

# Menomonee Valley Brownfields Walking Tour

Take a hike through Milwaukee's revitalized Menomonee River Valley

Wisconsin DNR's Remediation & Redevelopment Program is a unique environmental cleanup program, designed to assist in the investigation, cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties.

Welcome to the Menomonee River Valley. Four miles long and one half mile wide, the Menomonee Valley has a rich history of native and European settlement, community and industrial growth, economic hardship and eventual rejuvenation. For a glimpse of this rich history, take a Valley tour of former brownfield properties along the Hank Aaron State Trail!

### Brownfield Backdrop

Brownfields are abandoned or underused properties with real or perceived contamination that can hinder cleanup and redevelopment. With more than 10,000 brownfields located throughout the state, the

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Remediation & Redevelopment (RR) Program works with communities like Milwaukee to help investigate, clean up and eventually redevelop these former underutilized properties.

Milwaukee's Menomonee River Valley was a prime example of a big brownfield in need of some serious cleanup. Originally a shallow marsh, the Menomonee River Valley was filled over time with a variety of materials and adapted for industrial use. Throughout its history, the 1500-acre Valley offered opportunities for a growing workforce. Shipping, leather tanning, meat packing

" We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. "

--- Aldo Leopold



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photos courtesy of WDNR and Menomonee Valley Partners  
design by Lisa Schroeder



and machine tooling became the backbone of Milwaukee's economy. At one time more than 50,000 people worked in the Valley. However, years of industrial practices contributed to the impairment of the Valley's natural resources, and throughout the latter part of the 20th Century the idea of a contaminated Valley also blocked any real cleanup or redevelopment opportunities.

Today, the Menomonee River Valley has become a natural resource and economic gem once again, thanks to the efforts of the City of Milwaukee, local businesses, state agencies like the DNR and other

public and private entities. Due to its central location, open land and proximity to downtown, the Valley offers tremendous redevelopment potential as well as providing urban recreational opportunities through improved river access and the addition of the Hank Aaron State Trail.

The purpose of the walking tour and brochure is to highlight the many successes that have enhanced the redevelopment of Milwaukee's Menomonee River Valley, which promises to be the center of urban revitalization for years to come.



### Miller Park

Anchoring the west end of the Menomonee River Valley, Miller Park with its retractable roof is home to the Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Club. The 1.2 million square-foot, 43,000-seat giant sits on 265-acres that previously served as landfill. To deal with any residual methane issues, city officials worked with the DNR to have landfill materials removed and special barriers and a venting system installed. Looking north you will see the stadium's east parking areas, which are built on the former CMC railroad property.



### Menomonee Valley Industrial Center

If you stood on this spot 100 years ago, you might have felt the rumble of the mighty locomotives that crisscrossed the Valley during its industrial heyday. Since the bankruptcy of the Milwaukee Road in the 1980s, the former locomotive and railcar manufacturing and repair facility remained vacant and idle for many years. At 140 acres, the old Milwaukee Road site was the largest undeveloped single parcel in the Menomonee Valley. In 2003, the city acquired the blighted property. In addition to its own contributions, the city received state and federal grants to help with the cleanup and redevelopment, including a DNR Green Space and Public Facilities Grant to help develop the innovative storm water park you see to the east.



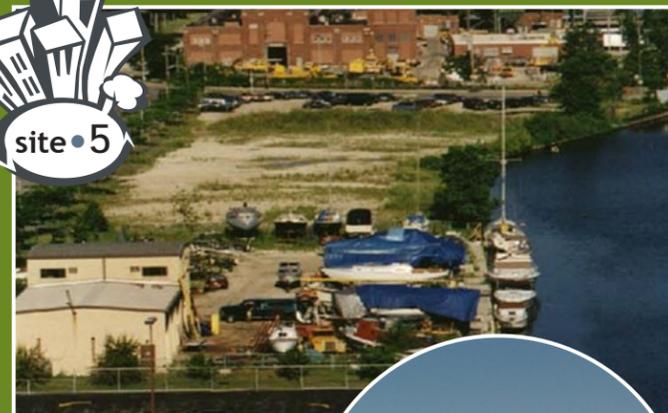
### Stormwater Retention Basin

The vegetated basin you see before you is the 25th and Canal bioretention facility. Bioretention is the use of plants to remove pollutants from stormwater runoff. This facility treats stormwater from over 70 acres along West Canal Street, between North 16th Street and North 25th Street. The site was a former City of Milwaukee public works yard.



### MU Valley Fields

Built in the late 1980's, Marquette University's Valley Fields facility was one of the first redevelopments to occur in the Menomonee Valley. Formerly the site of a coal yard, Valley Fields now includes soccer fields, a practice facility, an eight-lane 400-meter running track, and an area for field events such as the long jump, high jump, triple jump, pole vault, shot put, discus and javelin. If there is a soccer game in play during your visit, be sure to cheer loudly for the Golden Eagles!



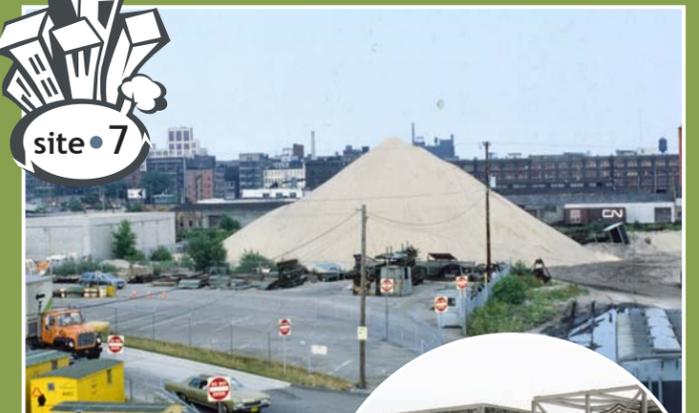
### The SIGMA Group Corporate Offices

Standing in front of the Sigma Group's corporate office complex, you might not realize you're looking at a "green" building, or that this used to be home to a vacant brownfield property. The Sigma Group, an engineering and environmental consulting firm, had to address several challenging conditions while planning and designing their new home, including management of contaminated soils. Completed in November 2004, the building and surrounding property incorporate several Earth-friendly aspects.



### Former Milwaukee Stockyards

It's hard to imagine live cows in the Valley as recently as 2006. The 13-acre site of the former Milwaukee Stockyards has been redeveloped and today is the current home to Proven Direct, a marketing and fulfillment company. Cleanup included the removal of underground petroleum storage tanks. Additional redevelopment includes construction of a 144,000-square-foot multi-tenant industrial building that could bring more than 100 new jobs to the Valley.



### Harley-Davidson Museum Complex

Can you hear the roar?! The Harley-Davidson Museum Complex is an architectural masterpiece located at the eastern tip of the Valley along the Menomonee River as it flows toward Lake Michigan. The complex actually sits on four parcels formerly owned by the city and the Morton Salt Company. Contamination included chloride from salt piles and petroleum from the use as a city public works site. The Museum complex will attract many visitors to the Valley.

