

## CHAPTER ONE: VISION

This chapter summarizes information collected and reported during Phase I of this planning process. This includes an overview of the City's context, assets and future opportunities, and community input during the planning process. All of this leads to the 2035 Vision, which is a representation of Brookfield's ideals for itself by the year 2035, and a future growth and preservation concept, which attempts to geographically represent the 2035 Vision.

The 2035 Vision statement—the central component of the 2035 Vision—includes nine principles for future City growth, change, and preservation. Each of the nine principles has its own chapter later in this Plan. Each of these chapters is designed to elaborate upon the principle and describe how it will be carried out to achieve the 2035 Vision.

The Community Vision Report, available on the City's website and through the Community Development Department, provides a more extensive presentation of the topics and ideas presented in this chapter.

### Brookfield's Position in the Region

Brookfield is centrally positioned in southeastern Wisconsin, which has historically been anchored by the City of Milwaukee. According to the Milwaukee 7 Economic Asset & Opportunity Analysis, the future of southeastern Wisconsin is increasingly linked with that of the Chicago-land area to its immediate south, and with broader regional trends in the Upper Midwest.

The economy of the Upper Midwest has historically been linked to its natural assets, including plentiful fresh water for shipping and consumption, great timber reserves to the north, and its position at the edge of America's breadbasket (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1: Midwest Natural Features

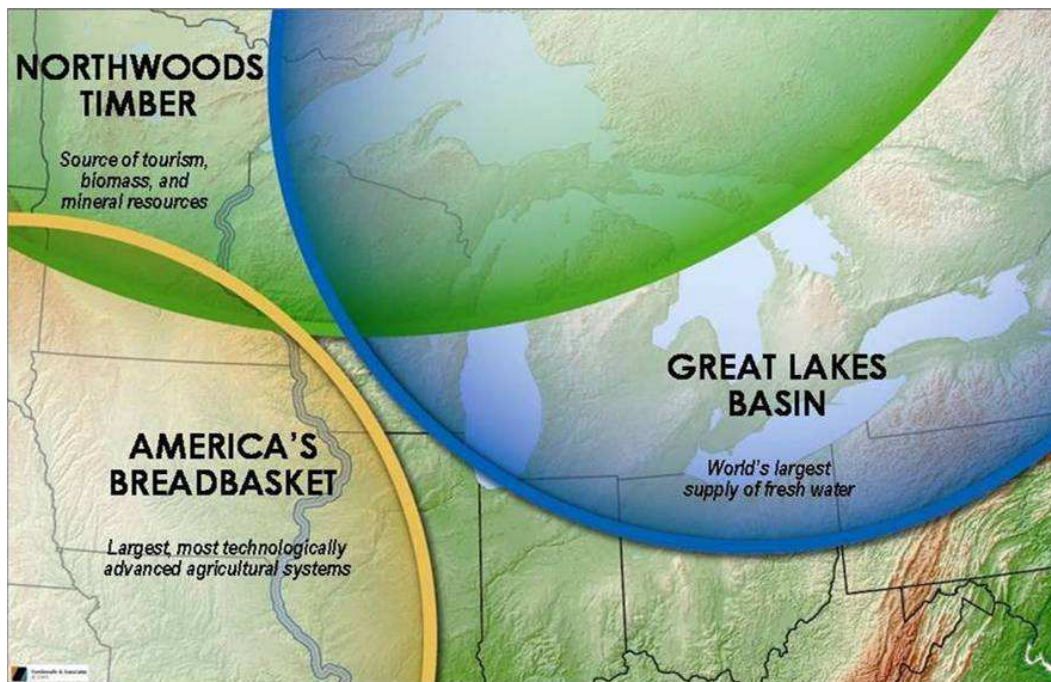
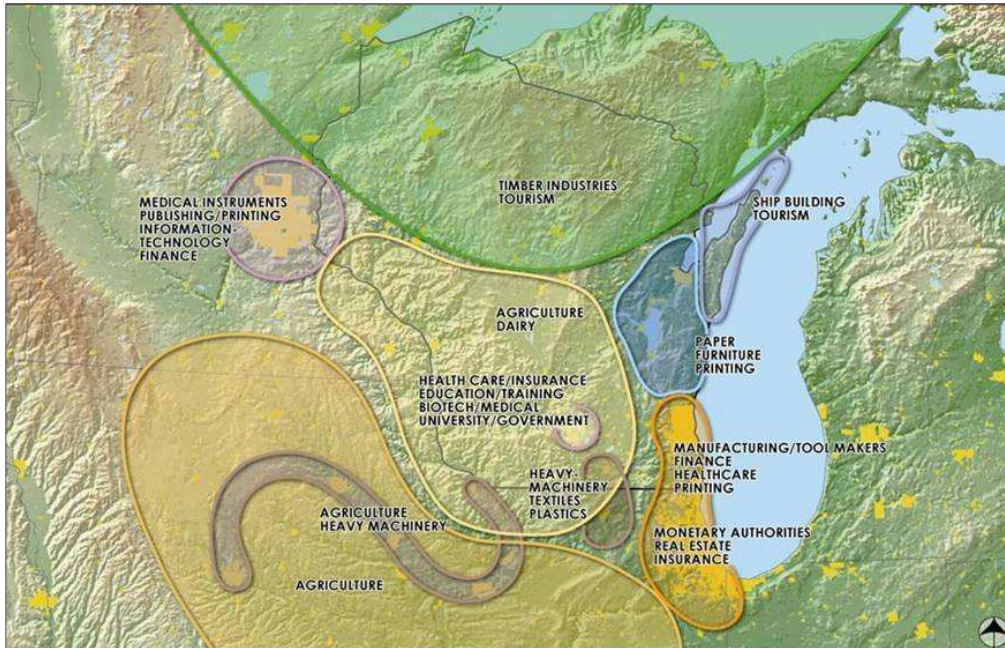


