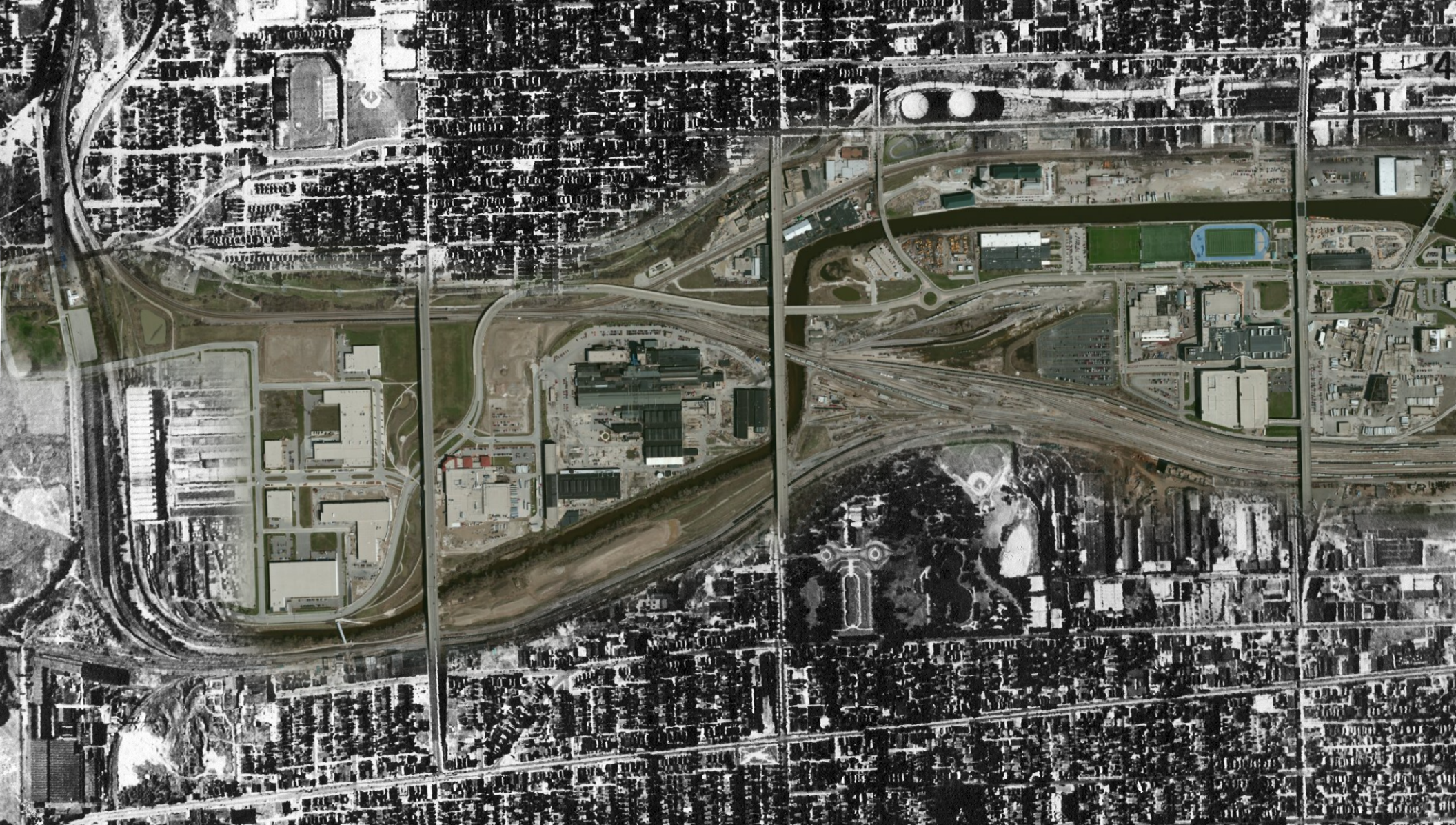


# 2013 MENOMONEE VALLEY STATE OF THE VALLEY REPORT



**TEN YEARS** BENCHMARKING CHANGE IN THE VALLEY





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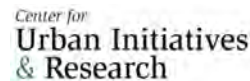
[epic.cuir.uwm.edu/mvbi](http://epic.cuir.uwm.edu/mvbi)

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE MEMOMONEE VALLEY BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE WAS PROVIDED BY:**



US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)  
University of Illinois Chicago (Illinois, Chicago)  
Ryerson University (Toronto, Canada)  
Sixteenth Street Community Health Center (Milwaukee, WI)

**THE MEMOMONEE VALLEY BENCHMARKING INITIATIVE & 2013 STATE OF THE VALLEY REPORT ARE THE RESULT OF A COLLABORATION WITH THE FOLLOWING PARTNERS:**



