

HOUSING NEEDS IN MILWAUKEE

Overview

Issues related to housing and neighborhood development are in the news in Milwaukee on a daily basis. Recently, there have been several changes in the way business, in relationship to these issues, is conducted in the City. Most notable of these changes is the newly implemented Neighborhood Strategic Planning process. In addition to changes in funding policy in the City, the press has reported that the recent sweeping changes in the welfare system in Wisconsin have had numerous impacts on individual housing situations and on the rate of eviction from privately owned housing. One of the purposes of this telephone survey of over 90 non-profit organizations working in the City of Milwaukee was to assess the status of current housing development efforts, and to gather perceptions of current and projected housing and organizational needs in inner-city areas of Milwaukee in light of recent policy changes at local and state levels. A second purpose for this telephone survey was to identify some potentially fertile areas for collaboration between the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UWM and non-profit organizations with housing and neighborhood development concerns in inner-city Milwaukee.

Methodology

An initial master list of organizations (see Appendix A) was created from the membership list of the Non-profit Center of Milwaukee and a list of invitees to UWM's School of Architecture and Urban Planning's Housing Development and Design Forum - 1996. This list was edited to include 93 organizations that seemed most likely to have some involvement with housing issues. As the survey progressed, seven additional

organizations were added to the list based on referrals from organizations and people contacted.

An attempt was made to contact every organization by phone in Spring 1998. Contact was made with 93 of the organizations on the list of 100. In some cases information about organizations was obtained from contacts in related or parent organizations, when contact could not be made with the listed organization. The larger, more well established organizations were contacted near the end of the survey because several of them were already involved in grant proposal development with UWM departments.

Each phone interview was initiated with a brief introduction to the main purposes of the survey: to assess the status of current housing development efforts, to gather perceptions of current and projected housing and organizational needs in inner-city areas of Milwaukee, and to identify some potentially fertile area for collaboration between the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at UWM and non-profit organizations. Each contact was asked about past housing efforts and the types of housing issues they were presently addressing in their organization. Contacts were then asked where they saw their organization headed in the future in relationship to housing development. Finally, each contact whose organization had been or planned to be involved in housing was asked follow-up questions about past, present and future development activities and concerns in order to engage them in thinking about ways that research, design, planning, and technical service resources at UWM's School of Architecture and Urban Planning or other UWM departments might lend support to their organization's efforts. In several cases follow-up, on-site visits were made at the suggestion of the organization's contact.