Figure 2: Regional Economic Drivers



Within the Upper Midwest, Chicago is the predominant economic center and the region's primary portal to the global economy. As the Chicago metropolis continues to grow, the connection

between Milwaukee, southeastern Wisconsin, and Chicago will continue to strengthen, as depicted in Figure 3: Regional Influences. The continued growth along Lake Michigan on both sides of the Wisconsin and Illinois border, enhanced transportation links including the planned widening of Interstate 94 and increased train service, and increased use of Milwaukee's General Mitchell International Airport as another major regional airport adds to the gradual unification of regional economies.

Brookfield's location provides relatively easy access to a market of over 20 million people, extending from Chicago to the Twin Cities. The Interstate and rail link connecting the Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, and Twin Cities' areas has been termed the "IQ Corridor," based on the interrelated opportunities of higher education, research, technology, and knowledge-based economic growth among these areas. Interstate improvements and high-speed, intercity passenger rail—with a stop in Brookfield—will enhance intercity access and the economic connections among places along the "IQ Corridor."

Zooming in a bit closer to home, Brookfield is ideally placed along the Interstate 94 corridor, just west of Milwaukee en route to Madison (see Figure 4). This section of Interstate 94 excels in advanced manufacturing; health care; financial, insurance, and real estate offices; bio-technology research and development; and higher education. Because the Milwaukee area cannot grow east, Brookfield will continue to become a central place in the region. This being said, Brookfield will be challenged in the future by the emergence of new communities along Interstate 94 corridor between Chicago and Milwaukee, where there is plentiful open land and perhaps even better transportation access, such as communities that have multiple access points to interstate highways and access to passenger rail. In addition, additional housing and economic development activities to the west of Brookfield will influence and challenge the City's status as a premier retail and housing center in the future.

### Figure 3: Regional Influences

Figure 4: Brookfield Area Influences

## **Brookfield's Community Profile**

Examining key demographic and economic indicators provides a baseline understanding of the City's current situation and its opportunities for the future. The data indicates that Brookfield is an economically robust and stable community with a number of key assets contributing to its strength. However, Brookfield's shifting demographic profile and changing position in the region indicate that the City also needs to consider new approaches and strategies to maintain success.

