

# REVIVAL OF THE URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

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Millennials and boomers are looking for engaging living environments with amped up amenities and connectivity.

From local newsworthy projects to national industry coverage, one thing is clear—successful multifamily and mixed-use developments are creating a distinct sense of place to enhance and revitalize communities. Apartment complexes, whether in the heart of the city or active suburban communities, are being designed to enhance connectivity with the surrounding neighborhood through unit plans and amenities that attract Millennials, boomers and everyone in between.

Scan a collection of BizTimes headlines and readers will see a consistent theme throughout Milwaukee—*Huge multifamily development planned, Developer plans 76-unit apartment building, Another major development planned*, and the list goes on. Whether in the heart of the city or in thriving suburban areas, communities and developers are continuing to invest in creating unique living environments to appeal to a modern lifestyle. And no matter the location, an amped-up amenity offering may make all the difference as renters decide where to live.

## URBAN SOLUTIONS

Thoughtfully designed urban solutions are revitalizing historic structures, filling in blighted sites and creating stronger connections within urban corridors around Milwaukee. Mixed-use strategies have been and continue to be a strong solution for all of these site conditions, providing an opportunity to activate street level with retail to attract the surrounding community while providing residents with unique in-house amenities.

However, street-level townhouses with walk-ups or walk-out first-level flats have also been gaining momentum. These solutions appeal to those who want a true front-door, residential-neighborhood feel.



The Flatiron | Milwaukee, WI



State Street Station | Wauwatosa, WI

Green spaces are another key component of urban developments that impact leasing. More than the now-popular green roof, renters are looking for additional socialization space in landscaped courtyards, community gardens or small, private green spaces.

And, of course there is the issue of parking. Developers across the country are exploring and debating this issue due to the popularity of rideshare programs. A reduction in parking provides numerous design possibilities and opportunities, however the majority of residents, especially in the Milwaukee area, still desire a spot for their car. When flexibility

is designed into the structured parking, the area can be transitioned into additional revenue-generating space as the reliance on personal automobiles decreases.

## SUBURBAN SOLUTIONS

Despite being located in suburban areas, the desired aspects of urban solutions still apply. Many of Milwaukee's suburban communities, such as Wauwatosa and Cedarburg, have vibrant village centers. Just like the urban developments, projects in these active areas can be oriented to take advantage of street-level activity.

In growing suburban areas with new entertainment districts that feature apartments over retail, like Oak Creek, there is still the desire for more residentially scaled apartment complexes. In these new housing developments, corridors are replaced with activated green spaces. A centralized clubhouse offers similar amenities to what is being seen in more urban developments. The clubhouse offers a central hub with ample green space connecting residents to the amenity offering at the heart of the community.



Arrabelle Townhomes | Cedarburg, WI



State Street Station | Wauwatosa, WI

### AN EMPHASIS ON AMENITIES

The no-holds-barred amenities making competition fierce is evidenced in the March 12, 2019 Multifamily Executive article, *10 Award-Winning Projects Recognized for Their Unique Amenities*. From a glass-bottomed, saltwater pool that extends 15 feet off the edge of a condo tower near Honolulu and art-focused lobbies and gallery spaces in a project in Philadelphia to a Maker Space in a Seattle project, design and development teams are thinking big. The article highlights amenities such as designated food truck parking spots, a coffee shop/beer and wine bar and pet spa/park—relevant solutions that Milwaukee teams have and continue to contemplate.

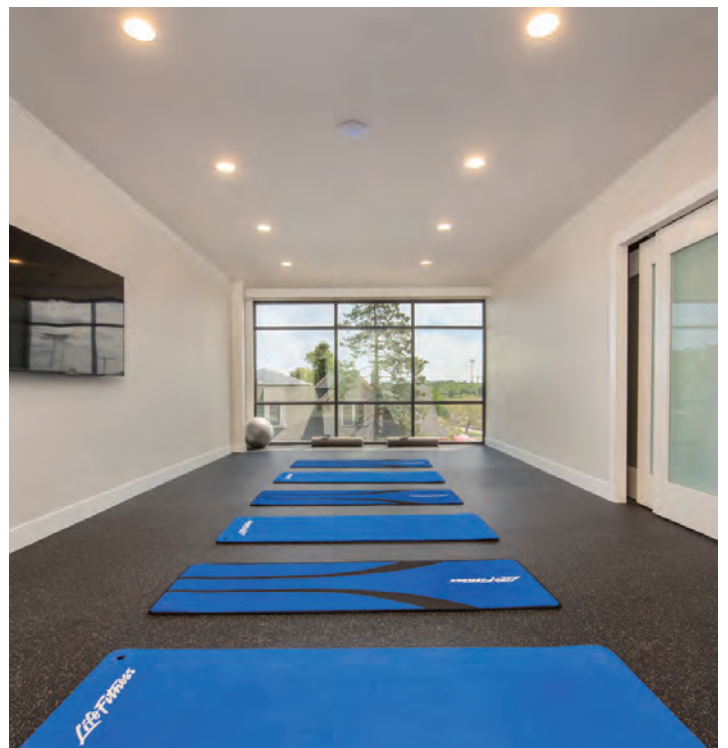
Innovations in office, retail and hospitality environments are driving changes in mixed-use/multifamily design that impact unit floor plans and public spaces. As the modern office continues to promote a culture that prioritizes work/life balance, there is a need for open work space in developments. Due to the proximity to Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin, State Street Station in Wauwatosa incorporated a work suite into the amenity package.

Trends in retail, such as the increase in online shopping, make secured package delivery solutions a priority. There are systems, like Parcel Pending, available to provide adequate delivery space while not increasing the demands on staff. And as seen

in numerous projects, hospitality-inspired lounges, game areas and bars have become an essential component of in-demand developments.

Whether an urban or suburban location, the competition is on in multifamily and mixed-use environments. Expectations are high and the modern renter is looking for the development that can deliver.

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State Street Station | Wauwatosa, WI

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The Village of Wauwatosa, WI