Sixteenth Street Community Health Center  
Ryerson University  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
UW-Milwaukee School of Architecture & Urban Planning  
University of Illinois Chicago  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
UW-Milwaukee Center for Urban Initiatives & Research

**PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THIS REPORT WAS TAKEN BY:**

Greg Latsch, Greg Latsch Photography  
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**THIS REPORT WAS PREPARED DURING THE FOLLOWING DATES:**

January 2011 to November 2013

# ABOUT THIS REPORT



\*Photo: A young boy stares down onto the Menomonee River from the Valley Passage bridge  
Source: Greg Latsch Photography

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS REPORT:

Lisa Schelling Sutton, American Geographical Society Library  
Terry Johnson, Center for Urban Initiatives and Research  
Karen Michalski, City of Milwaukee Health Department  
Nancy A. Olson, City of Milwaukee Information and Technology Management Division  
Greg Latsch, Greg Latsch Photography  
Daniel Adams, Layton Boulevard West Neighbors  
Catrina Crane, Menomonee Valley Partners  
Corey Zetts, Menomonee Valley Partners  
Laura Bray, Menomonee Valley Partners  
Tamara Pacada, Menomonee Valley Partners  
Timothy Brown, Menomonee Valley Partners  
Stephen Hudak, Milwaukee County Transit System  
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Tim Ehlinger, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Biology Department  
Catherine Madison, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development  
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Dave Horvath, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Geography Department  
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Tim Cotter, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning  
William Sharkey, University of Wisconsin-Sheboygan Geography Department  
Anne Reis, Urban Ecology Center  
Bill Mueller, Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory & Milwaukee BIOME Project  
Margie Coons, Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Grant D. Hetherington, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Mark Allen, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Will Wawrzyn, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Nathan Winkel, Xceligent®  
and....Past & Current Menomonee Valley Businesses



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS







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\*Photo: Towers and suspenders of the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Viaduct, built in 2001, during a summer sunset  
Source: Greg Latsch Photography

## OBJECTIVE OF 2013 STATE OF THE VALLEY REPORT

**T**he 2013 *State of the Valley Report* was created for citizens, investors, policy makers, professionals and those interested in the Menomonee Valley. The goal of this report is to help establish a common ground while continuing to strengthen the vision of a sustainable Menomonee Valley.

The report evaluates how various strategies, decisions and investments over the last 10 years have impacted the community, economic and environmental quality of the Menomonee Valley and surrounding communities. Monitoring these factors in the Menomonee Valley and surrounding communities help us to answer critical questions about whether the objectives of a sustainable Menomonee Valley are being met.

## READING THE 2013 STATE OF THE VALLEY REPORT

The 2013 *State of the Valley Report* study area encompasses the Menomonee Valley and surrounding neighborhoods. For a better understanding of the environmental and economic indicator study areas, please review our study area map on **page 9**. Given this report utilizes past and current data from the US Census Bureau, **page 10** provides a map of all relevant census boundaries and zip codes, including the community indicator study area.

The report and its indicators are categorized into the three components of sustainability - **Community, Environment and Economy**. Within each component, relevant indicators are analyzed on the basis of the following questions:

1. **What has been measured?** details the measures, sources of data and methodological approach used for evaluating the indicator's performance.
2. **Why is it important?** explains the role of the indicator in achieving sustainability in the Valley and surrounding neighborhoods.
3. **How are we doing?** describes the performance of each indicator within the study area by examining past trends and current conditions.

To assist in understanding changes to each indicator, tables, figures, pictures and maps are used to help clarify the analysis. These visuals help provide a snapshot of each indicator's performance.

## UNLOCK MORE INFORMATION WITHIN THE 2013 STATE OF THE VALLEY REPORT!

New to the *State of the Valley Report*, all corresponding pages with the black and white Layar® app icon (seen below) contain supplemental content viewable on your smartphone and tablet. Simply download the free app at [www.layar.com](http://www.layar.com), then point your device's camera towards the page and follow the directions. This app gives viewers access to websites, project contacts, videos and other media relevant to the Valley and this report.



# READING THIS REPORT



# THE VALLEY AND ITS BEGINNING

The Menomonee River Valley lies in the heart of the city of Milwaukee and always played a pivotal role in the economic life of the region. The 1,200 acre Valley spans a little more than half mile north to south and about three miles east to west. The Valley is bordered to the north by downtown Milwaukee, Marquette University and the historic neighborhoods of Avenues West and Merrill Park. Immediately south of the Valley are the Silver City and Walker's Point neighborhoods, historic Michell Park and businesses of National Avenue. To the west, Miller Park (home to the Milwaukee Brewers), and Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center. And east of the Valley lies the Historic Third Ward and Lake Michigan.