Key economic and demographic indicators for the City are as follows:

- In 2000, per the U.S. Census, Brookfield's population was 38,649, which represented an increase of 3,500 persons from 1990. The Wisconsin Department of Administration estimates that the City's 2008 population was 39,780.
- According to City-assembled data, Brookfield was home to 39,883 jobs in 2007—greater than the City's resident population total and indicative of the fact that Brookfield is a full-service community and regional destination for jobs and shopping. The City has an estimated daytime population of 80,000, double its overnight population.
- According to data from ESRI—a digital geographic data source—most of these jobs are either in retail or service sectors, including professional services (office workers). Less than 10% of Brookfield's employment is in the manufacturing sector, which is low compared to the southeastern Wisconsin region as a whole.
- Again per ESRI, the 2008 median household income in Brookfield was approximately \$98,000 per year, making the City one of Wisconsin's highest income communities. Household income has grown steadily from the 2000 median of \$76,000, per the U.S. Census.
- Brookfield's homes are significantly above average in value compared to the region as a whole. According to the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau), the median value of owner-occupied homes in the City was \$292,700 in 2007.
- Housing in Brookfield is predominantly owner-occupied and in single-family homes. Per the 2000 Census, approximately 88% of Brookfield's housing was owner-occupied and 85% of the City's housing units were single-family, detached structures.
- Brookfield's population is somewhat older than the average in southeastern Wisconsin. The City's estimated median age in 2008 is 46 (ESRI), compared to 42 in 2000 (Census). In 2008, over 1/3 of the City's population was aged 55 and older, with the number of Brookfield residents in that age group expected to increase by about 1,300 by 2013 (ESRI). This large and growing number of older people reflects the fact that the Baby Boom generation is transitioning into retirement and empty-nester households. This transition will have profound implications for Brookfield and will require new approaches to housing, community services, transportation, and economic development.
- Educational attainment among Brookfield's adult population is very high. Per the 2000 Census, 94% of Brookfield's adult population had a high school diploma and 50% had a bachelor's degree or higher. In comparison, 22% of adults statewide had a bachelor's degree in 2000.
- Brookfield is fiscally strong, one of the few Wisconsin municipalities with a AAA bond rating. The City has a healthy balance of residential and commercial property, and a total equalized property value of approximately \$6.5 billion, making it the fourth highest valued community in Wisconsin. This is particularly significant given the fact that Brookfield is ranked 17th in 2009 in the state in population.

Overall, the data on Brookfield's economic and demographic conditions shows that it is a stable, affluent community with modest population growth and residents who tend to be older and well-



educated. The City's businesses employ a large number of people, mainly in office, commercial service, and retail jobs. While office employment provides a good match to the resident workforce profile, the aging and higher-income Brookfield population suggests that at least some employees in the City's stores, restaurants, and other service industry establishments come from outside of the City. This assertion is supported by data from the Metropolitan Builders Association which used information from Milwaukee 7, U.S. Census Bureau, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and Waukesha County. The Builders Association study asserts that there is an undersupply of housing units valued at less than \$200,000, given household incomes. Also, there may be a shortage of housing available in the County in price ranges that match certain jobs, particularly in the retail, service, and entertainment sectors.

Appendix A, available upon request, includes a more detailed analysis of existing conditions, including demographics and trends in the City of Brookfield.

## Overview of Community Input

Community input is a primary ingredient in the creation of a future vision for a community. Numerous public information activities and events afforded Brookfield residents and other stakeholders the opportunity to express their opinions about the future vision and priorities for the City. Activities and events included focus groups, interviews, workshops, a community survey, and open houses at the local Farmers' Market and the annual National Night Out. The Comprehensive Plan Task Force also served as a critical source and conduit for public input throughout the process. No one source of input was used to shape the recommendations in this Plan.



*Public participation event*

The following points summarize common community attitudes for future growth and change as expressed through the various public information gathering efforts undertaken during Phase I and Phase II:

- Work to keep the schools strong, the community safe, and property taxes manageable
- Continue to cultivate Brookfield as a place for families.
- Preserve and enhance Brookfield's community character and work to maintain the City's high quality built and natural environment.
- Increase bicycle and pedestrian access in the City; particularly with path connections for schools, neighborhoods, and community and cultural facilities.
- Continue to preserve open space in the City through implementation of the greenway and park network.



