



# Milwaukee Children's Zone

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Prepared by the Legislative Reference Bureau

**Blueprint Commission Executive Committee  
Planning Guidance Document**

**October, 2014**

Report by the Legislative Reference Bureau guiding the planning and preparation of the Milwaukee Children's Zone Blueprint Commission Executive Committee, including the identification of key statistics and the outlining of necessary actions.

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**MILWAUKEE CHILDREN'S ZONE  
PLANNING GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
October 2014

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This plan is the first step toward the development of a Milwaukee Children’s Zone (MCZ). The zone will be designed to provide the City of Milwaukee, together with numerous local stakeholders, the means to strengthen the physical and programmatic connections necessary for improving social and economic outcomes for children. Through this planning guidance document, the City – through a “Blueprint Commission” – will be better able to connect existing social resources to improve the health, safety, welfare, education, living conditions and livelihoods of children and families in the area.

The proposed MCZ is located on the city’s Near South Side, with boundaries crossing 15 different census tracts and 3 aldermanic districts. The area has chronically exhibited extreme levels of poverty, unemployment and social deterioration, and access to quality educational, health care and social services may be limited. Some combination of rehabilitation, conservation or redevelopment of the zone’s resources may be necessary to reduce socio-economic disparities and improve area outcomes. For instance, key interventions in the proposed MCZ may include the following focus areas:

- Early development and care of children.
- Health, education, financial and civic engagement and advocacy.
- Connections with adjacent employers or employment centers.
- Expansion of arts and cultural programming.
- Teen crime and recidivism reduction.
- Cradle-to-college and cradle-to-career programs.
- Adult education.
- Housing and community development.
- Other youth and parent/guardian support.

The MCZ strategy will be based primarily on existing innovative and highly collaborative efforts in the community, but will also establish a plan for implementing additional local programs and leveraging other local resources. For instance, the MCZ will be positioned to pursue state and federal resources aimed at improving social, environmental and economic outcomes for children and their families.

This strategy is built on the premise that area revitalization can be realized more fully through the systematic and cooperative provision of services and the community-wide development of a culture of success. The first step in developing the MCZ is the establishment of a Blueprint Commission, whose Executive Committee will be tasked with:

- Developing a planning process that sets the direction for, builds a commitment to and develops the capacity to realize the children's zone concept.
- Identifying important strengths, opportunities, challenges and problems in the proposed zone.
- Establishing a vision of what the MCZ will look like when the challenges, problems and opportunities in the area are successfully addressed.
- Initiating a strategic plan consisting of goals, objectives, tasks, designation of responsible parties, identification of resources needed, timelines for implementation and procedures for monitoring outcomes.

Over the next year and a half, the Blueprint Commission Executive Committee (BCEC) will work to develop and refine a plan for addressing issues in the proposed MCZ. The BCEC will solicit and engage key stakeholders and the community to build this capacity and will be responsible for meeting management, consensus building and public engagement. In this way, the MCZ vision and plan will be rooted in the aspirations of the area's residents, creating an environment where children and families can succeed, regardless of socio-economic status.

## II. INTRODUCTION

### A. Disparities

The United States is billed as a “land of opportunity,” a place where anyone, through hard work and determination, can achieve great success. This romantic image is bolstered by an abundance of media reports, political statements and personal stories touting the American heritage of work ethic, individualism and the pursuit of happiness, but this perspective is not the complete picture.

While personal qualities and abilities certainly play a role in individual success, an increasing body of research is finding that individual outcomes are also very much tied to factors outside one’s control. This is especially true for children, whose health, well-being, future earning power, education attainment and even lifespan are in part determined by socioeconomic factors often beyond their control. Factors such as skin color, parents’ English language proficiency and family poverty have all been linked to disparities in health, education and other social outcomes.

