

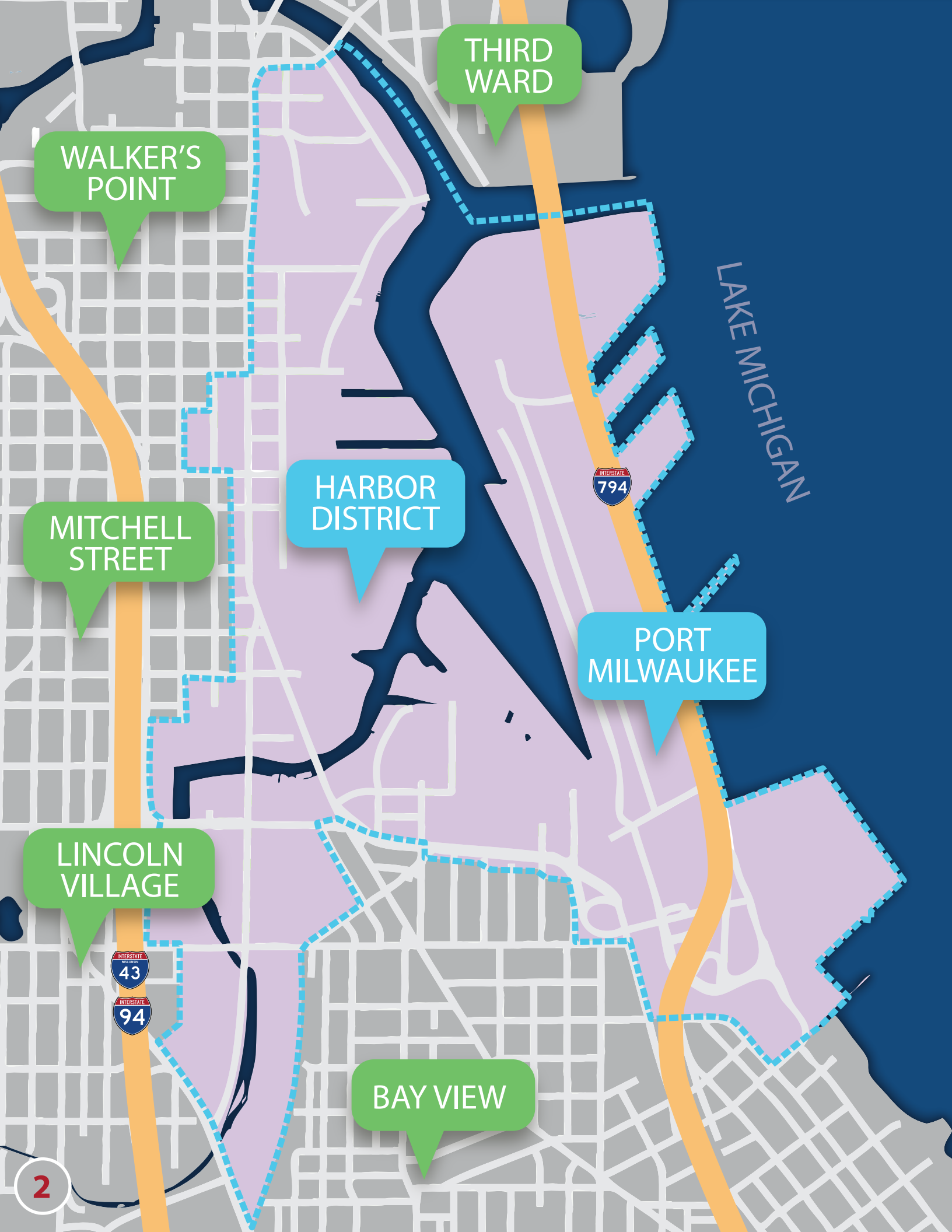
# BRANDING & IDENTITY DEPLOYMENT GUIDELINES & PLAN

JANUARY 2019



Gritty. Green. Real.





THIRD WARD

WALKER'S POINT

LAKE MICHIGAN

INTERSTATE 794

HARBOR DISTRICT

MITCHELL STREET

PORT MILWAUKEE

LINCOLN VILLAGE

INTERSTATE 43  
INTERSTATE 94

BAY VIEW

# BRAND STATEMENT

Our Harbor District is a 1,000-acre functionally diversified neighborhood with 9 miles of active waterfront where the confluence of the Milwaukee, Menomonee and Kinnickinnic Rivers flows into Lake Michigan.

