

The MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary delivers a proven transformational homeless community center model with a 26-year track record of effectively serving homeless and housing insecure persons. Today in witness of the present crisis of Milwaukee's overwhelmed safety net and growing numbers of unsheltered homeless people I bring some recommendations:

1. That a City-appointed task force be formed to create immediate action plans to address this issue expediently and effectively and to ongoingly monitor the situation; that this task force include representation of several homeless outreach and advocacy groups and also include MPD.
2. For the persons in desperate need for housing and other crucial support, if space in emergency warming rooms becomes limited, we recommend that the dormitories of the State Fairgrounds be made available and that a range of social services be provided there.
3. For the small number of persons who are unwilling to go into housing or emergency warming rooms who prefer living in tent city arrangements, we recommend studying models of how other cities work with tent city populations, especially cities who enact policies mandating self-government and charters to ensure that living standards related to self-policing and sanitation, etc. are acceptable. We recommend that Milwaukee seek to create innovative ways of addressing the residents and culture of tent cities that foster dignity, health and also responsibility.
3. In the long view, we want City officials to be aware that when the MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary facility currently under construction at 2461 West Center Street achieves occupancy within the next few months we will play a significant role in reversing the local homeless plight.
4. Additionally, building on our current strong partnership with MSOE, not only are we planning interior and exterior food production with honors students under the guidance of Dr. Michael Carriere, we have been given permission by the City to use vacant lots closeby our building for gardens and creative activities. Groundworks has joined our collaboration with MSOE. Directly north of our building across Center Street there is a very large vacant Green Space we have expressed interest in -- which would be ideal for the development of a tiny house village. According to Dr. Carriere, notes that MSOE would be very interested in collaborating with MBHS and the City in developing a tiny house village. He says, "This is a project that could not only speak to the MSOE University Scholars Honors Program, but to the broader MSOE community. Many of our engineering programs, including mechanical engineering, civil engineering, and architectural engineering, could play roles in such work. In fact, MSOE sponsors a tiny house competition each year.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to bring these recommendations forward. Representatives of my organization and I would like to stay mainstreamed in addressing these concerns.

Sincerely,

Sister MacCanon Brown, President/CEO  
MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary

