHC). In the research phase, MVP made important contacts with frontline staff at SSCHC which serves primarily a Latino population on the south side of the Valley. These staff can be trusted to get information out to their constituents.

B.2. Invest for larger events

For larger events like the Milwaukee Portrait in June, it is worthwhile for MVP to issue public service announcements about the event on local radio stations: 1290, La Grande, and 88.9. Although there will be some production cost for this (particularly for the translation of the message into Spanish), this method will allow MVP to reach beyond using community groups as the conduit when seeking to draw larger crowds.

Appendix A

MVP CURRENT MODES OF COMMUNICATION

- MVP website, www.renewthevalley.org
- Monthly e-news bulletin
- Public safety roundtable meetings
- MVP board meetings
- Menomonee Valley Business Association meetings
- Menomonee Valley Business Association newsletter
- MVP annual report
- Community presentations

Appendix B

OPPORTUNITIES: VALLEY BUSINESSES

With the implementation of the Menomonee Valley Business Resource Program, Valley businesses can maximize the benefits of their location. The Business Resource Program is targeted to providing low-cost benefits to Valley businesses, aiding in recruitment and retention and overall enhancing their experience and that of their employees.

The practices of Valley businesses vary, but there are areas of common ground that can be leveraged to increase recruitment from surrounding neighborhoods and enhance the experience of Valley employees. It is necessary to point out that not all the opportunities listed below will be of interest to all Valley businesses.

1. MVP staff can provide assistance to Valley businesses in the areas of recruitment and retention, but in order to play this role, it will be necessary for Valley businesses to share information with MVP staff. Meeting with MVP staff, at their request, on an annual basis to discuss labor needs, recruitment practices, and retention challenges would provide an opportunity to address any challenges.
2. MVP will arrange an annual Valley Employer Presentation at which Valley businesses can share their labor needs and recruitment practices with community groups and workforce development agencies. By preparing a brief ten-minute presentation, Valley employers can share workforce information with many groups at one time, avoiding separate requests for information throughout the year.
3. MVP staff will be arranging, on a pilot basis, quarterly human resource roundtables for Valley businesses. At these roundtables, businesses will have an opportunity to share hiring successes, recruitment and retention strategies and challenges, and discuss low-cost benefits available to their employees.
4. MVP will prepare a "Welcome to the Valley" packet that can be presented to new employees at orientation. This will enable Valley businesses to share information about the Valley and surrounding neighborhoods in a one-touch format.
5. MVP will assemble a list of services near to the Valley that may be useful for Valley employees. Employers can use this information to provide referrals to employees looking for or in need of particular services (e.g. daycare, counseling, health care, etc).
6. MVP is willing to coordinate homeownership seminars at Valley businesses. If businesses have employees interested in buying homes, this is the best way to make the initial contact with community partners.

9. Certain community agencies have real time information about homeownership opportunities in surrounding neighborhoods. By posting flyers advertising homes for sale in break room locations, employees can act on this information.

7. MVP is willing to identify schools that are interested in making a connection with Valley businesses. Such involvements may be as limited as providing a tour, or as involved in providing internship opportunities. These engagements present an opportunity for long-range recruitment.

8. MVP plans on compiling information on public training dollars that could be accessed by Valley businesses. These funds could offset the investment that many Valley businesses are making in staff training.

10. In the future, MVP will be offering guided walks through the Valley to Valley employees. These walks will be offered a time convenient to employers and expose employees to green space amenities available in the Valley. Valley employers could consider these opportunities to be team-building exercises.

MVP will also be working with community organizations surrounding the Valley to coordinate neighborhood tours for Valley employees. These tours will expose employees to surrounding neighborhoods with the aim to increase their knowledge and comfort level of neighborhoods near to their work.

Appendix C

OPPORTUNITIES: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Ultimately, strong ties between Valley businesses and surrounding neighborhoods, i.e. community organizations, will result in better neighborhoods for all. There are several different types of community organizations surrounding the Valley. These include but are not limited to neighborhood associations, community development corporations, service organizations (e.g. health clinics), places of worship, and schools.

The involvement of community organizations is needed to fully implement the Business Resource Program for Valley businesses. Community organizations benefit from their participation in at least two ways:

1. Organizations can obtain information on job opportunities for their constituents
2. Organizations have another “market” for their services in Valley employees

Some organizations will choose to take an active role in the Business Resource Program, working closely with Menomonee Valley Partners to offer services to Valley employees. These organizations will dedicate staff time and other resources to the Business Resource Program and will require additional financial resources to support their involvement.

Other organizations will decide to play a more passive role according to their missions and available resources. These organizations may share information with MVP when necessary and spread information about Valley events and updates, but will not actively be involved with Valley businesses. Below is a list of recommended involvements for community organizations.

1. Community organizations can attend Valley Employer Presentations annually at which Valley employers will present their labor needs and recruitment practices. By attending this event, community organizations can get accurate information about how to inform their constituents regarding job opportunities in the Valley. This also saves time for community groups in having to approach each employer one-on-one. (Passive)
2. Community organizations can collaborate with MVP on the creation of a “Welcome to the Valley” packet to be shared with Valley employees upon their orientation. Community organizations can get information out to Valley employees regarding their services. (Active)
3. Community organizations can share information about their services which MVP can then provide to Valley employers. Organizations will be requested to update this information on at least an annual basis. Targeted organizations for this activity will primarily be service-oriented, e.g. day care centers, health clinics, educational services, etc. (Passive)

4. Community organizations can prepare and present homeownership seminars to Valley employees. By providing information to Valley employees regarding homeownership opportunities, community organizations can tap into another possible market for neighborhood investments. Initially, these seminars should be arranged in collaboration with MVP. (Active)

5. While providing homeownership seminars will be key to making a connection with Valley employees, there will also be time-sensitive information regarding specific homes for sale that community organizations may want to share. Community organizations should prepare standardized flyers that can be shared with employers and posted for employees. Initially, MVP will serve as the conduit to get this information to Valley businesses. (Active)

6. Community organizations can plan tours for Valley employees. These tours present an opportunity for community organizations to showcase the attributes of their neighborhoods to individuals who may know little about them. These tours may lead to increased patronizing of neighborhood businesses, increased interest in purchasing homes, or just a greater appreciation for and understanding of surrounding neighborhoods. (Active)

7. Schools have an opportunity to expose their students to career choices by working with Valley businesses. School should work with MVP to identify Valley businesses that would be a good match for their curriculum and with the business, arrange programming such as tours or a mentorship program.