For example, the 2013 National Healthcare Disparities Report by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services notes that:

Some Americans routinely face more barriers to care and receive poorer quality of care when they can get it...It makes a difference in people’s lives when breast cancer is diagnosed early; when a patient having a heart attack gets the correct lifesaving treatment in a timely fashion; when medications are correctly administered; and when health care providers listen to their patients and their families, show them respect, and answer their questions in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. All Americans should have access to quality care that helps them achieve the best possible health.

Eliminating disparities – whether in healthcare, education, employment or some other area – will require multiple interventions from a wide variety of stakeholders in the community. This appears to be especially true in Wisconsin. According to a March 2014 report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Wisconsin has the largest disparity for African-American children in the nation, in terms of their ability to “*grow up in economically successful families, live in supportive communities and meet developmental, health and educational milestones.*” The study examined reading proficiency, high school graduation rates and poverty, among other factors, to examine disparities across racial groups.



## B. Children's Zones

All Americans may have, for the most part, equal opportunity, but not everyone is provided an equal start. Children in non-white, low-income neighborhoods suffer from higher rates of asthma, are more likely to face risks of lead poisoning and are exposed to more violence and crime than most middle-class neighborhoods. In general, children in disadvantaged areas are not afforded the opportunities and infrastructure that many communities take for granted. It is in these areas that children's zones may be an effective tool for helping children better overcome adversity.

Children's zones are consortiums of place-based programs, agencies and people committed to reducing disparities in children's outcomes. In children's zones, these new and existing networks of committed individuals and institutions are key to the creation of a new social service paradigm, one which calls upon everyone in a community to develop, coordinate and provide quality education, accessible health care, youth development programs, opportunity for employment and safe and affordable housing for children and families.

According to a 2014 press release on President Obama's Promise Zone initiative:

A child's zip code should never determine her destiny; but today, the neighborhood she grows up in impacts her odds of graduating high school, her health outcomes, and her lifetime economic opportunities...It will take a collaborative effort — between private business and federal, state, and local officials; faith-based and non-profit organizations; and striving kids and parents—to ensure that hard work leads to a decent living for every American in every community.

The proposed Milwaukee Children's Zone is based on this premise. The HCZ strategy will be primarily based on existing, innovative and highly collaborative efforts in the community, but will also establish a plan for implementing additional local programs and leveraging other local resources, much as other similar models have been successfully implemented across the United States.

## C. Harlem Children's Zone

The first successful large-scale children's zone to be implemented in the United States, the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ), began in 1970 as the Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families, a truancy-prevention program. In 1991, the agency opened a community center in a public school, offering various services and activities on nights, weekends and during the summer.

About this same time, the HCZ developed a pilot project and a 10-year business plan addressing best-practices for poor families on issues from crime to health to schools. The HCZ officially began as a 24-block network of programs in 1997. In 2007, the project grew to nearly 100 blocks.

### Services & Structure

The HCZ is run by an executive board and headed by Geoffrey Canada, a Bronx native and the organization's founder. Canada envisioned the HCZ as a continuum of services at every point in a child's development (what the organization calls the "pipeline"). The organization has served more than 10,000 children and 13,000 adults, and has an annual budget over \$75 million.

Since its inception, the HCZ has introduced numerous successful initiatives, including Baby College parenting workshops (2000); the Harlem Gems pre-school program (2001); the HCZ Asthma Initiative (2001); the Promise Academy charter schools (2004); an anti-obesity program (2006); and several college preparation programs.

All of these programs are offered free to the children and families of Harlem, mostly through donations from foundations and philanthropists, including the Goldman Sachs Foundation and billionaires Stanley Druckenmiller and Kenneth Langone, who also serve on the executive board.

Working primarily in areas with child poverty rates twice the national average, the HCZ model focuses on the social, health and educational development of children, but also on their families and neighborhood environments. According to the HCZ project model, this includes 5 core principles:

- *Neighborhood-based, at-scale approaches.*

Engaging an entire neighborhood helps to achieve 3 goals: It reaches children in numbers significant enough to affect the culture of a community; it transforms the

physical and social environments that impact the children’s development; and it creates programs at a scale large enough to meet the local need.