\*Photo: A drawing shows the Valley as a vast wetland prior to colonization  
Source: Milwaukee County Historical Society

For thousands of years, the Menomonee Valley was a wild rice marsh, home to American Indians. The name "Menomonee" is derived from the Algonquin "meno," meaning good, and "min," a term for grain or fruit. Wild rice (menomin) flourished in the extensive wetlands of the Menomonee Valley. By the 1700s, the Potawatomi were the primary residents of the region. Ojibwa, Fox, Menominee, Ottawa, Sauk,

Winnebago and others also lived here at various times. Flowing through it is the Menomonee River, whose abundant fish and waterfowl provided the necessities of life for early Native American populations and a canoe route from Lake Michigan into the interior. As European settlement increased in the late 1800s, the Valley's accessibility to railways, Lake Michigan, and local river systems made it a prime location for industrial activity.

In 1869, a group of business leaders supported by local authorities planned a network of canals and slips in the Valley that were surrounded by parcels of land for industrial use. The project took a decade to complete and required vast quantities of material to fill in the marsh, including dredge spoil, gravel, and municipal and industrial wastes. As the renowned Milwaukee historian John Gurda aptly observed, "lumber yards, coal yards and sash and door factories sprouted in the eastern end of the Valley even before the muck was dry."

Larger industrial complexes, including tanneries, breweries, stockyards, and railroad shops dotted the entire Valley by the late 1800s. The transformation of the Valley from a natural system to an industrialized one is the feature that has most epitomized Milwaukee's evolution and, unfortunately, highlights the unsustainable model of past industrialization efforts. To quote an 1882 newspaper article:



\*Photo: The Menomonee Valley was a hub for locomotives and industry in Milwaukee's early years  
Source: Milwaukee County Historical Society

*"Nothing, perhaps, more strikingly exhibits the rapidity and solidarity of Milwaukee's growth than the march of improvement in the Menomonee Valley. The bogs and marshes in that locality are being converted into firm ground, and the waters which formerly spread themselves thinly over a large surface are being confined to an artificial channel and made navigable for great ships. The vast tract, which but a few years ago was the home of the wild duck and the resort of the sportsman with his gun, is now partially converted, and soon will be entirely so, to the seat of manufacturing and commercial enterprises, which take rank among the first of their kind in the entire Northwest"*



\*Photo: Train tracks dominated the Valley environment, compromising the quality of the environment—specifically, the Menomonee River  
Source: Milwaukee County Historical Society

# HISTORY OF THE VALLEY



## THE NEXT GENERATION OF THE VALLEY

**B**y the end of the nineteenth century, residential communities had spread extensively along the Valley's bluffs, producing some of the most densely populated neighborhoods in Wisconsin. Industry prospered well into the 1920s and only the Great Depression of the 1930s could curtail its growth, which quickly picked up again with the onset of World War II. The industrial engine of the Valley began to decelerate in the decades following the war. Highway construction made it possible for people to live further away from their workplace and for manufacturers to use roads to transport goods instead of rail and water. Although the opening of the Milwaukee County Stadium in 1953 and the Valley Power Plant in 1969 did breathe some life into the district, it was still suffering the same fate as many industrial districts in the Rustbelt. Indeed, the Valley witnessed employment drop from over 50,000 jobs in the 1920s, to approximately 20,000 jobs in the mid-1970s, to barely 7,095 jobs by 1997. With its economic decline, a host of problems ensued in both the Valley and surrounding neighborhoods, including unemployment, a reduced tax base and pollution.

The city did make a few efforts to revitalize the Valley in the late 1970s. These included rebuilding several roads, clearing blight, acquiring land, and locating a handful of city facilities in the area. More attention, however, was devoted to renewing the Valley when Mayor John Norquist took office in 1988. Mayor Norquist understood the importance of the Valley to Milwaukee's economy and employment base. As interest in the Valley's future spread, many pondered what was next. As Milwaukee Historian John Gurda notes - *"a series of public and private initiatives, not all of them coordinated, raised expectations for an area that had become one of the most underused in central Milwaukee."*

While several long-standing manufacturers continued to operate in the Valley, there also emerged a new desire for amenities to reconnect it with the community. A number of amenities were added or planned for the Valley in the early 1990s, including Marquette University's Valley Fields athletic complex, the Potawatomi Bingo Casino, a new stadium for the Milwaukee Brewers (Miller Park), and the Hank Aaron State Trail. These developments, along with the rapid conversion of warehouse and industrial property into residential lofts and retail shops just east of the Valley, in the Historic Third Ward District, made it necessary for the city and affected stakeholders to come to a decision on the future of this historically industrial district. Fortunately, the City, local businesses and key stakeholders in the surrounding community could agree on one thing - the area needed to be revitalized and provide "family supporting" jobs.

