



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

RIVERWORKS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



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As of December 31, 2019

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RIVERWORKS

MISSION Riverworks Development Corporation (RDC) drives social and economic development by aligning residents and businesses with specialized resources that strengthen Harambee, Riverwest, and surrounding communities.

VISION Riverworks Development Corporation envisions a vibrant and diverse community of residents, businesses, and stakeholders who jointly create and maintain a prosperous neighborhood and quality of life.

CONTENTS

Financial Empowerment	p. 3-4
Neighborhood Development	p. 5
Creative Placemaking	p. 6
Workforce Development	p. 7-8
Business Development	p. 9-10
Real Estate Development	p. 11
Staff	p. 12
Supporters	p. 13
Financials	p. 14



Message from the Executive Director

As I look back to 2019 from our current realities, it seems long ago. Many things have changed-- the urgent needs in our community brought on by COVID-19, and the overflow of anger, sadness, and indignation due to the murder of George Floyd and so many other needless tragedies.

At the same time, many things have remained the same. Our three-year strategic plan was completed in 2019 much to the credit of our board and staff who put in countless hours to carve out the near future for our organization. Despite the “new normal”, our plan stands strong and, if anything, has been expedited and exacerbated by the realities of 2020. Increasing the capacity of our Financial Clinic services, strengthening our workforce initiatives; building on our successes in helping families stay in their homes and prepare for homeownership; providing safe, healthy experiences that build our community through the Beerline Trail; and helping small businesses thrive, are all extremely timely and ambitious for Riverworks Development Corporation.

In 2019, Riverworks Development Corporation continued to closely align our programs and initiatives with those of the Harambee Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) and Riverworks Business Improvement District (BID). While these entities have their own boards of directors and missions, they “live” at Riverworks and we all benefit from shared resources and collaborative projects.

At the end of the day, Riverworks strives to respond to the evolving needs and changes in the Harambee and Riverwest communities— the 53212 zip code — as well as provide visionary, catalytic leadership to move us forward together, connecting our neighborhoods to city, regional and national resources and networks that will enable us to achieve our potential.

Thank you to all of the residents, donors, businesses, employees, and partners who make it possible for Riverworks to achieve its mission. I truly appreciate your support.

Darryl Johnson
Executive Director

Message from the Board President

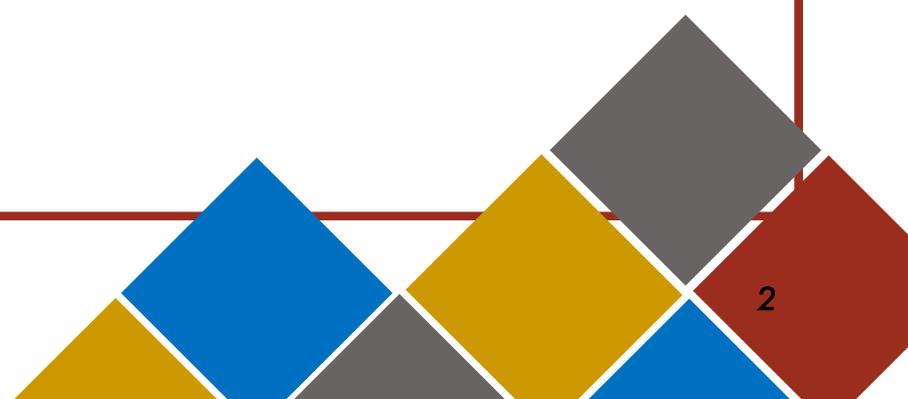
Here at Riverworks Development Corporation, we continue on our journey towards sustainability and better serving the Harambee & Riverwest neighborhoods. Our focus on providing quality and extensive services to our various stakeholders continues to become targeted in meeting the ever-growing aspects being asked today of an organization like us.

In 2019, the board and staff finished putting together our strategic plan for the next three years that will help us to evolve into a more comprehensive and integrated entity going forward. Working with the Riverworks Business Improvement District (BID) #25 and the Harambee Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) #7, we continue to develop the foundation springboard to help us to make this evolution required by our stakeholders to better serve our neighborhoods.