- *The “HCZ Pipeline.”*

This includes developing excellent, accessible programs and schools and linking them to one another so they provide uninterrupted support for children’s healthy growth, starting with pre-natal programs for parents and finishing when young people graduate from college.

- *Community Building.*

This is especially important among residents, institutions and stakeholders within the zone, who help to create the environment necessary for children’s healthy development.

- *Evaluation.*

Evaluating program outcomes creates a “feedback loop” that cycles data back to management for use in improving and refining program offerings.

- *Cultivating a culture of success.*

This HCZ principle is rooted in passion, accountability, leadership and teamwork.

According to the HCZ website, the goal of the model is to “*create a ‘tipping point’ in the neighborhood so that children are surrounded by an enriching environment of college-oriented peers and supportive adults, a counterweight to ‘the street’ and a toxic popular culture that glorifies misogyny and anti-social behavior.*” To create this “critical mass,” the HCZ network includes in-school, after-school, social-service, health and community-building programs.

### Success

The HCZ has been credited with improving educational outcomes for students and providing essential support services for the Harlem community. No class will have gone through the program’s entire pipeline (starting in Baby College and graduating from a Promise Academy) until 2020, but some notable successes have been achieved. For instance, less than 10 percent of college students who participated in HCZ’s College Success Office programs dropped out of

4-year schools, compared to the national average of over 40 percent.

The HCZ lists numerous other accomplishments on its website. In the 2010 fiscal year, these include:

- In the Baby College program, 86 percent of parents who read to their children less than 5 times a week at pre-test improved their frequency.
- Those with “delayed” or “very delayed” readiness classifications in the Harlem Gems program decreased from 16.5 percent to 0 percent.
- Over 98 percent of Promise Academy II's students scored at or above grade level on the math exam, outperforming their counterparts in New York State, New York City and District 5, as well as black and white students in New York State.
- 100 percent of high school after-school program participants (284 of 284) stayed in school, and 90 percent were accepted into college for the 2010-2011 year.

External reviews of the HCZ's 2 charter schools show similar positive results. Evaluation is facilitated by a system of ample quantitative data at regular intervals and established benchmarks for success. Some attribute the charter schools' success to their longer days, longer school year, healthy meals, remedial and test-prep classes, and extensive after-school programs, but many charter schools in New York City provide similar services and are equally successful. The real measure of success for the HCZ will be the long-term social impact of the program on the community of Harlem itself, and that has yet to be measured.

### Challenges

According to a 2004 New York Times Magazine article by Paul Tough,

Most conservatives explain poverty by looking to culture and behavior: bad parenting, high out-of-wedlock birth rates, teenagers who don't know the value of an honest day's work. To most liberals, the real problems are economic: underfinanced public schools and a dearth of well-paying semiskilled jobs, which make it nearly impossible for families to pull themselves out of poverty.

Geoffrey Canada believes all these factors are to blame. This idea of cradle-to-college intervention in family, community and school is what makes HCZ different from many other intervention programs, but it also makes HCZ complex. For instance, as of the 2004 New York

Times article, the organization employed more than 650 people in more than 20 programs.

This complexity may make replication of the program difficult. According to the 2013 Center for Policy Innovation Discussion Paper #08, *“there seems little doubt that the HCZ is having a dramatic impact on the lives of those children and their families in their programs. At the same time, there are legitimate questions about the potential for replicating the HCZ in cities across the country.”*

This paper lists a number of issues cities may find in replicating the HCZ model, including the limitations of basing academic achievement on standardized tests, the “heavy” costs of the model and the general size and uniqueness of the Harlem neighborhood. The HCZ itself notes that it will likely take at least 10 years for any organization to fully implement a similar model, with funding of *“at least \$3,500 per participant in order to build capacity, plan strategically, and execute high-quality programs.”* A 2010 New York Times article notes the cost of the HCZ’s charter school may be much higher: around \$16,000 per student (including good performance incentives like trips to the Galapagos Islands or Disney World).

