

Cathedral Place

Milwaukee, WI
Steven Puchek – Senior Thesis Project

Project Background

Location

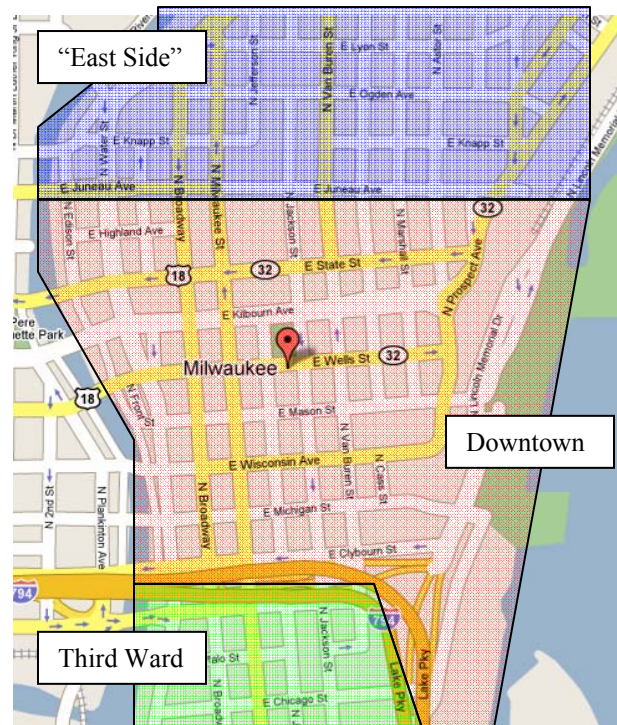
Cathedral Place is located in Milwaukee, WI just north of inner downtown. Its construction was the first of many new projects in the downtown area designed to develop residential revitalization and growth as well as stunt the suburbanization of the surrounding rural-based cities and counties.

Milwaukee is also primary location for many large industry headquarters including Harley Davidson, US Bank Corp., Masterlock, Miller Brewing Company, and Northwestern Mutual, and a commercial locale for many of Wisconsin’s larger businesses. As such, the compact downtown area has been well developed over the decades and only benefits from the construction of a new, high-rise office and residential tower.

The actual site of the Cathedral Place is immediately south of Cathedral Park, one of the few remaining Milwaukee County Parks in the downtown area. Cathedral Park is the location of many smaller downtown music and ethnic festivals, as well as a centerpiece for the many surrounding upscale restaurants. The building occupies half of the block between Jefferson St. and Jackson St and is bordered to the north and south by Wells St. and Mason St. Sharing the block with a parking deck and surrounded by other 10+ story office and residential buildings with ground level restaurants, Cathedral Place is a “bird of a feather” and very well molded into the area.

The city was founded based on its access to Lake Michigan and the Milwaukee River similar to Chicago and its foundation on the waterways and access to great lakes shipping routes. As such, the city focuses much of its personality on the lake, shipping, and other “coastal” traits. It is this “persona” that governed the form of the building’s architecture, and in this thesis, much of the lighting design.

For more information on Milwaukee and the surrounding areas please visit www.ci.mil.wi.us or www.onmilwaukee.com. As an often misunderstood urban and suburban area of the Midwest, it allows one to better appreciate the lighting proposals and architecture of the building itself.



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Building Uses

Cathedral Place as a building entity does not conform to the status quo of buildings in its immediate vicinity. It is a mixed-use building serving Commercial/Office, Residential Condominium, Retail and Restaurant, and has an integrated Parking Garage.

As can be seen from the Building Abstract, the percentage floor area of the construction is heavily weighted toward the Parking Garage, but the percentage of the occupied structure is focused more toward the Office tenants. The condominiums occupy 8% of the total structure area, but 16% of the tenant space. As a contrast, the office tower spans 42% of the total structure and accounts for over 78% of the tenant space. The restaurant and retail spaces are allocated only a small section of the ground floor.



Because of this varied use, the systems of the building were divided prior to construction to reflect this separation of space usage. This includes the electrical, mechanical, and even the structural components of the building. While the architecture and layout of the building suggest a complete segregation of space, the internal workings of the building are all connected at some level. At the street level, this gives greater appeal to the retail and restaurants, as well as a delineation of the residential spaces from commercial spaces.

All of this begs the question, for what purpose other than the architecturally psychological would one choose such a complex nature for a simple building. The answer is related to both the systems within the building as well as the owners and funding sources for its construction.

Owners and Management

Cathedral Place was constructed at a cost of over \$50 million. The controlling owner of this project, Van Buren Management, was not enticed to construct a building of this magnitude without the accessible income to supplement the intended commercial development – and subsequent residential development. Residential development was added as an extra and immediate source of income to offset the construction costs while the commercial development's payback came to fruition.

The parcel of land purchased allowed, while city demand necessitated, the development of a parking structure. Occupying over 50% of the available land and gross building floor area, the Redevelopment Authority of Milwaukee authorized the allocation of supplemental funds for the construction of the Parking Garage.

As an additional layer of division for the project, Van Buren Management does not manage office tenants, condominium tenants, retail tenants or in-house affairs related to their developments. Pentagon Management LLC was chosen as the entity to manage the building's affairs. For this reason, previous division had to be mended well enough to allow for the successful and easy management of half of the building's tenants.

The internal workings of the building as well as the structural and architectural segregation of the building is directly related to the three "owning" entities – Van Buren's Commercial and Retail, Individual's Condominiums (bought outright), and the Redevelopment Authority's Parking and Retail. The electrical system illustrates this fact quite clearly as will be seen in the Electrical Depth.

Construction and Occupancy

The building was constructed between January 2002 and March 2004. Office fit-out and occupancy was allowed in November of 2004 and Anchor tenants occupied by March. All but 2 of the condominiums have been filled as of this writing (26 of the 28) and office tenants have fitted out all of the floors from 11 to 17, and half of the 10th. Retail entities have moved in with relative permanence, including 2 restaurants, as can be seen from the Thesis Abstract. As of this writing, occupancy has been unchanged for one full year – a fundamental basis for many of the systems' designs.