



October 24, 2013

Common Council Members
City of Milwaukee

Honorable Members of the Common Council,

We're writing to you in support of the proposal by Mayor Tom Barrett to create an Interagency Housing Coordinator position and to place that position in the Office of Mayor.

We don't need to describe to you the challenges that Milwaukee's neighborhoods are facing in light of the on-going foreclosure crises. The issues involved are complex and varied. Numerous City departments as well as agencies external to the City each have a role to play. Due to the loss of federal funds (i.e. Neighborhood Stabilization Program), an expanded commitment by the City is certainly needed. The Mayor's 2014 budget proposal is reasonable and appropriate.

Creating an Interagency Housing Coordinator position and having that position work out of the Mayor's office is also an important part of an effective response by the City, since it elevates the stature of the position and insures that there is appropriate policy leadership and coordination of the numerous partners and agencies, both within and external to City government.

There are a number of initiatives underway that can leverage and amplify the City's foreclosure mitigation efforts. These initiatives include the Zilber Neighborhood Initiative, the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP), the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program, WHEDA's Transform Milwaukee Initiative, as well as LISC's on-going work to support and build the community development infrastructure in Milwaukee. In order to insure that these resources are deployed effectively and with the greatest possible impact, there needs to be coordination and alignment. We believe that the creation of this position is an important resource in that process.

If we can provide additional information in support of this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact us. In the meantime, we hope that you will endorse the proposal to create this position in the Office of the Mayor.

Sincerely,

Leo J. Ries
Executive Director
LISC Milwaukee

Susan Lloyd, PhD
Executive Director
Zilber Family Foundation