Regardless of these challenges, the HCZ’s success in improving outcomes for poor and minority families in Harlem has led to renewed interest in place-based initiatives addressing poverty in American cities. Overall, the HCZ is not just about education, but instead seeks to create social change. The linking of social services, community building and successful schools is at the heart of the HCZ, and it may be the key to answering questions of poverty and income disparity across the nation.

### III. MILWAUKEE CHILDREN'S ZONE

The proposed Milwaukee Children's Zone is an area encompassing approximately 225 blocks in the Near South Side, stretching from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street in the west to Barclay Street in the east and from Bruce Street in the north to Cleveland Avenue in the south. The zone encompasses portions of the Walker's Point, Clarke Square, Muskego Way, Historic Mitchell Street, Clock Tower Acres, Harbor View, Lincoln Village and Polonia Neighborhoods. The area also contains all or a portion of 15 different census tracts, and its boundaries contact 3 aldermanic districts. The preliminary boundaries of the proposed zone are provided in the Appendix.

Residents of Milwaukee's Near South Side experience significant challenges (including disparities in education, employment, housing, health coverage and juvenile justice) but also have access to significant social resources. To overcome these challenges and integrate these resources, the area's neighborhoods will require an infusion of coordinated action. This is the primary objective of the MCZ: to build a consortium of resources aimed at improving children's outcomes.

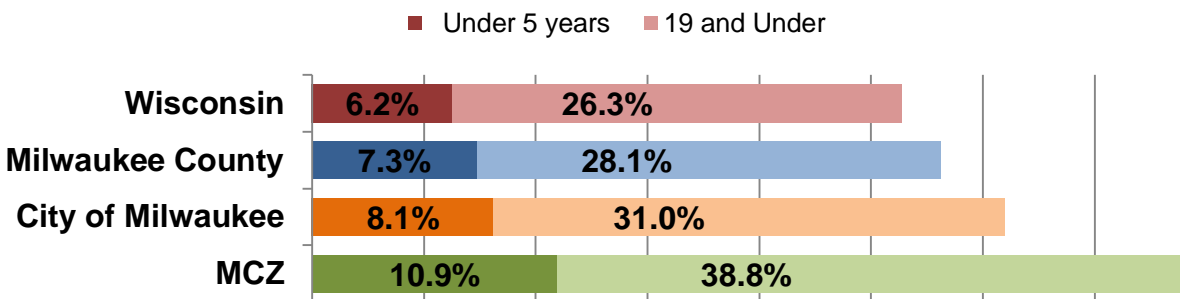
A key lesson from the Harlem Children's Zone appears to be that mobilizing, strengthening and retaining a critical mass of sustained partnerships and resources is essential for continued initiative success. The MCZ will likely require substantial engagement of key leaders in the business and philanthropic community, as well as local government leaders.

These issues and resources are addressed briefly below. Unless otherwise indicated, the following data are derived from the 2012 American Community Survey's 5-year estimates for census tracts 157, 158, 163, 164, 165, 167, 168, 175, 176, 186, 187, 188 and 1865.

### A. General Demographics

The proposed MCZ has approximately 42,000 residents, with 16,300 (38.8%) of those 19 years old or younger. Over 4,600 of these are less than 5 years old, nearly twice the rate of the state. Not surprisingly, the average household size in the proposed MCZ is 3.33, nearly one-third larger than the average household size of both the city (2.52) and the state (2.42). Additionally, the percentage of households in the proposed MCZ with at least one person under 18 years old (52.2%) is significantly larger than the city (34.2%) and the state (30.8%).