The Valley also offers opportunities for students to have hands-on experiences in learning about ecology. School should take advantage of this opportunity by adapting or developing curriculum that would make use of the Valley. (Active)

Appendix D

OPPORTUNITIES: GOVERNMENT ENTITIES,³ FRIENDS OF HANK AARON STATE TRAIL

Urban Strategies' research process revealed that there is a significant lack of knowledge regarding the Menomonee Valley and its amenities, including the Hank Aaron State Trail. Installing signage is one way to address these issues. MVP is willing to convene government entities and other involved parties to begin to address the signage issue.

The Menomonee Valley is in need of both directional signage within the Valley to identify amenities, and gateway signage located at entrances geared both to pedestrians and vehicles.

In the future, maintenance of the green space amenities in the Valley will be key. Safety and security issues were frequently cited by neighborhood residents and Valley employees. Today, much of these concerns are based on perceptions, but in the future it may be necessary to proactively address safety and security concerns. MVP currently hosts public safety roundtables with Valley businesses and law enforcement. Continuing, and even expanding these roundtables, may be necessary.

³Government entities refer to the following: State of WI Department of Natural Resources, State of WI Department of Transportation, City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works.

Appendix E

OPPORTUNITIES: COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

1. MVP will continue to maintain contact with commercial districts leaders located in neighborhoods surrounding the Valley to share information about events or happenings, such as a new business opening. This information should be shared with MVP who can, in the very least, include a posting in the monthly Valley e-news which is distributed to Valley employees. Simultaneously, commercial district leaders are encouraged to guide their business owners to consider Valley employees as a potential target market and develop appropriate marketing strategies.

2. MVP will work with commercial district leaders and other community organizations to arrange neighborhood tours for Valley employees. These tours provide commercial districts with an opportunity to showcase their businesses to potential customers.

Appendix F

STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Employers recruit from surrounding neighborhoods

- Create a publication that advertises job opportunities in the Valley as well as recreation opportunities that is broadly disseminated
- Host a job fair in the Valley
- Host a listing of jobs available in the Valley on the MVP website

Employers implement worker retention practices and programs

- Coordinate programs across Valley companies to promote health and wellness, other benefits
- Coordinate team-building events using Valley recreation for employers
- Implement a career ladder across Valley businesses
- Coordinate the creation of an “employee resource bus” that would travel through the Valley and provide information on and access to services
- Host an event in the Valley inviting community organizations to set up booths and share information; invite all Valley employees

Valley employees purchase homes near to the Valley

- Coordinate events at which neighborhood residents and Valley employees intermingle

Valley employees and residents frequent neighborhood businesses

- Develop a web-based system to advertise surrounding businesses used by employers and residents
- Coordinate a delivery service in the Valley with surrounding restaurants participating
- Host a fair in the Valley at which surrounding businesses can attend to market their products
- Provide coupon books and flyers on new businesses and disseminate to Valley employees

Valley employers, employees, and residents make use of recreational amenities

- Hire a security firm to patrol the Valley
- Host outdoor events for residents, employers, and employees

Appendix G

PUBLIC DOLLARS FOR EMPLOYEE TRAINING

1. Customized Labor Training

Wisconsin Department of Commerce

Training is targeted to manufacturing and industry

\$2,500 per employee is the maximum

Employer must provide a match of 50%

Local commerce area development managers must submit grant application

2. Business Employees Skills Training (BEST)

Wisconsin Department of Commerce

10 industry clusters: automation, agriculture/food products, biotechnology, IT, manufacturing, medical devices, paper/forest products, printing, tourism, and childcare

Training must be provided by a qualified third party, the employer receives the grant of up to \$10,000 and must provide a 25% match

Business must be small businesses to receive this award (less than 100 employees)

3. High Growth Job Training for Advanced Manufacturing Industry

US Department of Labor

Grants require a collaboration of local Workforce Investment Board, industry reps, and training institutions. High growth sectors: advanced manufacturing, aerospace, automotive, biotech, construction, energy, financial services, geospatial technology, healthcare, homeland security, hospitality, IT, retail, and transportation.

Appendix H

SUGGESTIONS FOR MENOMONEE VALLEY COMMUNITY PARK

Each focus group was asked what they would ideally like to see in the Menomonee Valley Community Park. The responses are listed here in alphabetical order.

- Bait shop for fishers
- Basketball court
- Band shell
- Bike cooperative
- Bike rental
- Canoe and kayak rental
- Cart vendors selling food, drinks
- Clubhouse that could be rented for events, used for meeting space
- Community garden
- Cross Country Skiing trails
- Ice skating rink
- Paddleboats
- Shelter (for community picnics, events if it is raining)
- Skate rental

Focus group participants also mentioned activities and events they would like to happen in the Valley. These responses are listed below in alphabetical order.

- Circus
- Company picnics
- Concerts
- Coordinated walking groups
- Horse-drawn carriage rides
- Outdoor theatre
- Red-bus, trolley tours