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**The Milwaukee Public Museum's  
*Streets of Old Milwaukee* Exhibit to Close for Renovations on August 3**

Milwaukee—July 15, 2015—The Milwaukee Public Museum's (MPM) beloved exhibit the *Streets of Old Milwaukee* (*Streets*) will close temporarily on August 3<sup>rd</sup> to be reimagined and renovated in celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

"Most exhibits showcase history," said Dennis Kois, President and CEO, MPM. "*Streets* has become part of Milwaukee's history. We're very excited to build on that history by implementing changes that will enhance not only the *Streets* themselves, but deliver the kind of visitor experience contemporary museum-goers expect."

*Streets* opened in January 1965, under the direction of then-Director Stephan Borhegyi, who was inspired by a 19<sup>th</sup> century barbershop and drugstore exhibit in the Museum's library building. MPM artist Edward Green designed the original exhibit to transport the visitor back to a fall evening at the turn of the century. For its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the MPM exhibits team will raise the bar further by providing visitors with a heightened sensory experience including new soundscapes, "secrets" to discover, sights and even smells, as well as the integration of cutting-edge technology to engage audiences.

"Milwaukee has a history of building world-class, innovative exhibits," said Julian Jackson, Exhibit Director, MPM. "We're building on the shoulders of giants, here. Carl Akeley created the very first habitat-style diorama here in 1889. The *Indian Crow Bison Hunt* was the largest open diorama in the world when it opened in November 1966. The re-imagination of *Streets* will live up to and build upon that level of quality."

*Streets* will be entered via a new life-sized street car that will rumble down the tracks and appear, through clever use of technology, to travel back in time to Milwaukee's yesteryear. From viewing new storefronts and businesses to eavesdropping on conversations between *Streets* residents to engaging in hands-on activities like climbing aboard a penny-farthing high wheeler, the reimagining of the *Streets of Old Milwaukee* brings the cultural and economic changes taking place in Milwaukee during the post-Industrial Revolution era to life.

Although a permanent exhibit, *Streets* has not been static, with additions being made as late as the early 2000s. In the late 1990s, three new units were added, including the Watson Family House which added an African-American perspective to *Streets*. The Watson Family House highlights objects from the home of freed Virginia slave Sully Watson and his wife Susanna and shows what life was like for some African-American families in Milwaukee. The *Streets* reimagining will continue to highlight diverse perspectives found in Milwaukee during this time.

“The *Streets of Old Milwaukee* is probably the most popular exhibit in Wisconsin, and is certainly so for residents of Milwaukee,” said Kois. “The renovation of *Streets* gives us an incredible opportunity to both enrich the experience already there by taking visitors deeper into the magical experience of going back in time, but also to weave into that experience the viewpoints of people who were living in the city at that time, but whose voices were left out.”

The *Streets of Old Milwaukee* will reopen in December 2015.

#### **About the Milwaukee Public Museum**

The Milwaukee Public Museum is a natural and human history museum located in downtown Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The museum was chartered in 1882 and opened to the public in 1884. MPM has three floors of exhibits that encompass life-size dioramas, walk-through villages, world cultures, dinosaurs, a rain forest and a live butterfly garden, as well as the Daniel M. Soref National Geographic Dome Theater & Planetarium. The museum houses more than 4.5 million objects and hosts some half a million visitors each year.

The MPM is operated by Milwaukee Public Museum, Inc., a private, non-profit company, and its facilities and collections are held in trust and supported by Milwaukee County for the benefit of the public.

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