\*Background Photo: The Valley Twin Smokestacks, an iconic landmark representing the Valley's rich history of industry, were torn down in 2007 amid safety concerns  
Source: Menomonee Valley Partners, Inc.

In 1998, the city of Milwaukee, Menomonee Valley Business Association (MVBA) and Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) devised a land-use plan for the Valley. The following year, Sixteenth Street Community Health Center (SSCHC) and the Planning & Design Institute co-hosted a two-day charrette with local professionals, resulting in a comprehensive report entitled *"A Vision for Smart Growth"* that outlines ideas for the eastern, central, and western portions of the Valley. Essentially, these documents would serve as guides for the redevelopment of the Valley. To accommodate these efforts, a non-profit called the Menomonee Valley Partners (MVP) was born.

In 2002, the SSCHC, together with the City of Milwaukee, MVP and other sponsors, organized a national design competition (*Natural Landscapes for Living Communities*) to plan the redevelopment of the Valley's west-end. The winning design for the site provided for 70 acres of light industrial development, a mile segment of the Hank Aaron State Trail, and streets, parks, and natural areas along the banks of the Menomonee River. From this design, the city generated the Menomonee Valley Industrial Center (MVIC) and Community Park Land Use Plan in 2006 to guide redevelopment, which has since attracted numerous companies, living-wage jobs, and awards. In following years, several catalytic projects, such as the Harley Davidson Museum, Valley Passage, Urban Ecology Center and recently built Three Bridges Park, have continued the Valley's vision of sustainability.

While redevelopment of the Valley has made tremendous progress since 1998, work still remains in other sections. As part of the Milwaukee Area Comprehensive Plan process, a new planning initiative called Menomonee Valley 2.0 ([www.planthevalley.org](http://www.planthevalley.org)) has been generated by the City of Milwaukee and MVP to give residents and other stakeholders a forum to provide input on the Valley's future. Launched in the fall 2013, the planning process will solicit public input and prepare a draft plan that should be ready for review and adoption by the summer of 2014.



\*Photo: In 2012, a promotional sign for the Menomonee Valley Industrial Center (MVIC) shows only 12 acres left for sale by the City of Milwaukee  
Source: Greg Latsch Photography

# HISTORY OF THE VALLEY



**AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY: A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF CHANGE IN THE VALLEY**

**H**istorical aerial photographs from Milwaukee County for years 1937, 1963, 2000, 2007 & 2010 provide a unique perspective on how the west-side of the Valley has changed over the past 75 years. When looking at these images, consider other notable changes to the local area - Interstate 94 (1968), the Mitchell Park Domes (1967), Miller Park (2001), West Canal Street (2006), and the Menomonee Valley Industrial Center (2006). Together, the images below illustrate how the Valley, once hindered by pollution and blight, has transcended into a best practice of brownfield redevelopment using sustainable elements.



**1937**  
 \*Source: Milwaukee County Automated Mapping and Land Information System, 1937  
**1937:** As the automobile gained popularity, Milwaukee, known for its well-connected electric streetcar routes, began to abandon many by the 1950's. The three viaducts shown above, since rehabilitated, introduced new north-south connections vital to Milwaukee.



**1963**  
 \*Source: Milwaukee County Automated Mapping and Land Information System, 1963  
**1963:** While Interstate 94 opened around the time of this photo, the Valley's use was still exclusive to the railroad and several industrial properties. The Mitchell Park Domes, shown during construction, replaced the original Milwaukee conservatory in 1967.



**2000**  
 \*Source: Milwaukee County Automated Mapping and Land Information System, 2000  
**2000:** This photograph shows the newly-built Hank Aaron State Trail, upstream along the Menomonee River, and the development of Miller Park to the west. The Shimek Memorial Track & Field Facility on Canal Street was built in 1995 by Marquette University.



**2007**  
 \*Source: Milwaukee County Automated Mapping and Land Information System, 2007  
**2007:** The most noticeable change since 2000 is the extension of Canal Street westward to Miller Park. This project included a round-a-bout at 25<sup>th</sup> Street and extension of the Hank Aaron State Trail. The Menomonee Valley Industrial Center (MVIC) on Canal Street, a primary focus for the Valley's redevelopment, began to take form at this time with Palermo's Pizza moving to their Valley location.



**2010**  
 \*Source: Milwaukee County Automated Mapping and Land Information System, 2010  
**2010:** This image shows how accessibility since the Valley's redevelopment has improved for both workers and visitors. The MVIC experienced healthy growth and became one of the few industrial developments that occurred in Milwaukee during the recent economic recession.