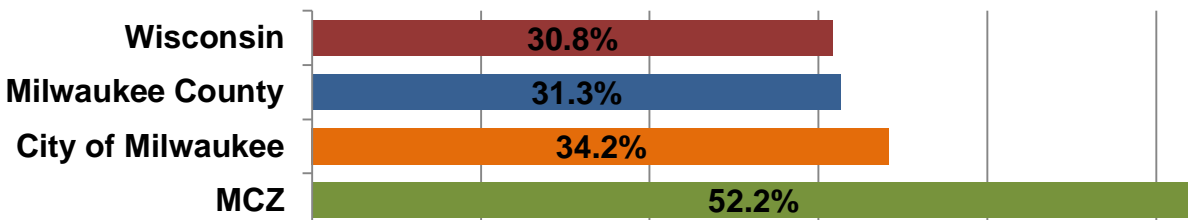
#### Age of Population



#### Average Household Size

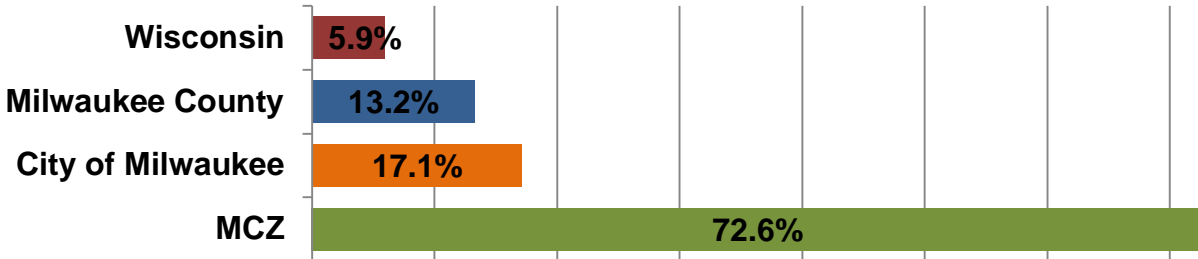


#### % of Households With 1 or More People Under 18 Years Old

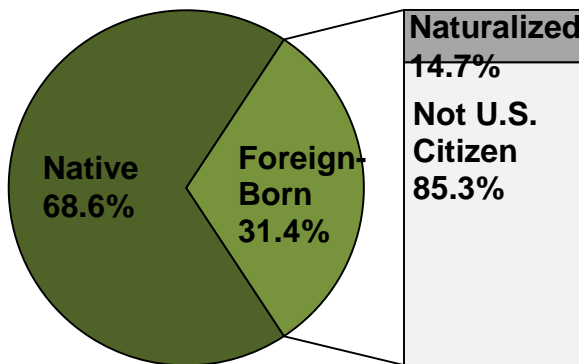


Finally, it may be significant to note that over 70% of the proposed MCZ population is Hispanic or Latino. Of these, nearly three-fourths are Mexican and over one-fifth are Puerto Rican, and of the zone’s foreign-born population, over 85% are not naturalized U.S. citizens.