The waterways, 1st Street, the railways, and bike paths bring people to, from, and through our **"rust & green"** district of juxtaposed uses that have evolved from a rice marsh with plentiful fish and game to an economic hub that served industries throughout the state.

Today our District is a **gritty mix** of old & new and high tech & low tech. Our maritime heritage is visible in the waterways of our working harbor, which are also enjoyed by recreational boaters. Global trade, local commerce, the study of freshwater, and recreation cohabit as components of our **scrappy personality**.

Urbanites choose to play here with kayaks, pontoons and party boats. Their land legs and pedal taverns take them to bars, restaurants and weddings celebrated in **memorable venues**. Visitors come and taste our food, hear our music, experience our access to water, and see our public art – and leave our district with **remarkable stories to tell**.

Multiple generations choose to work in our District in industries including technology, manufacturing, freshwater science, construction, salvage and the service industry. Employment opportunities continue to expand with multi-million-dollar developments underway. The **development sites are virtual job boards**.

Longtime near southside residents look forward to the reactivation of the waterfront. People who like living in an accessible, energized, near-downtown neighborhood have filled the recently built apartments in mixed-use buildings. The high demand for additional marketable and affordable housing will be met in the new developments underway...and visitors anxiously await staying at a hotel recently announced.

Those who have experienced our Harbor District say, **"it's the unpolished real Milwaukee," "has unexpected hidden places to explore," "makes gritty cool & good," and "is offbeat & edgy and once experienced is never forgotten."**

Our Harbor District never loses sight of the hard work that made us – and knows vision, dedication, and respect for the environment will take us to where we are going next.



Photo credit: Chemistry in Place<sup>SM</sup>

# TARGET AUDIENCES & MARKETS

The Harbor District aims to attract people and create memorable places. People are key to placemaking so understanding visitors, residents, employers and workers who are seeking adventure, education, a change of pace, the open water, jobs and something fresh is imperative.

Recognizing the dynamics at play and responding to the input received in the Branding Workshop, we see the following groups as having interest in the Harbor District. Reasons include geographic proximity and the wide array of what exists within the District.

**Workshop participants advised against getting too “highbrow” to keep the Harbor District accessible and help attract people interested in a future here:**

- Near South Side residents and residents in contiguous neighborhoods
- Milwaukee’s Latino/Hispanic Community
- People moving and thinking about moving into new residential developments
- Employers & employees of Harbor District businesses
- Large employers, like Rockwell and Komatsu
- Existing industries, like Wrought Washer and Engel Tool & Forge
- New industries, like Foamation and Enlightened Brewery
- Port Milwaukee and marine-related businesses
- Recreational water users (boating community)
- Water research and technology
- Visitors from beyond the Harbor District and Near South Side, including people visiting bars and restaurants and tourist venues like Cooperage (music/event venue and pedal/paddle tavern)

With its unique configuration, mixed land uses, and 9 miles of waterfront, our 1,000-acre district offers options for development that do not exist elsewhere in the Milwaukee Metropolitan area. In the period from 2016 – 2018 alone, \$500 million in new development was announced: Michels Corporation’s 6.7-acre, mixed-use; Mandel Group’s 4.2-acre, mixed-use; and Komatsu Mining Corp’s 60-acre headquarters and manufacturing.

The Harbor District’s momentum has been fueled by these new large developments. They have enhanced the focus on the District and call attention to sites for other uses. **Benefitting from momentum, we will more easily attract interest from those that will add to our offerings: professional services, supply chains companies, workforce housing, amenities, food & beverage, and entertainment venues.** Additions like these, will fill in and grow the ecosystem of goods and services that make for a cohesive, self-sufficient and walkable neighborhood.

In addition, **future public space investment in and/or expansion of the Riverwalk, Harbor View Plaza waterfront park, Kinnickinnic River Trail biking pathway, and The Hop MKE streetcar extension become “the glue”** that connect the above-mentioned new and proposed developments to the anchor institutions – Rockwell Automation, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences and Port Milwaukee.

Gateway and wayfinding signage, public art, and placemaking opportunities are in visible spots throughout the District. Workshop participants were engaged in an activity to call out where they might be located, and this information can be found later in this report. Note the recommendations maintain the District’s authenticity showing the **“high tech & low tech”** and **“grit.”**

All these components contribute to the unique Harbor District aesthetic that continues to show and tell its **quirky and distinctive “rust & green” personality** through the intersection of industry, maritime, freshwater research & technology, residences and the amenities that residents, workers, students and visitors want.