# HISTORY OF THE VALLEY

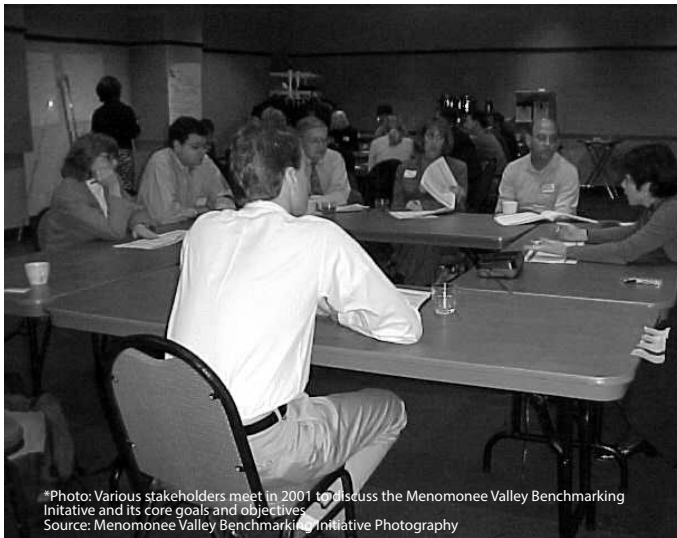


## BENCHMARKING SUCCESS: TRACKING VALLEY-WIDE SUSTAINABILITY

In order to track the Valley's progress toward sustainability, the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center collaborated with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to create the Menomonee Valley Benchmarking Initiative (MVBI). The core objectives of the MVBI, as defined by the partners at the outset of the project, were several-fold:

- Raise awareness in the community regarding the current state of the Menomonee Valley and the progress made towards its revitalization
- Create an information clearinghouse on data related to community, environmental, and economic indicators
- Promote the principles of sustainability in an urban context by exploring issues and assembling data in a more holistic manner that considers community, environmental, and economic concerns

Other objectives were to generate a practical synthesis of the raw data for the benefit of a wide variety of users and to stimulate research interest in the Valley as a complex laboratory for studying urban environments.



\*Photo: Various stakeholders meet in 2001 to discuss the Menomonee Valley Benchmarking Initiative and its core goals and objectives.  
Source: Menomonee Valley Benchmarking Initiative Photography

In 2001, indicator work group meetings focusing on the triple-bottom line of **community**, **environmental**, and **economic** performance were held with stakeholders to determine key "issues of concern" for the Valley, and to select specific "indicators" for investigating those issues. The coordinators of the study and the stakeholders agreed that the MVBI should not focus

on historical trends and legacies, but evaluate the Valley's future progress based on its conditions at the start of the new millennium. They also felt that ongoing reviews of its performance would be critical as the Valley continues its renewal.

Completing the previous two versions of the MVBI report involved identifying stakeholders willing to supply existing or new data and report the results. While some of the data could be gathered from existing sources, a significant amount had to be collected from scratch. For this reason, it was felt that establishing a protocol and making arrangements for future data collection was important to the success of the MVBI.



Measuring and tracking the state of **economic** activity in the Valley was a central focus of the MVBI. Given that much of the information on business activity and employment for the area was not available, a survey designed by stakeholders was administered to Valley businesses by mail and then followed-up with telephone calls. Additional sources of information include local, state and national agencies, both private and public.

As for **environmental** benchmarks, the partners worked with a number of key scientists from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to establish a water-quality monitoring network to analyze biotic integrity and physical water quality in the Menomonee River. They also worked with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WI-DNR) to analyze data from local air-monitoring stations, while information on land coverage and bird activity was gathered by graduate students and an array of volunteers from local organizations and nonprofits.

For **community** indicators, data on recreation and art were gathered by University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee students as part of fieldwork classes. Updates to demographic data were available from the US Census Bureau. Housing and crime data were obtained from relevant City departments, while health data pertaining to fertility rates and lead poisoning rates is from local and state agencies.

Overall, the MVBI has been attempting to educate the public, inform policy-making efforts, and monitor the performance of renewal activities by gathering analytical information reflective of overall redevelopment in the area. The 2013 State of the Valley Report is the third installment of the MVBI, an assessment of the previous decade within the Valley. These reports generate a useful synthesis of data, help promote principles of sustainability in an urban brownfields context, and bring together stakeholders in a collaborative effort.