On behalf of the board and staff, I would like to thank you for your support and your commitment to the work we do to make our efforts have a positive impact.

Come join us on our journey!

Steve Adams
Board President



FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT

The Financial Clinic helps clients build wealth and achieve life goals.

The **Riverworks** Financial Clinic spurs personal and community transformation through financial empowerment; this is achieved by providing client-centered, customized coaching and services which enable clients to plan and manage their own financial future. The Financial Clinic is open to all Milwaukee residents, with special emphasis on Riverworks' surrounding neighborhoods: Harambee & Riverwest. Client results include reduced debt, increased income and net worth, rising credit scores, ability to secure loan products for home purchase, education, businesses, and other life goals. The Financial Clinic is a part of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation's (LISC's) national network of Financial Opportunity Centers.

In 2019, the Financial Clinic helped 600 residents file tax returns through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, resulting in \$663,333 payments to clients.



Executive Director Darryl Johnson with VITA volunteers

"Riverworks' tax preparers always went and beyond to assist me with my concerns, especially when I was under the impression that I owed the IRS over \$20,000. I had just purchased a home and I was so scared that the IRS would take my house away, or place a lien on it. Today, I received a refund check in the mail—I cried! I thank Riverworks for all they have done for me and my family."

- Financial Clinic VITA Client

The Clinic also launched year-round tax support for clients with ongoing needs. With the partnership of several financial institutions, the Financial Clinic offered an extensive series of workshops at THE VIBE, which included Homebuying 101, Building Credit, Establishing Relationships with Financial Institutions, and Budgeting, to name a few. In addition to referrals to Riverworks' own employment and small business development programs, the Financial Clinic strengthened its referrals to organizations and programs that specialize in affordable housing, educational advancement, child support diligences, unpaid back taxes, AODA services, public benefits, and City/Grant funds.



VITA Volunteer helping a client file his taxes



Participants learn money-saving techniques at a couponing workshop

110

Financial Clinic
Face to Face
Coaching Sessions

7

Financial Clinic Clients
Received Pre-approvals
for Purchasing Homes

11

Financial Clinic Clients
Closed on Personal /
Business Loans

77

Financial Clinic Clients
Increased Their
Credit Scores

Neighborhood Development

Riverworks mobilizes residents for home improvement, safety, and neighborhood beautification.

Riverworks helps residents to create a vibrant community that reflects the culture and values of the Harambee and Riverwest neighborhoods. Through our neighborhood development initiatives, residents can connect with each other and address their most critical concerns whether it's safety, home rehabilitation, or simply getting more involved in the community. This work is done in close partnership with the Harambee Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) #7 and its resident-led board of directors. Neighborhood Development initiatives are driven by a combination of resident feedback and a data-driven understanding of neighborhood conditions.

Safety & Beautification - In 2019, the Keefe Avenue Safety Task Force, a resident-led collaboration, improved vacant lots along Keefe Avenue as part of the "Love Your Block" program. Riverworks hosted a collaborative 53212 Town Hall meeting with alders Nic Kovac and Milele Coggs, along with many individuals working for the City of Milwaukee. Staff also facilitated the Riverwest Safety Series to educate residents about resources including the Milwaukee Police District Bike Theft Reduction Program, e-Notify, MKE Mobile, "When to call 911", and Renter's Rights. In all, more than 1000 residents participated in neighborhood clean ups, community meetings and events, and door to door canvassing throughout the year.

\$417K

Public Dollars
Leveraged

12

Roofs Repaired

22

Home Rehab
Projects Completed

1,000

Residents Engaged

Housing - In 2019, we also implemented our bi-annual housing surveys, and used this data to target and match resources to homeowners and to hold absentee landlords accountable for poor property conditions. The Harambee Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) #7 funded 12 roofing projects totaling \$127,000 in grants. We also leveraged the City of Milwaukee's Compliance Loan Program, Strong Homes Loan, and Targeted Investment Neighborhood (TIN). In total, 22 home rehab projects were completed with \$417,000 invested. Additionally, Riverworks was selected by the City of Milwaukee to administer the new "Anti-Displacement Fund" program, which offers compensation for long-term tenants affected by rising home values in specific areas of the city.