Photo credit: Chemistry in Place<sup>SM</sup>

# METHODS & OPPORTUNITIES

The Harbor District is many things, some of which are complete opposites like “**high tech & low tech**” and “**rust & green.**” Recognizing this helps identify opportunities and opens us to how the District can be true to itself and do high tech & low tech and rust & green distinctively.

Our methods focus on ways to leverage and expand on the best of the Harbor District, keep new developments and initiatives in tune with the guts & attitude of the District, and make sure the District continues to have life after the sun goes down. Opportunities are identified in each of these categories. The seeds of these opportunities were planted in the Branding Workshop. This report places them in context.

**First & foremost, keep in mind that the initial question of each new opportunity is: does it pass the “Gritty. Green. Real.” test? If not, perhaps it does not belong in the Harbor District.**

**Leverage & expand upon the best in the District – focus on reaching out to the groups listed in “Target Audiences & Markets”**

- **Events & programming** – grow HarborFest; work with businesses in the District to encourage them to do events and programming in the District’s indoor & outdoor venues; connect people and piggyback experiences to bring diverse groups together; become known as “the house on the block where all the kids meet;” host events for civic organization from both outside & inside the District; develop a winter event to balance the packed summer schedule in the District
- **Water** - capitalize on water and the waterfront in every way possible 365 days a year – connect the land transportation network to the Riverwalk and water access points; identify the water access point that makes sense for placemaking opportunities; bring water ski shows and competition to the mooring basin in the inner harbor; add a water play feature viewable from the UWM School of Freshwater Science and Harbor View Plaza; add a hammock park in a new waterfront park that has another kayak launch
- **Commerce** – engage District businesses to sell the District to other businesses in their supply chain to encourage businesses to move to the District

**Keep new developments and initiatives in tune with the “guts & attitude” of the District**

- **Developments** – ensure that proposals consider things like form, materials, scale, street presence, landscaping, signage and branding – and are convincingly packaged to be part of the Harbor District (see guidelines in this report)
- **Public Art** – employ public art guidelines (see guidelines in this report) specific to ensure aesthetic expression speaks to the Harbor District brand in scale, materials, placement, theme and relationship to streets, water and improvements making sure all is in sync yet edgy
- **Placemaking** – consider that with each new development and programming initiative numerous opportunities exist to speak to the Harbor District brand - don’t overlook the obvious; locate seating areas and hang-out spots near and off the biking paths, park and waterfront areas; implement placemaking ideas in spots that were identified in Branding Workshop (see maps that follow)

**Make sure the District continues to have life after the sun goes down**

- **Lights** – think 24/7 and the power of solar energy and identify where, after sun down, lighting should be added to provide security, assist in wayfinding, and enhance the District creating a night-time mystique (i.e. under rail bridges on National Avenue, Greenfield Avenue, Washington Street) bridges, riverfront rail/Riverwalk, the Bay View Dog Park on Bay Street
- **Luminescent Materials** - research material science to discover ways to use a multitude of materials that after dark glow (i.e. pebbles on pathways, luminescent paint and/or tape striping on curbs, luminescent painted graphics on concrete dome-like enclosures and silos on Jones Island, luminescent rooftops visible from planes)
- **Wayfinding** – recognize the importance of 1st Street, the Riverwalk and traffic counts the DOT tracks in terms of where people go and what they see to set up the wayfinding system; install lighted gateway signage at north and south entry points and boat access points on the waterway; install lighted directional signage at key intersections/decision points with high traffic counts
- **Security** – activate the streetscape with infill development; encourage night life businesses; make sure streets are clearly signed; light bus stops



Photo credit: Chemistry in Place<sup>SM</sup>





Chemistry in Place<sup>SM</sup>



**EXISTING USES & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS**  
**JANUARY 2019**

Prepared by  
 Chemistry in Place<sup>SM</sup>

- Harbor District
- Parks & Trails
- Recreational Marina
- Proposed Riverwalk
- DOT Traffic Count (average daily vehicles)

# HARBOR DISTRICT BRAND DEPLOYMENT INTRODUCTION

The ability of people to understand the Harbor District as a clear place or destination is challenged by:

