

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Milwaukee BikeShare Demonstration Project*

- **Year Complete:** 2014
- **Local Government:** City of Milwaukee, WI
- **Local Foundation:** The Brico Fund

Project Purpose

To demonstrate how the City, funders, the business community and community-at-large can partner together to identify, fund, and implement sustainability strategies.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.

“Public/Private Partnerships” is a term often aspired towards but not often realized. With now dozens of partners and broad financial support from many organizations, the Milwaukee bike share system epitomizes the best of a public/private partnership. The public/private partnership is a tactic often employed by City of Milwaukee officials. The biggest successes as a city are built on these relationships. Another important tactic is gaining quick wins in order to demonstrate competence and capacity for larger grants and projects. Having a tangible, successful project to point to leads to future, larger funding opportunities that will expand current programs and/or pilot projects.

Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).

Relationships need to be based on mutual trust and respect born out of successful implementation of municipal sustainability projects. This takes time and effort on both parties. Sustainability directors need to be able to demonstrate a capacity to implement grants and achieve or exceed stated goals/outcomes. It is also imperative the local foundation and the sustainability director have mutually beneficial goals and an alignment of visions around community sustainability.

Additional Information and Resources

The City of Milwaukee and Midwest Bike Share introduced public bike sharing in 2013 to provide Milwaukee area residents and visitors with another option for getting around Milwaukee. Public bike share offers residents and visitors an easy, efficient, inexpensive and quick travel option for short trips by providing ready access to a bike without having to worry about storage or maintenance.

Today, it is a thriving program with 87 stations and over 3,000 members. More information on the program and its benefits to the city can be found [here](#) and [here](#).