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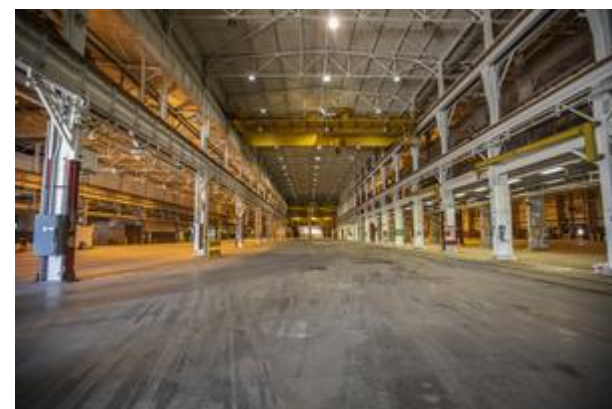
<https://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/news/2020/06/28/bucyrus-campus-redevelopment-could-bring-more-manu.html>

## Bucyrus campus redevelopment could bring more manufacturing, new uses like housing

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Efforts are ramping up to attract new manufacturers to a half-million square feet of former Bucyrus-Erie buildings in South Milwaukee and to potentially convert at least one former office building into housing, a brewpub or other uses.

Reich Brothers LLC acquired the 29-acre campus in 2018 and has completed its process of removing and reselling old equipment and refurbishing its seven buildings. The campus has 730,000 square feet of manufacturing and office space. *See the attached slideshow for a tour.*



KENNY YOO

Reich Brothers recently recruited a new broker and with support from South Milwaukee officials is adopting new strategies to bring companies back to an empty campus that once held thousands of workers.

“We know what the impact of having thousands of employees on that site is, we saw it for 100-plus years,” said Mayor Erik Brooks. “There were thousands of workers on that campus and we saw what that brought to downtown South Milwaukee and to local businesses, the energy that brought and the economic stimulus that brought. We certainly want to recapture that.”

The property was the home of Bucyrus-Erie stretching back to the 1800s. Caterpillar had been operating in the facility after acquiring Bucyrus, but moved its last workers out in 2018.

Refilling such a large campus will take time, and Reich Brothers is exploring new strategies to attract companies and people. Besides its three large industrial buildings, the campus has four offices. Many spaces are move-in ready, as Caterpillar left behind its desks and cubicles.

Reich Brothers is in the process of hiring an architect to consider ways to convert the Heritage Building and other offices into new uses, including housing, said Robert Hassler, director of real estate for Reich Brothers. The resulting concepts will be used to market the buildings to other developers.

“We have to adapt to whatever the environment is,” he said. “It’s a pretty significant campus in terms of what it can do for South Milwaukee.”

Standing four stories tall with 58,920 square feet, the Heritage building has an industrial aesthetic that has proven successful for buildings in Milwaukee's 3rd Ward, for example.

That building’s spaces could also be converted for a brewpub, and its former worker cafeteria could be reopened to bring other uses to the property, said Hassler and Terry McMahon, principal with Cushman & Wakefield/The Boerke Co. Inc. who is now marketing the campus.

“We’re looking at all kinds of uses, especially for the offices, like a mixed-use or live-work-play environment,” McMahon said.

Brooks said he is on board with that concept. The city has been working closely with Reich, and created a tax incremental financing district to support redevelopment of the property. The city used that TIF to raise \$75,000 for master planning for the campus, including for potential new development on parking lots and circulation and access improvements.

“I think they’re going to have to get creative in the redevelopment of that property and we want to support that as much as we can,” Brooks said.

After working with The Dickman Co. Inc. last year to market the property, Reich Brothers recently shifted to Boerke.

The campus’ industrial buildings once made massive mining and digging equipment for Bucyrus and Caterpillar, and likely will remain a manufacturing use, versus warehousing or conversion to commercial or housing. Those buildings have uncommon features that some manufacturers need, including heavy overhead cranes.

“We’re looking for manufacturers and assemblers,” McMahon said. “You can’t replicate that space. To put a heavy crane facility up right now, I don’t know what that would cost.”

Breaking the campus up for multiple companies will also mean reconnecting it to surrounding downtown and its streets. The campus has been walled off because it housed only Bucyrus or Caterpillar operations as a closed corporate campus.

As the offices closest to Milwaukee Avenue are refilled, there could be ways to make a stronger connection to that public street, Hassler said. That would encourage future workers to venture out to South Milwaukee’s businesses, he said.

“Obviously, we also would like to not detract from the main street,” he said. “We’d like to spur activity on Milwaukee Avenue, too.”

The city is in the midst of a \$1.5 million investment in Milwaukee Avenue's streetscape to make it more attractive to pedestrians with new trees, lighting and other features, Brooks said. There are several smaller-scale redevelopments advancing around the Bucyrus campus.

Bucyrus Foundation, Skyline Catering and the city in a year hope to open the Bucyrus Club events hall in a restored nearby building, Brooks said. Zimmerman Architectural Studios was recently hired to design that effort, he said.

Other local businesses are investing in downtown buildings. DB Tax & Wealth is expanding into a neighboring property. The two-story building at 1003 Milwaukee Ave. will be renovated for a new first-floor user with help from a \$30,000 city grant, and Moran's Pub also is restoring its building with city help, Brooks said.

A new city public space is being designed a block south of the Bucyrus campus at 11th and Madison avenues, Brooks said. Saiki Design of Madison is leading that design effort, which kicks off in the coming weeks, he said. The Bucyrus Foundation contributed \$500,000 to that effort, he said.

"All of this is kind of coming together around the Bucyrus campus," he said.

**Sean Ryan**

Reporter

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