- Overlap with other neighborhoods on its western and southern edges including Walker's Point, Clocktower Acres, Baran Park and Bay View
- Rail infrastructure raised above grade crisscrossing the district subdividing and limiting physical and visual access from the city's street grid and more specifically from the primary traffic artery, S. 1st Street, to the waters' edge
- Underdeveloped public access along the harbor water edge limiting the public's understanding and association with the harbor

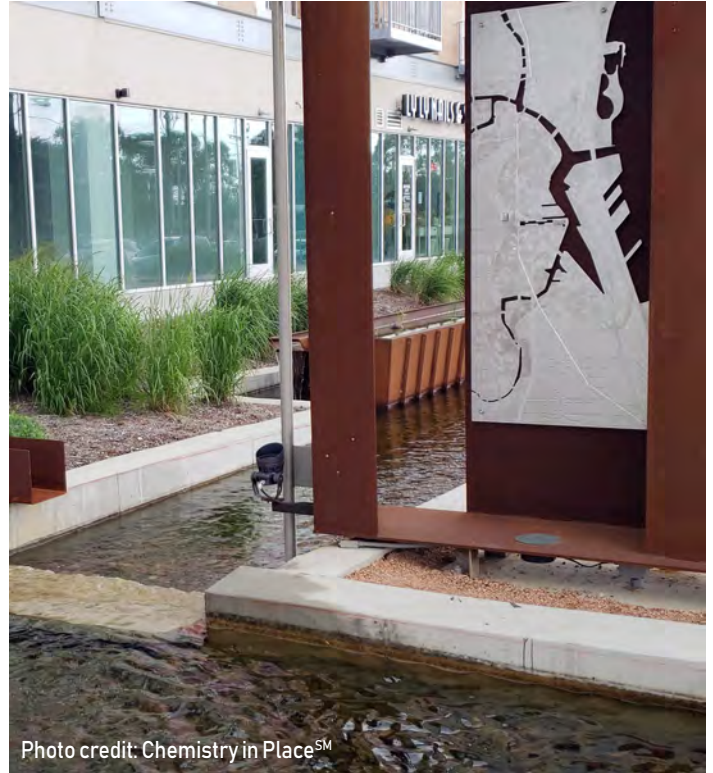
To overcome these challenges the following pages present strategies and guidelines to enhance Wayfinding in the District and reinforce the District's Identity by way of **signage, public infrastructure improvements, new public spaces and public art**. Each guideline is meant to draw out solutions that respond to the brand tag line:

**"Gritty. Green. Real."**

**Gritty.** is a reference to the past and reflects the prevalent imagery of the District's infrastructure and industrial works. It might also be expressed as bold, heavy duty, rugged, raw, structural, etc.



**Green.** is a reference to the future and responsible public and private stewardship, sustainability in terms of energy use, water conservation, renewable resources promoting neighborhood social wellbeing, economic health and environmental mitigation and habitat restoration.



**Real.** is a reference to the social and economic history of the District evident in its authentic industrial and infrastructure artifacts, the new cooperative public and private redevelopment efforts, and the success of the rich and diverse social, cultural and economic networks established in the District.



## GUIDELINE:

To respond to the brand term “**Gritty**” use materials and construction methods common to the District’s character including formed reinforced concrete, exposed structural steel, heavy timber and sheet metal. Detail material joinery with unconcealed fasteners to express the method of crafting and assembly.



## GUIDELINE:

To respond to the brand term “**Green**” improve District thoroughfares as “Complete Streets” with equal attention to vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian accommodation.

Complete Street (5th Ward)



Sustainable Street (The Brewery)



## GUIDELINE:

Build new “Sustainable Complete Streets” with green infrastructure features, rain gardens, bioswales, street trees and native vegetation as landscape focal points and public amenities to improve the livability and sustainability of the whole community.

## GUIDELINE:

To respond to the brand term “**Real**” expand public opportunities to understand, see, experience, participate in and realize what the District’s working waterfront has to offer.

Seasonal public invitation to witness the waterfront (Toronto, Canada)



# HARBOR DISTRICT WAYFINDING

Despite the many landmarks in the District that typically aid wayfinding the street network creates challenges. Unlike all other neighborhood districts in the City the Harbor District is not dominated by the typical Milwaukee north-south street grid aiding orientation. In addition, many streets dead end at the west edge of the Canadian Pacific (CP) railroad embankment. Further confusing orientation for visitors, the water edge geography occasionally caused some street alignments to skew from the grid. While freeway access from the west is quite direct, access to the District from the south east freeway interchange and Lake Express Ferry requires faith and patience. Given the limitations of the network of routes that thread their way through the District a wayfinding system is warranted.