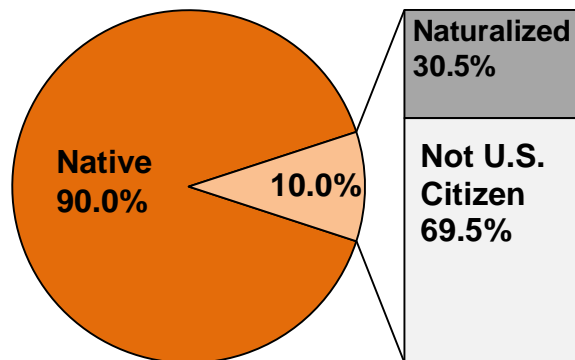
### % Hispanic or Latino



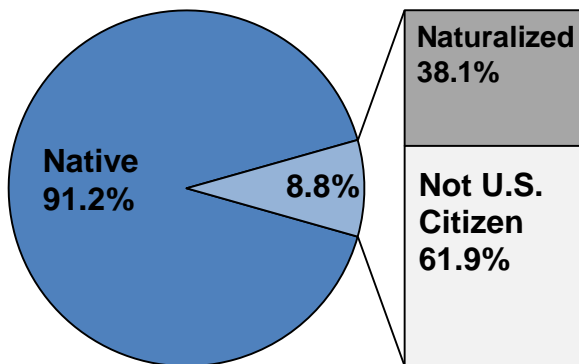
**MCZ**



**City of Milwaukee**



**Milwaukee County**



**Wisconsin**

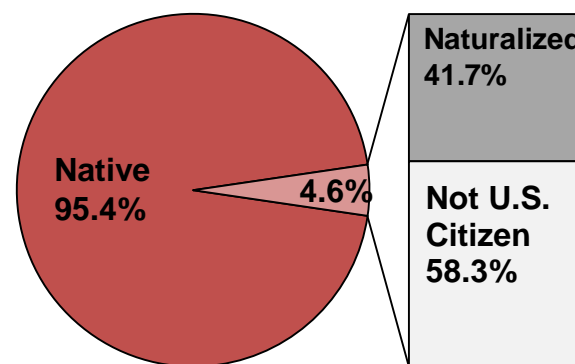
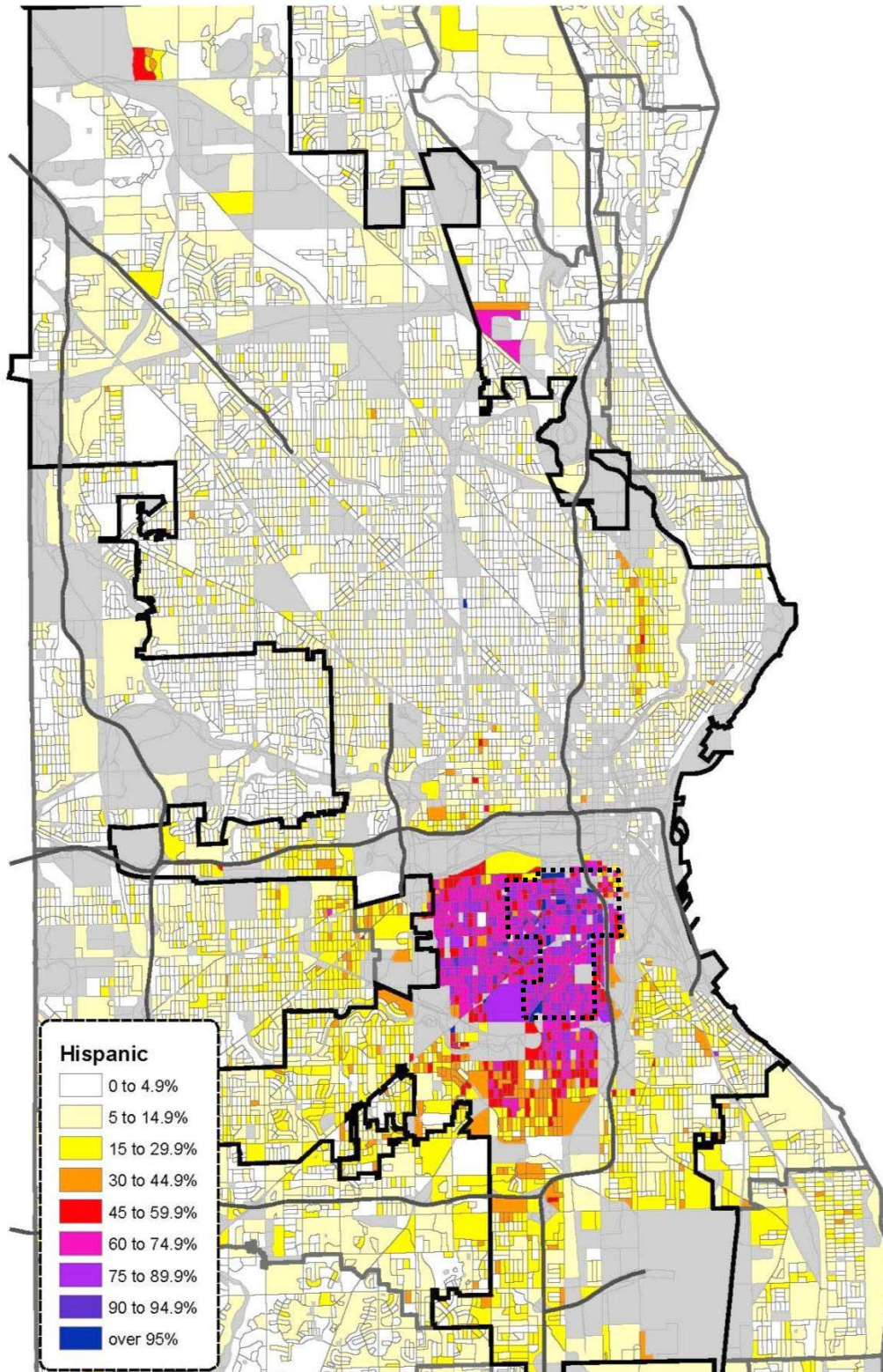