*Farmers' Market Open House*

- Encourage some additional market rate housing options to appeal, including seniors and young professionals, without compromising Brookfield's essential character.
- Increase linkages between the City and educational facilities, by preparing today's students for tomorrow's occupations and expanding opportunities for lifelong learning.
- Identify a unique approach for sustainability in Brookfield, which is addressed in Chapter Eight: Special Places.
- Work to establish a cooperative relationship with the Town of Brookfield, particularly as related to the future of the Bluemound Road corridor and long-term boundaries.
- Increase communication between residents and elected officials, and the accessibility of local government to the people.

Appendices to both the Community Vision Report and this Comprehensive Plan include much more extensive results and analyses of public input events.

### Challenges for the Plan to Address

Based on professional analysis and community input, broad trends for the nation, region, and area that affect Brookfield and its planning are highlighted below:

- **Safety.** Concerns about personal and traffic safety will grow, so the City's actions should help keep Brookfield a safe place.
- **Regionalism.** In an era of diminishing resources and global competition among regions, Brookfield will need to collaborate with its neighbors and fulfill a productive and central role in the region.
- **Demographics.** The large and aging generation of "boomers" will result in new housing, service, and transportation needs; and create the potential for both future entrepreneurs/mentors and a labor shortage.
- **Energy efficiency.** In an era of volatile energy costs and supplies, communities that are well positioned for energy-efficient operations and lifestyles will be the most successful.
- **Managing water.** Increasingly; communities are recognizing the challenges associated with managing water, for example, to ensure plentiful, clean supplies and to minimize flooding.
- **Transportation.** The growing elderly population, employer and workforce needs, increasing traffic congestion, and volatile fuel costs suggest the need for more transportation options, in addition to enhancing access and mobility.
- **Green space and urbanization.** In the face of growing development pressure and increased centrality in the region, communities like Brookfield need to decide on the best approaches for green space preservation, development placement, and added density.

### Summary of Brookfield's Assets and Future Opportunities

Brookfield is an established, nearly built-out, mature "edge city" that is neither a first-ring interior suburb nor an outer-ring bedroom community. Brookfield has a reputation as an affluent residential community, with shopping focused along Bluemound Road. However, that is only part of Brookfield's story. What is surprising to some is that Brookfield's daytime population doubles its overnight resident population, indicating that the City is a significant employment and shopping destination for residents of other parts of the region.



*City of Brookfield entryway signage on Moorland Road*

Based on public input and research, Brookfield's unique assets are presented in Figure 4. Figure 4 also suggests Brookfield's future opportunities via a presentation of the current influences on the community from within and near its borders.

Even as a mostly "built out" community, it is evident that Brookfield will change between now and 2035.

Capturing the City's future opportunities and addressing challenges

increases Brookfield's chance to positively shape this inevitable change. Brookfield is fortunate to have a number of opportunities to maintain and enhance the community in the face of a changing world. Brookfield's key opportunities are summarized as follows:

- Leveraging the experience, skills, and innovative potential of Brookfield's "boomer" population to promote entrepreneurship and mentorship in the City.
- Continuing to evolve as a regional center of jobs, shopping, culture and entertainment, given that with the Milwaukee region's continued growth to the west, Brookfield increasingly becomes a center and a destination rather than a satellite community.
- Repositioning aging retail areas as dynamic mixed-use districts, in the face of shifts in the national retail market that place an increasing focus on creating "experiences", aging buildings and retail formats, and competing centers in the region.
- Repositioning of business centers as the nature of corporate office location decisions and the conduct of office operations has and will continue to evolve in some cases into non-traditional forms (e.g., shared office uses, mixed use campuses, consolidated information technology centers, satellite offices versus traditional regional centers).
- Improving transportation access to maintain Brookfield's primacy in this area, meet the needs of a growing metro area, and respond to global economic shifts.
- Linking housing choices more closely to workforce and evolving community needs, without compromising Brookfield's character as a City of mostly single family, owner-occupied neighborhoods
- Increasing educational opportunities for children and adults, through collaborations with local and regional educational providers.
- Maintaining valued open space while also promoting redevelopment and reinvention of developed places in the City.