Creative Placemaking

As a vibrant public space, the Beerline Trail has become a symbol of access and equity.

Riverworks is the lead community-based agency driving the transformation of the Beerline Trail, a formerly underutilized railroad right-of-way that crosses through Harambee and Riverwest. In 2014, Riverworks and the Greater Milwaukee Committee (GMC), teamed up with the City of Milwaukee, the Harambee Great Neighborhood Initiative, MKE<->LAX, and other cultural and community leadership, with the goal of spurring economic growth and neighborhood connection through art and green space.

In 2019, Riverworks expanded its partnerships with arts organizations and neighbors, engaged and assisted new entrepreneurs and artists, and created many opportunities for community celebration and recreation along the trail. The trail was alive with Art Days, Food Truck Fridays, Friday Flicks, 53212 Marketplace showcases featuring “makers” and artists, and the first annual Music on the Beerline event.

“Riverworks is a wealth of resources and knowledge to help individuals from all walks of life. I, myself have gone to Riverworks and have inquired about finances, home repair, and information on how to possibly improve my life and the neighborhood I live in. So, thank you Riverworks!”

- Josephine, Harambee Resident

Photos from top to bottom: pallet-furniture created during 2019 Art Days events; True Skool artist spray painting during 2019 Art Days events; DJ Nu Stylez mixing beats at the 2019 Music on the BLT event; volunteers during 2019 Love Your Block project; youth community member painting during 2019 Music on the BLT event.



Workforce Development

Riverworks connects residents to jobs, and businesses to employees

Riverworks' Workforce Development helps community members obtain long-term jobs with sustainable income, while connecting Milwaukee businesses with qualified candidates.

In 2019, the Neighborhood Ambassador Program (NAP) employed young adults from the community to clean up litter and debris from five Business Improvement Districts throughout the City of Milwaukee. With support from the Financial Clinic, NAP participants were given financial coaching and job-readiness training including job application preparedness, resume building, tips for interviews, and conflict resolution. They met potential employers, attended job fairs, and were connected to local job opportunities that fit their career goals.

Social Enterprises offer job opportunities through Riverworks Cleans and Riverworks Coin Laundry.

RIVERWORKS COIN LAUNDRY

Located at 3334 N Holton Street, Riverworks Coin Laundry offers a variety of high-efficiency washers and dryers at affordable rates and pick-up and drop-off laundry services for local businesses.

In 2019, Riverworks partnered with the Milwaukee Office of Early Childhood Initiatives to open Milwaukee's first laundromat mini-library. The goal of the mini-library is to promote early childhood development through reading and learning during day-to-day activities. At the mini-library, children are not only encouraged to read while their parents are doing laundry, but are also welcome to bring books home to stock their own personal libraries.

Photos from top to bottom: NAP participant picking up litter; City of Milwaukee "No Dumping" sign in front of a massive illegal dump site; mother and son at Riverworks Coin Laundry mini-library; Riverworks Cleans yellow work truck for cleaning up vacant lots; inside Riverworks Coin Laundry; NAP participant cleaning up the street in a Business Improvement District.

RIVERWORKS CLEANS

Riverworks Cleans offers employment opportunities while improving Milwaukee neighborhoods and properties. Through contracts with Business Improvement Districts and the City of Milwaukee, the crew maintains commercial districts through clean-up of illegal dumping, trash and graffiti removal, landscaping, painting, snow removal, and other projects.

In 2019, Riverworks Cleans worked the following Business Improvement Districts: Brady Street, Oakland Avenue, Eastside, Riverworks, Havenwoods, and Downer Avenue. Riverworks Cleans serviced 1,750 city-owned properties and removed 7,154 cubic yards of trash and debris.