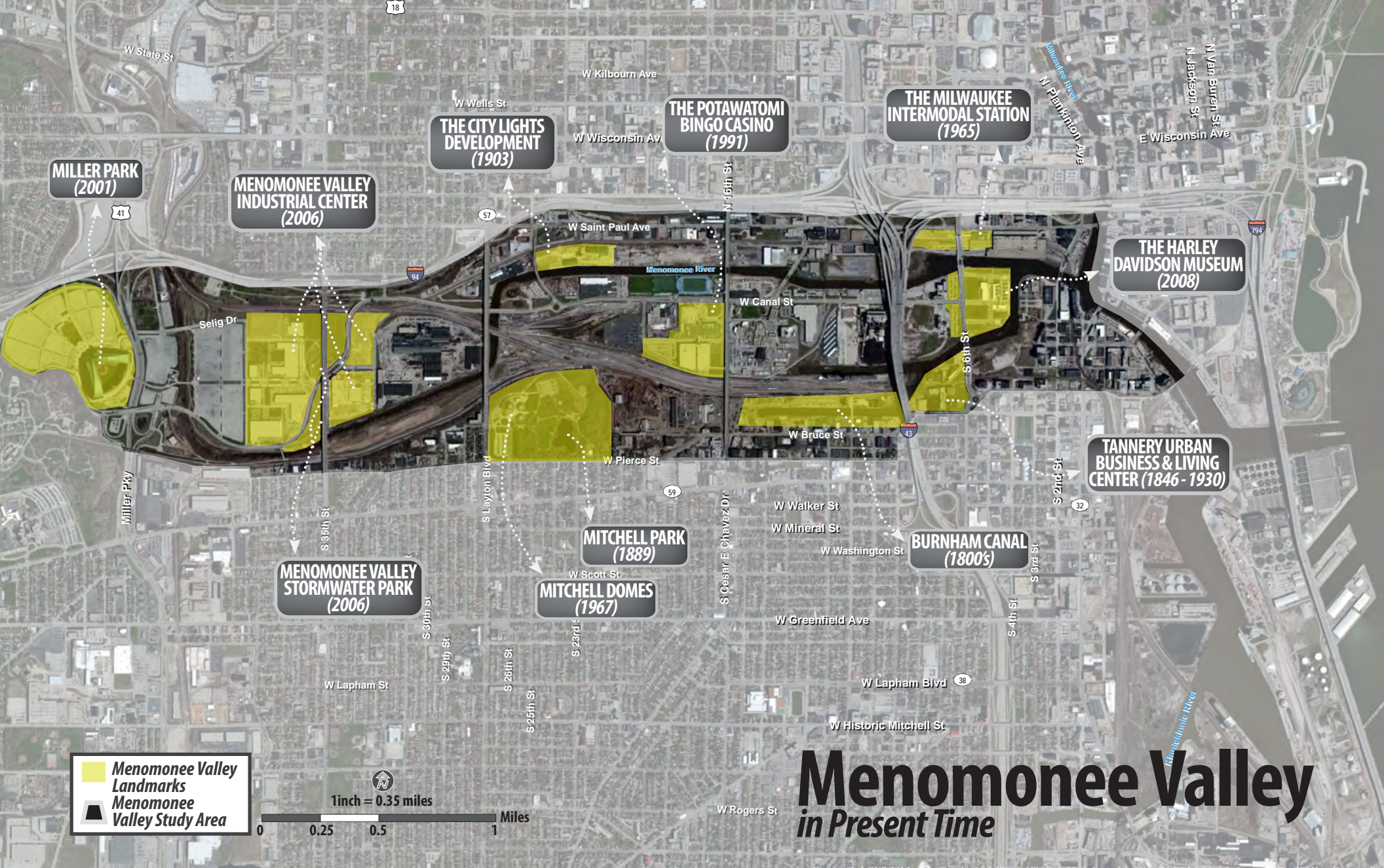


The numbers in these ellipses represent the years of each MVBI report. For pages discussing indicators (pages 07-58), these ellipses will tell you what previous report year(s) the following indicator was analyzed for.