The map on Page 21 shows a composite of decision points and recommended signage locations identified during the input at the workshop session. These are locations where key basic information would aid visitors to the District. These locations represent a point of departure for a District wayfinding signage initiative. Besides locations, sign type, form and message (i.e. Rockwell, UWM School of Freshwater Sciences, Port of Milwaukee, etc.) are important.

## GUIDELINE:

District signage type, form, scale and type-face should convey an image consistent with the District Brand: **“Gritty. Green. Real.”**

Place Markers



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Vehicle Directional Sign Form



Photo credit: Sarah Lynn Christensen

District Bicycle Route Maps

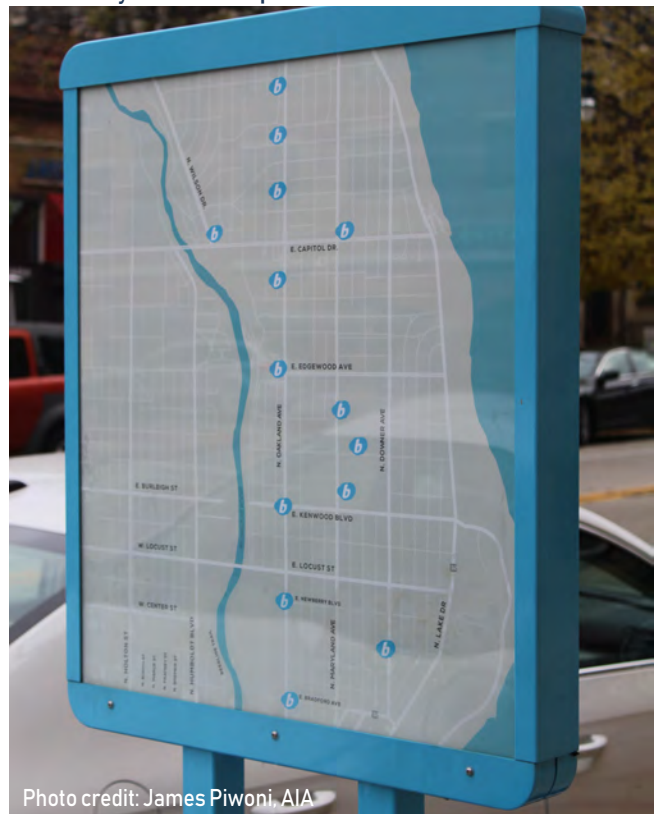


Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

# HARBOR DISTRICT IDENTITY

To a large extent residents and workplace employees, visitors, or passers-through experience the District by accessing it along 1st Street. The traffic counts bear this out indicating 1st Street as an important opportunity and likely the most potent means to promote identity and facilitate brand deployment. The goal is to heighten the District's visual identification and impress 1st Street's relationship in accessing the other subdistricts. Here are three complementary urban design strategies to seize the opportunity the physical context provides.

## 1. THE SPINE

First Street is the main conduit, the connecting spine but it is currently a chaotic visual environment with an occasional landmark. It needs to be a street with some singular defining quality which sets it apart from the surrounding streets. Street trees are the most visually significant means to set the street apart. Since there are almost no plantings along 1st Street planting trees curbside regularly spaced and as close together as possible, (ideally 25' – 30') would be highly effective. Most often streetscape improvements address both sides of the street equally. Since this street for a portion of its length forms a border with other neighborhoods to the west a differentiating factor might be a different treatment on each side of the street.

### GUIDELINE:

First Street should have a continuous distinct street character clearly setting it apart from adjacent streets and branding the district with repetitive vertical elements, special streetscape amenity details and a consistent pattern of planting to green and enhance the experience for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