388

Cubic Yards of Litter Collected

685

Street Trash Cans Emptied

229

Shopping Carts Returned

13

Building Tags (Graffiti) Removed

18

Illegal Dumps Located

76

Cubic Yards Removed From Illegal Dumps

380

Average Weekly Coin Laundry Customers



Business Development

Riverworks helps small businesses thrive.

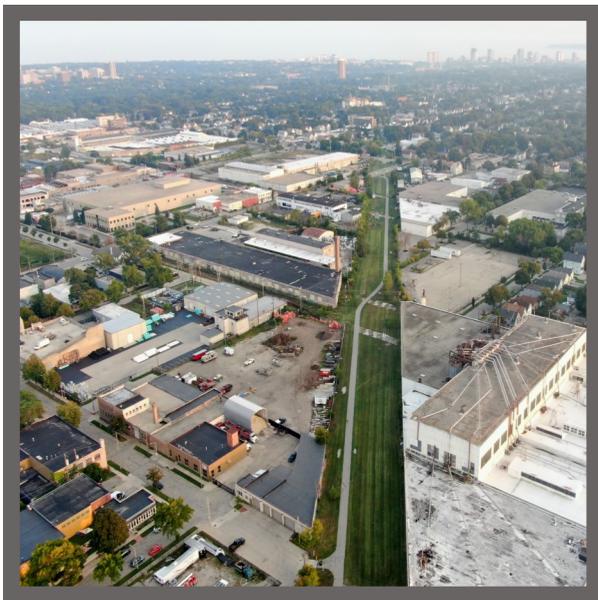
Riverworks connects local businesses to services, events, and real estate opportunities. Services available to businesses include property beautification and security, business promotion, business planning, expansion and relocation and linking employers to job pools of local residents.

In 2019, Riverworks supported the East Capitol Drive Safety Network (ECDSN) which connects Milwaukee Police Department officers with Capitol Drive businesses, serving as community liaisons and increasing communication and collaboration amongst the surrounding businesses.

Riverworks also established a Women's Entrepreneurial Network, WE 53212. More than fifty women-owned businesses gather to network and learn from speakers on a variety of topics.



Residents and business owners on a walking tour of the Riverworks BID



Drone photo of the Beerline Trail between the intersection of Richards & Keefe and Capitol.

In partnership with the Riverworks Business Improvement District (BID) #25, we reached out to over 200 existing businesses, entrepreneurs and property owners, and distributed resources available through Riverworks and other agencies. The BID has seen tremendous growth over the past year, seeing a 3% increase in overall property values, and over \$80,000 leveraged from City of Milwaukee and BID grants to invest in districts properties.

THE VIBE

THE VIBE is Riverworks' dynamic co-working office & event space for entrepreneurs, businesses, and community groups. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC), and U.S. Bank provide resources and workshops for residents looking to potentially start a new business and for existing businesses looking to grow and network.

In 2019, THE VIBE hosted 42 business & community events including: Riverwest 24, Milwaukee Urban Leagues' Biz Night, The Business Council holiday party, the Riverwest Co-Op Grocery & Cafe annual retreat, and NEWaukee's Empty Storefronts Conference, to name a few. THE VIBE had a total of 26 unique Members in 2019, ranging from a food truck entrepreneur to an aquaponics business.

"I have been a member of THE VIBE co-working office space at Riverworks since it opened around mid-2018. I joined THE VIBE by renting an office space to run my mortgage lending business, and I have always felt welcome and at home amongst the staff and other members. Likewise, I have found the energy and support of Riverworks to be positive and uplifting!"

- Bernard, THE VIBE Member & Renter



2019 53212 City Hall Meeting in THE VIBE

Real Estate Development

Riverworks spurs catalytic projects that drive neighborhood revitalization

Riverworks aims to transform the physical environment in Harambee and Riverwest to activate blighted and vacant properties and develop its own commercial and residential properties. As of 2019, Riverworks' real estate holdings include:

Riverworks City Center, located at 518-526 East Concordia Avenue, is a 2.5 million dollar development and is home to Riverworks Development Corporation, Riverworks Business Improvement District, and Harambee Neighborhood Improvement District. The project also includes Riverworks Coin Laundry, located at 3334 North Holton Street, two additional commercial spaces, and the Beerline Trail Plaza for events.