# HISTORY OF THE MVBI





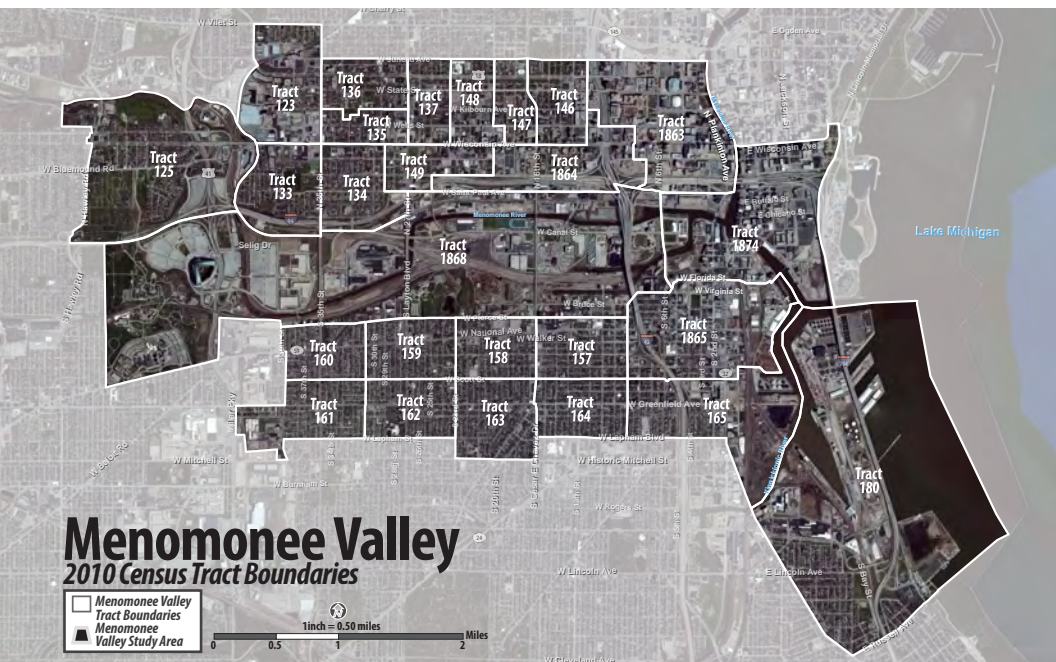
# Menomonee Valley in Present Time

\*Data Source (Map): Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and GIS Users

# ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY AREA MAP

**ENVIRONMENTAL & ECONOMIC BOUNDARY FOR INDICATORS**  
 The study area, shown in color, is defined by the following coordinates - north to Interstate 94, south to West Pierce Street, west to Miller Park and east to the Milwaukee River. This study area is used as the boundary for **economic and environmental indicators**, unless otherwise noted. Locations marked in yellow represent Menomonee Valley landmarks, with the year it was built also provided. Given the Valley's rich history, some have existed for over 150 years.  
 \*Of note - this aerial image is from 2012.