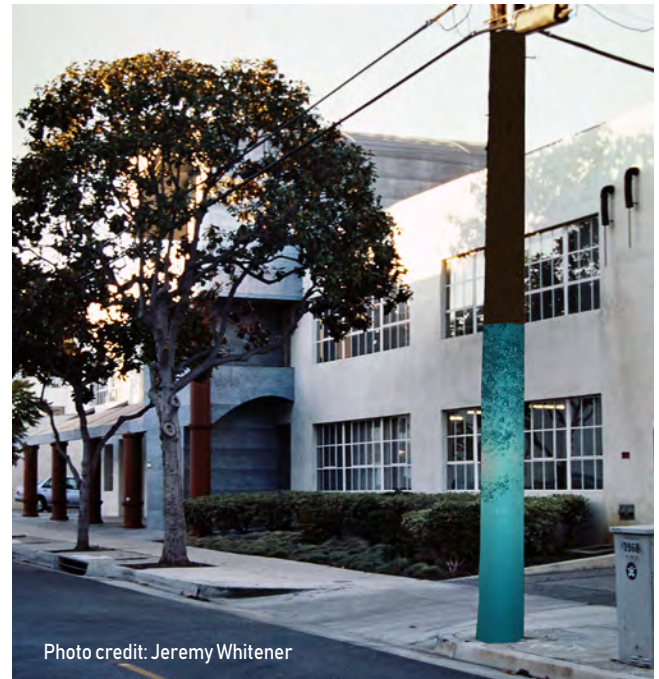
Consistent pattern of plantings (Birmingham, MI)



### GUIDELINE:

Within new public space environments the identity of the District shall be continuously reinforced by a structured system of messaging that overtly and intrinsically establishes the brand, **"Gritty. Green. Real"**.

Utility poles with graphics as vertical branding elements



Structured signage system



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Overt emblem



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Continuous green patterned ribbon & intrinsic pavement message



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

## 2. THE GATEWAYS

Intersections with 1st Street at Oregon, Florida, National, Washington and Greenfield provide access points to the harbor. An emphasis on branding at these locations will also enhance wayfinding. Marking these gateways to the harbor can take many forms with common and unique elements at each location but each conveying the brand message. The intersection at Greenfield is already marked by a public space, Freshwater Plaza, with a fountain, pools, art and plantings and is an exemplary model as a gateway that fits the brand. Though this would not be repeated at other harbor access streets each gateway design should be similarly responsive to the brand.

### GUIDELINE:

Along 1st Street mark the streets that are harbor portals with special design emphasis that celebrate these as space thresholds from 1st street to the CP viaducts. At these harbor gateways, shape design elements that reinforce the district brand identity and promote wayfinding.

### GUIDELINE:

In addition to the 1st Street harbor access gateways several other key district locations require similar attention. Mark S. Water Street east of the Pittsburgh Avenue, Becher Street west of 1st Street, any new harbor access routes along Kinnickinnic Avenue north of Bay Street and perhaps at Lincoln west of 1st Street with special design features that celebrate these as gateways to the Harbor District.

Overhead Gateway  
(San Diego, CA)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Gateway for Night Arrival  
(Vancouver, Canada)



Photo credit: MKdw

### 3. PUBLIC PLACES / PUBLIC ART

The gateways encourage public access to the waterfront where the Waterfront and Land Use Plan calls for rebuilding public streets, boat and kayak launch areas and riverwalks. Extending the branding and wayfinding into these public infrastructure projects will provide identity to the entire District public space network.

#### GUIDELINE:

Along the streetscapes and riverwalks where micro-climates will be advantageous, adjacent land uses will support activation and proposed building types will provide clear space definition. Create new public spaces adjacent to and integrated with the pedestrian pathways.

Existing Harbor District public place with micro climate advantage



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Sunlit river edge residential green space (3rd Ward)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA



## GUIDELINE:

At the water's edge where views of prominent landmarks and harbor activities rouse the senses build riverwalks with multi leveled places to walk, overview, occupy and reach the water. Include lighting, plantings, and public amenities and art.

Places to stroll, occupy and overview waterfront activities (St. Paul, MN)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Harbor walks with places to park, bike and walk with pedestrian amenities and public art (Rotterdam)