Riverworks Lofts, located at 3372 N Holton Street, offers one to two bedroom loft-style apartments at an affordable price.

Riverworks Commons, located at 3901-3925 North Richards Street, is a 2.3 million dollar commercial development which offers 21,000 square feet of retail space.

In 2019, Riverworks focused much of our real estate development energy on the section of the Beerline Trail that is directly behind the Riverworks City Center. With an entire summer busy with event programming on the Beerline Trail Plaza, we started to connect with designers and architects to improve the space's functionality. Without spoiling it too much, we are excited to roll out plans for further enhancing that space in 2020!



Photos from top to bottom: Riverworks Coin Laundry from outside; Riverworks Development Corporation Offices' front door; Riverworks City Center grand opening in 2018

2019 STAFF

Executive Director

Darryl Johnson

Administrative

Debbie Powers

Dessie Patrick

Financial Clinic

Coretta Herring

Shameka Moore

Neighborhood Development

Amber Ascher

Amy Rohan

Ruth Weill

Creative Placemaking

Rosalynn Wolfe

Business Improvement

Kate Bartlett

Temo Rodriguez

Cleans Crew

John Cervantes

Antoine Bonner

Andre Hall

Derrick Hall

Deantae Richmond

Kevin White

Cornelius Wickliffe

Coin Laundry

Shaunta Gibbs

Nicole Marshall

Ricky Williams



Your Support Goes a Long Way!

Shout Out to Our
2019 Donors!

Riverworks Development Corporation thanks our generous donors for supporting the work that we do! Any and every gift counts, no matter the size, to help us achieve our mission of offering residents and businesses resources for social and economic development.