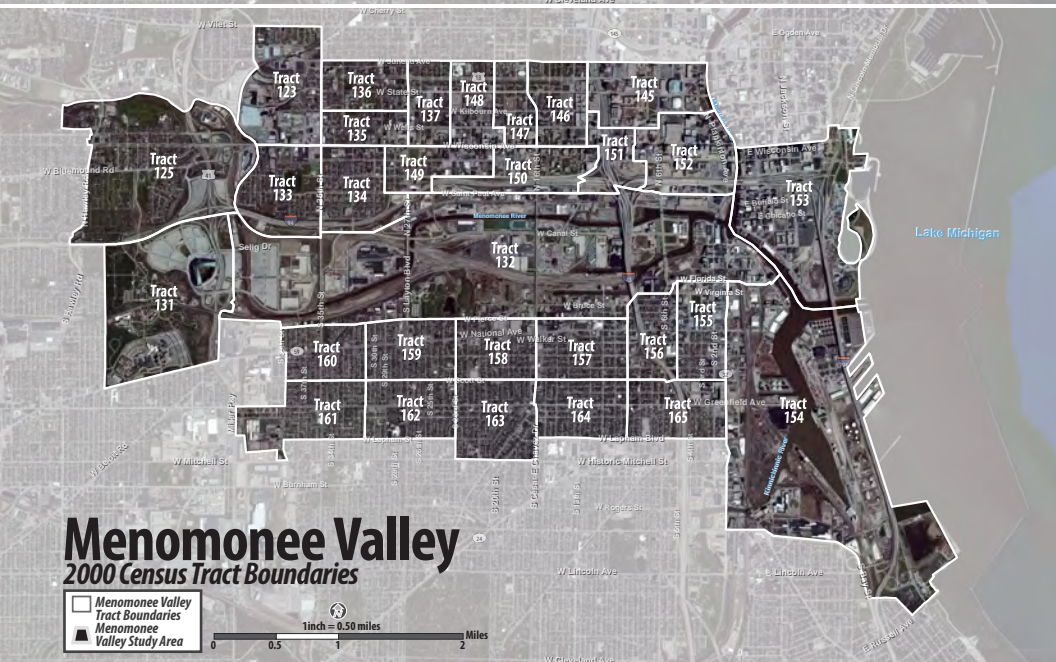




### Menomonee Valley 2010 Census Tract Boundaries

□ Menomonee Valley Tract Boundaries  
 ■ Menomonee Valley Study Area

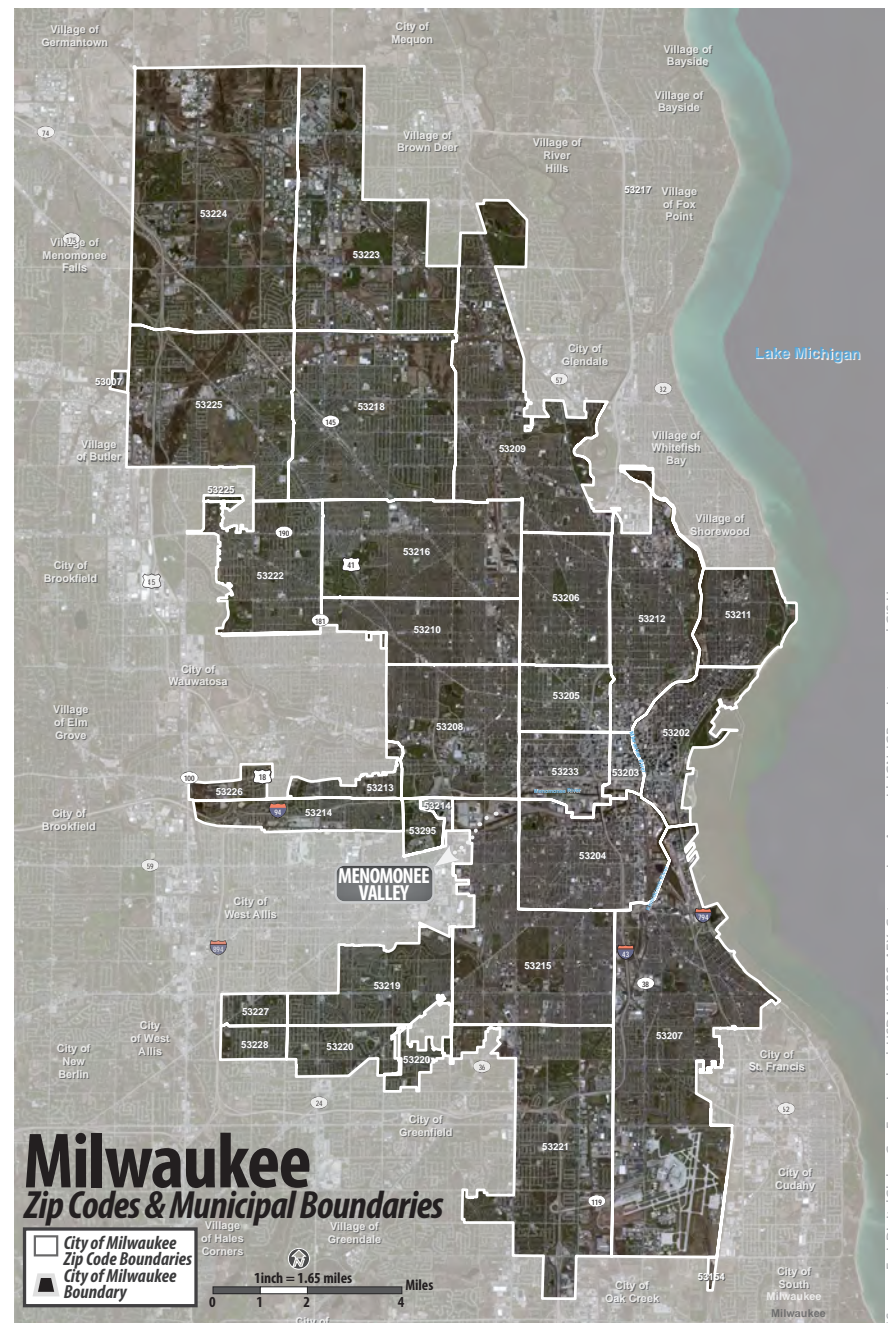
1 inch = 0.50 miles



### Menomonee Valley 2000 Census Tract Boundaries

□ Menomonee Valley Tract Boundaries  
 ■ Menomonee Valley Study Area

1 inch = 0.50 miles



### Milwaukee Zip Codes & Municipal Boundaries

□ City of Milwaukee Zip Code Boundaries  
 ■ City of Milwaukee Boundary

1 inch = 1.65 miles

\*Source (Both): Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, I-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and GIS Users

\*Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, I-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and GIS Users

**COMMUNITY & ZIP CODE BOUNDARY FOR INDICATORS**  
 The maps above represent geographical areas, known as **census tracts**, used by the US Census. In 2010, the US Census modified the 2000 boundaries. These maps show the study area used for **community indicators** unless otherwise noted. The map to the right shows **zip codes** in the City and **municipal boundaries** in Milwaukee County. Zip codes are used in some economic indicators.  
 \*Of note - all aerial images are from 2012.



# CENSUS BOUNDARY & COMMUNITY STUDY AREA MAP