## **2035 Vision Statement**

The centerpiece of Phase I of the planning process was a 2035 Vision, communicated through the Community Vision Report. Brookfield's 2035 Vision has presented, described, illustrated, and quantified through a number of different approaches, which include a vision statement, illustrations, impact statistics, and detailed descriptions and comparisons to other possible futures for Brookfield. This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on the 2035 Vision statement—a short expression of Brookfield in the year 2035 and nine guiding principles.



Before describing the substance of Brookfield's 2035 Vision, it is useful to briefly review that the 2035 Vision can be understood as:

- A presentation of how the City should look and feel by the year 2035.
- An inspirational and positive view of Brookfield's future that allows the community to "stretch" and explore its opportunities.
- A platform for the City to take advantage of its place-based assets; emerging local, regional, national, and global trends; and the opportunities those assets and trends form.
- A broad framework around which to build more detailed strategies and plans, including this Comprehensive Plan.

The vision statement, illustrated in Figure 5, is a beacon for community growth and change over the next 25 years. Simply stated, Brookfield's 2035 Vision is:

**Located in the heart of Southeastern Wisconsin, the City of Brookfield is a community of choice for families and businesses and a premier sustainable place to live, work, shop, and play.**

The Vision is elaborated through nine guiding principles, which form the basis for the organization of the remainder of this Plan and a tool for evaluation of community performance against the Plan.

In many ways, the 2035 Vision reflects and advances the City's 2020 Vision, which was central to its 2020 Master Plan. This includes an emphasis on maintaining a balanced community. The 2035 Vision does, however, represent an evolution of the 2020 Vision by embracing emerging trends and issues, including an emphasis on sustainability and regionalism.

## Future Growth and Preservation Concept

Figure 6 represents aspects of the City's vision that have a geographic reference, and that provide a second basic construct for the remainder of this Plan and for community development in general. Brookfield's residential neighborhoods, Targeted Investment Areas, and Greenway network are the three most prominent features on this map.

- **Neighborhoods.** Brookfield's existing, predominantly single family neighborhoods are places where very little land use change is envisioned or desired. Traffic calming techniques are identified in the City's policy and can be used as necessary to minimize cut-through traffic and address traffic speed. Greenway trail connections will connect neighborhoods to each other and key destinations. The focus in established neighborhoods, such as on Brookfield's east side, will be on home modernization for the next generation. Public safety will be emphasized throughout. See Chapter Three: Housing and Neighborhoods for more detail.



*Brookfield's single family homes characterize the landscape*

- **Targeted Investment Areas (TIAs).** The City will continue to support the use of TIAs, not only as an organizing planning principle, but as a practical tool to focus new investment. Specifically, land use change will be focused in Brookfield's TIAs, often in the form of mixed use development. This will generate vitality and value within the TIAs, nearby neighborhoods, and the City as a whole—particularly as current buildings age and market demands shift. Future development types, density, form, pace, and services will not be identical across the TIAs—see Chapter Eight: Special Places for more detail. Also, the recently adopted South Gateway Neighborhood Plan identifies a "Future Study Area" over the Carpenter Road neighborhood and recommends further study to address possible impacts of a future redevelopment of the Moorland Road and I-94 interchange by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. See that plan for details.

In addition, the City recognizes that future development types and formats may evolve, and the City's TIA plans will therefore need to remain flexible to remain responsive to social, economic, and design viability.

- **Greenways.** The City will complete its greenways network for the multiple recreational, stormwater management, flood control, and neighborhood and community enhancement purposes it serves. Trail linkages within the greenways will be completed for both recreation and transportation purposes, leading to a more healthy and sustainable community. See Chapter Five: Natural Resources and Recreation for more detail.



*Greenway trail in Mitchell Park*

**FIGURE 5: BROOKFIELD VISION STATEMENT**

**FIGURE 6: BROOKFIELD’S FUTURE GROWTH AND PRESERVATION CONCEPT**