Figure 1. Hispanic Population Distribution, 2010.

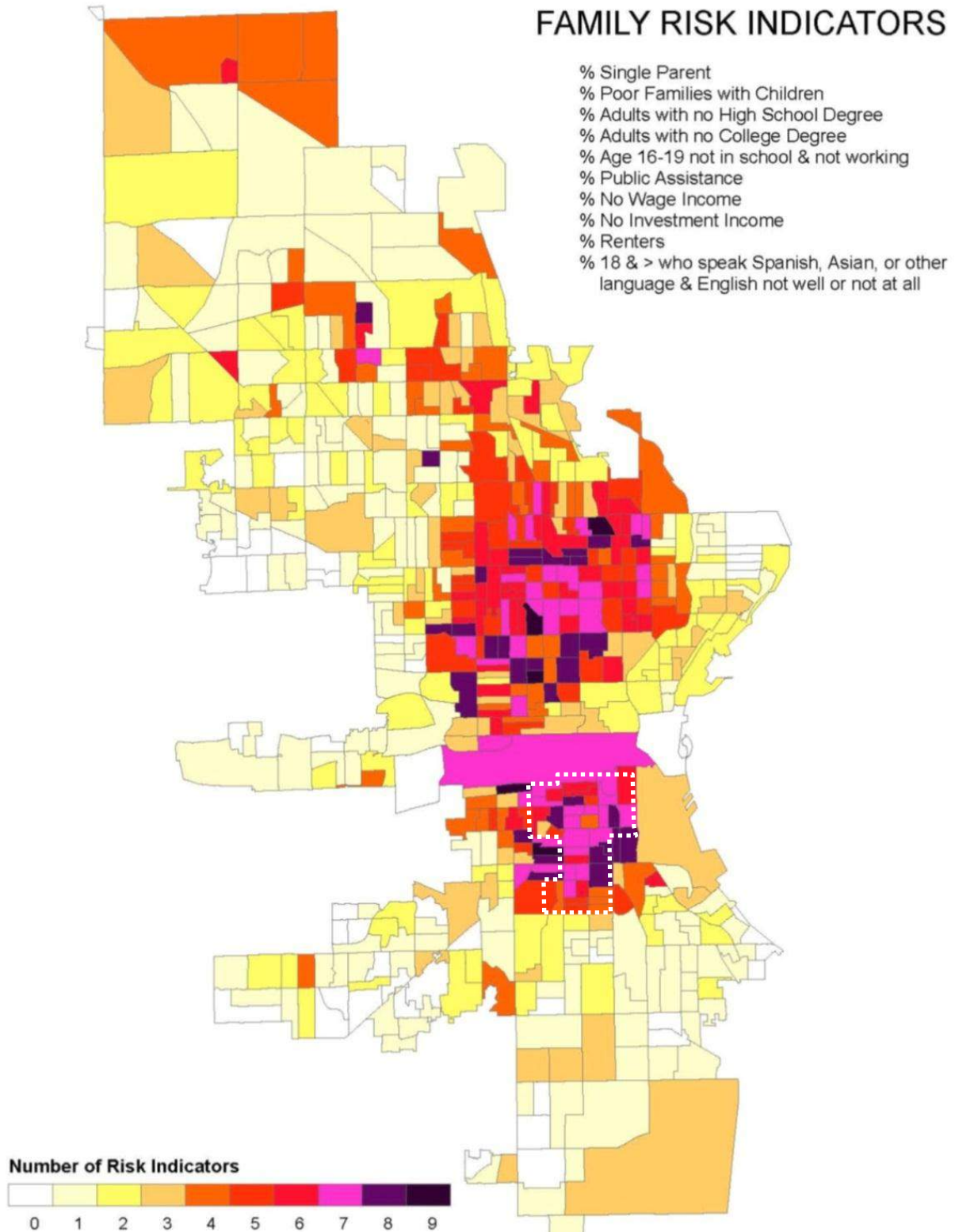


Source: Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee.

## **B. Specific Needs and Conditions**

As the largest city in Wisconsin and the 31<sup>st</sup> largest city in the United States by population, Milwaukee is home to many of the social, environmental and economic issues common in large American cities. The Near South Side, in particular, is home to a large Hispanic or Latino population and, as the figure on the following page indicates, a significant number of family risk indicators. Data relating to these and similar needs and concerns of the proposed zone are provided below.

Figure 2. Family Risk Indicators in Milwaukee.



Source: Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee.