Nonprofit Management Fund
Greater Milwaukee Committee
WHEDA
Groundwork Milwaukee

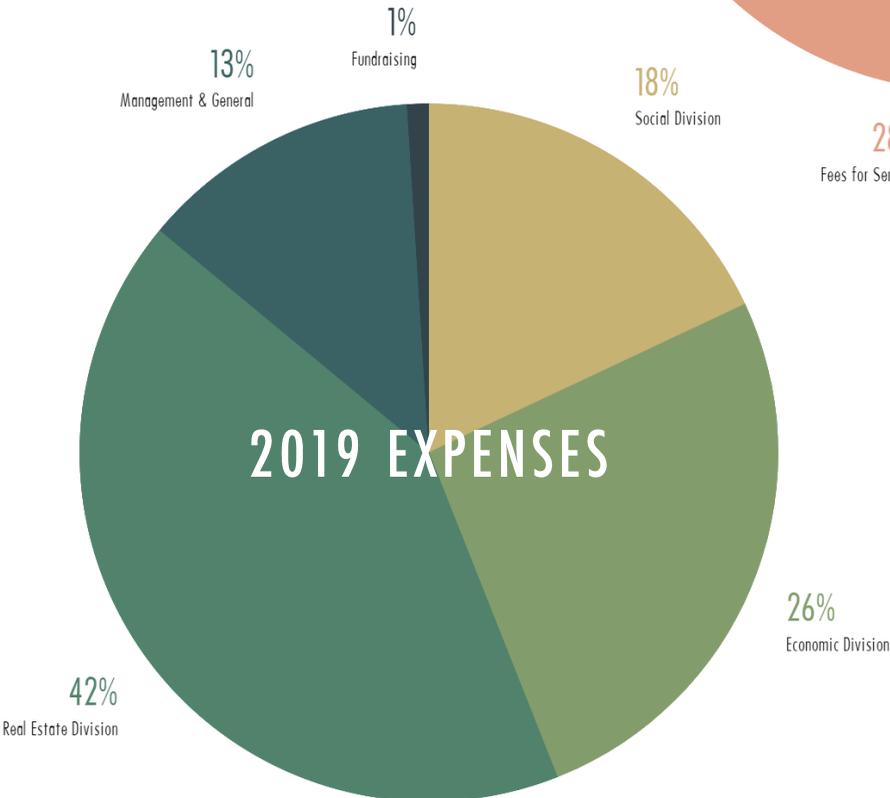
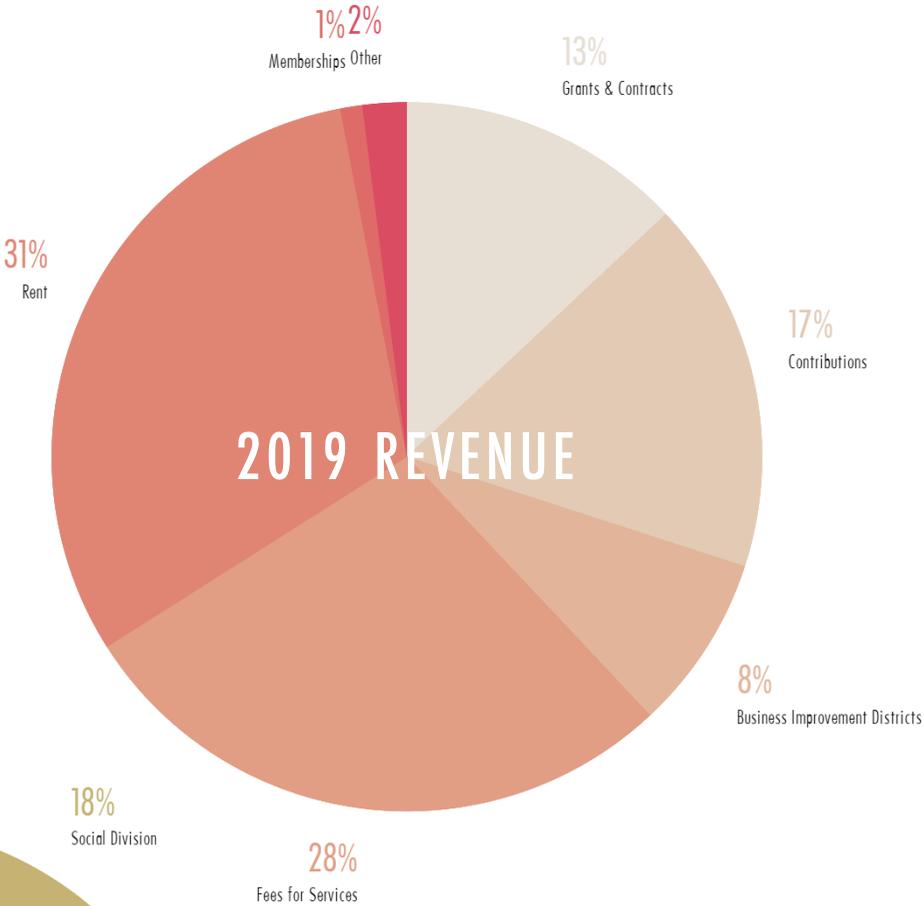
Internal Revenue Service
Green Bay Packers Foundation
Freddie Mac
Chase Bank

Amelia Hock
Anonymous
Ari Kim
Cindy Muhar
Debbie Powers
Diversatek
Donald Sargent
Dwight Williamson
Eaton's Asphalt Service Inc.
Garrett Taylor
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Molly Nilssen
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Outpost Natural Foods
Ric Rowley
Shawnta Eaton-Leschig
Steve Adams
Telemachus Rafaelidys
Tory Kress
Yuvraj Food Mart, Inc.

2019 FINANCIAL REPORT



For more information about Riverworks' finances, contact Executive Director, Darryl Johnson, at 414-906-9650.



Photos from left to right: Performers from 2020 Music on the Beerline Trail event; Food truck vendor at 2020 Food Truck Fridays event; Medalists from 2020 Beerline Trail 5K event.



RIVERWORKS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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