Photo credit: Jen Stauber

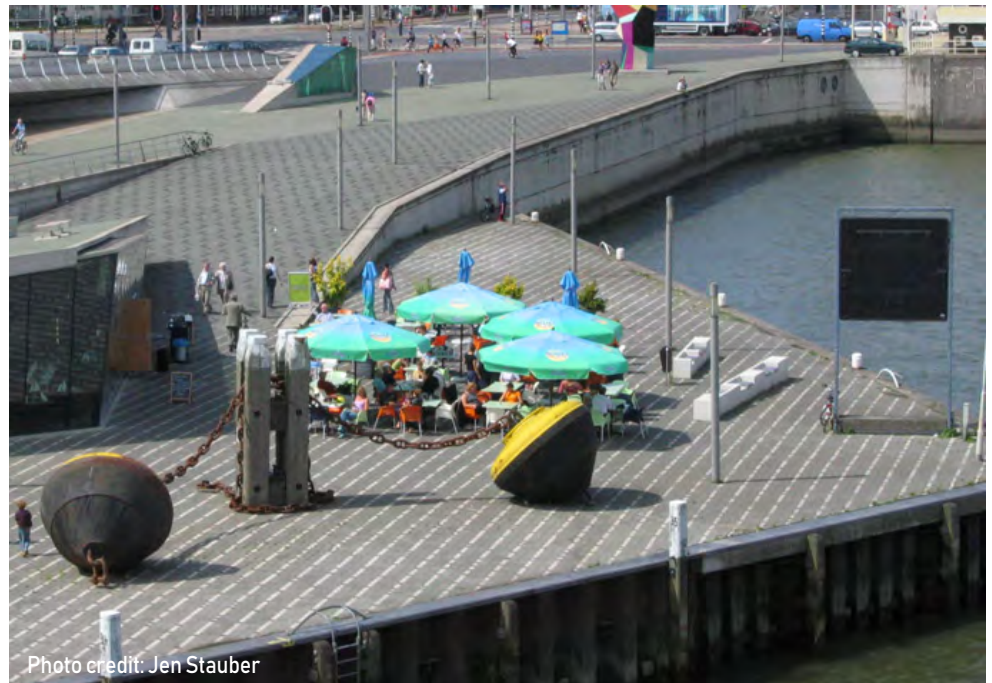


Photo credit: Jen Stauber

# HARBOR DISTRICT PUBLIC ART

Workshop participants mapped District landmarks / industrial artifacts, noted opportunities for new public spaces and located sites for public art (see map). The District is rich in industrial artifacts with gritty workplace imagery. It has several murals that speak to local economic and social history. These are the foundation of the brand.

## GUIDELINE:

Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the District's many industrial and transportation artifacts that give the District its authentic workplace identity.

Harbor District mural



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

## GUIDELINE:

Guideline: Integrate public art into public spaces / streetscapes. The public art should convey the brand message: **"Gritty. Green. Real."** Initiatives of varying scales should include environmental art, functioning art, art as a focal point in placemaking or art as an elemental detail. Temporary art installations are also encouraged.

## EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC ART

The Art of Lighting Celebrating the Industrial Environment (Duisburg)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Art as an Environment (3rd Ward)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

District's gritty industrial artifacts can be enhanced with the brand message (Brim, Australia)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Wetland Bridge Sculpture (Cranbrook, MI)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

Greened Bench (Columbus IN)



Photo credit: James Piwoni, AIA

# EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC ART

Gritty Focal Point (Chicago, IL)



Celebrating Life on the Green - Art that Activates (Chicago, IL)



Art as an Elemental Detail



Waterfront Temporary Art





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- BRANDING OPPORTUNITIES A-Z**
- A Hoan Bridge - Landmark Lighting
  - B Boat Launch - Key Public Place, Art
  - C RR Swing Bridge - Art, Bike Link, Lighting
  - D Gate 1 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - E Gate 2 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - F Gate 3 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - G Gate 4 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - H Gate 5 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - I Gate 6 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - J Gate 7 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - K Gate 8 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - L Retaining Wall - Graphic Art, Lighting
  - M Harbor/Riverwalk, Art, Lighting, Greening
  - N Gate 9 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - O Gate 10 - Signage, Lighting, Art, Greening
  - P Industrial Tower - Lighting, Art, Greening
  - Q Large Visible Roof - Signage, Graphics
  - R Silos - Mural, Lighting
  - S RR Swing Bridge - Art, Lighting
  - T Water Positioned Art / Lighting
  - U Tanks - Signage, Lighting, Art
  - V Silos - Mural, Lighting
  - W Large Visible Roof - Signage, Graphics
  - X Steam Stack - Signage, Lighting, Art
  - Y New Park - Greening, Lighting, Art, Boats
  - Z Bike Trails - Signage, Art, Lighting

**Brand Identity Deployment Key**

- First Street Spine
- Harbor Gates / Portal Spaces
- Harbor Walk / Riverwalk
- New Public Places
- ★ District Landmark
- ▲ Identified Public Art Sites
- Bike Trails
- New Wayfinding Signage



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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