

# Menomonee Valley Redevelopment and Community Park



## Landscape Performance Benefits

- Created public access to the Menomonee River and over 60 acres of park/open space in a area that had been off-limits to the public for 50+ years.
- Added 3 pedestrian/bicycle bridges and 7 miles of regional bike and pedestrian trails, linking greater Milwaukee and neighborhoods to the park, river, and valley.
- Increased developer yield (usable land) by 10-12% over conventional development by clustering development sites and consolidating stormwater management.
- Treats water quality and manages 100-year flood volumes for 100+ acre basin.
- Eliminates need for irrigation by using drought-tolerant native plants.
- Increased development site property values by 1,400% between 2002 and 2009.
- Added over \$1 million in annual City property tax revenues.
- Created 2,000 new jobs by 2006. Estimate 5,000 new jobs by 2015.
- Triggered the use of the Menomonee River Valley as an outdoor science laboratory, which receives 10,000 student visits annually.

### Overview

The plan creates a centralized park and shared stormwater treatment area as the centerpiece of a 140-acre light industrial redevelopment. The park creates over 60 acres of recreational space with revitalized landscape and habitat along the Menomonee River. The shared stormwater facility results in a higher development yield for individual property owners, allowing the City to remain extremely competitive when attracting businesses to the Valley.

### Sustainable Features

- The 140-acre brownfield was remediated, reducing public health risks, protecting the river's watershed, and making the site suitable for human use and redevelopment.
- Over 3,000 feet of the riverbank will be stabilized and restored, leading to larger habitat areas and a cleaner, healthier Menomonee River.
- Over 300,000 cubic yards of contaminated debris and soil was managed on site to create historic glacial features and native landscape communities of Southern Wisconsin.
- About 50,000 cubic yards of concrete (from demolition during the I-94 Interchange reconstruction) was crushed and recycled to create a stormwater infiltration gallery below the surface of treatment wetlands
- Local artists recycled glass from the Miller Brewing Company to create glass panels incorporated into drainage outfall structures.
- Picnic tables were built from wood salvaged from the former Milwaukee Stockyards; benches were made from excess sewer pipe that would have gone to a landfill.
- Over 500 native trees were added to the site. Most (70% of trees) were planted by local student,

### Designer

Wenk Associates, Inc.

### Land Use

Brownfield  
Park/Open space

### Project Type

Park  
Industrial park  
Stormwater management facility

### Location

3301 W Canal St Milwaukee, WI  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53214

### Size

140 acres

### Budget

\$40 million for development sites and remediation, \$9 million for stormwater park

### Completion Date

2006 (Phase I and II), construction ongoing

community and advocacy groups.

### **Challenge**

Milwaukee's Menomonee River Valley was decimated by economic recession. It went from a highly-productive industrial center to an area in ruins. Because the site was within the 100-year floodplain, the soil would not likely support building loads. Severe health risks and environmental contamination existed. The City needed to address environmental concerns while also creating jobs.

### **Solution**

The project team developed a unique fill management program that remediates contamination on site and raises the development sites out of the flood plain. The plan creates a park as the centerpiece of the new development. The park treats and manages stormwater runoff for the entire basin, while providing the community with access to the river, and use of nearly 60 acres of open space.

### **Cost Comparison**

- The park was constructed under financially challenging circumstances with zero capital from the City Parks Department. Grants and funders include:
- Wisconsin DNR
- US EPA Great Lakes Initiative
- Milwaukee Metro Sewerage District
- Menomonee Valley Business Partners

### **Lessons Learned**

- By seeking "multiple-benefit" solutions, the City was able to combine several large infrastructure projects (environmental remediation, development site preparation and Canal Street construction) and leverage costs in order to support projects that were mutually beneficial to the community and the environment: parks, open space and, environmental restoration.

### **Project Team**

Coming soon.

### **Role of the Landscape Architect**

Led a multi-disciplinary team of engineers, ecologists, and architects in the planning and design of the 140-acre park and industrial redevelopment.

### **References & Resources**

Wenk Associates: Menomonee  
Menomonee Valley Partners [»](#) [¿](#)  
EPA Region 5 Phoenix Award for Excellence in Brownfield Redevelopment, 2009  
ASLA Honor Award in Analysis & Planning, 2011 [»](#) [¿](#)  
ASLA Analysis and Planning Merit Award, 2003

Additional Images