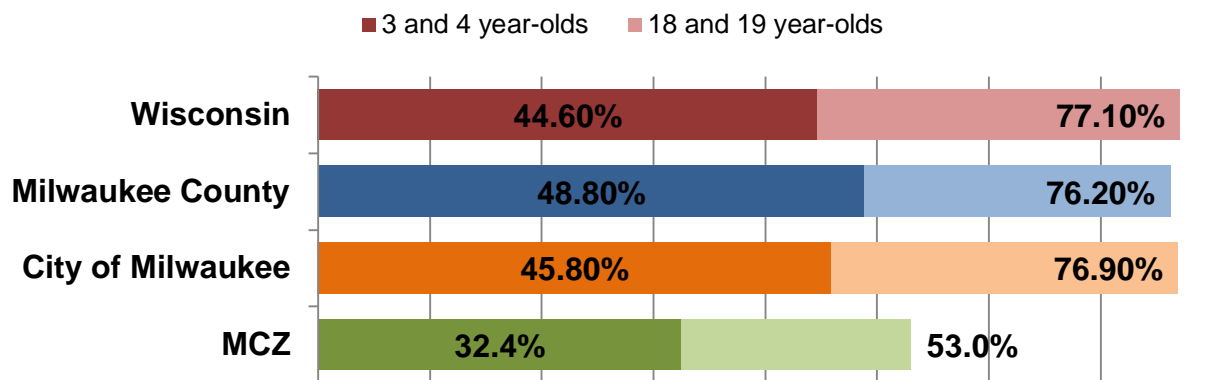
Educational Performance

In 2013, according to National Assessment of Educational Progress tests, Wisconsin had the largest achievement gap between black and white students among all states. Only 18.3% of the state’s African-American students scored proficient or advanced on state math exams in 2013, for instance, compared to 48.6% overall and 56.2% among white students. A May 2013 Robert M. LaFollette School of Public Affairs report further notes that:

Although the overall performance of Wisconsin’s K-12 students has improved over the past decade, the state has one of the highest graduation rates in the country, and Wisconsin students consistently score higher than average on national standardized tests, the state’s progress in narrowing racial achievement gaps has stalled or reversed course over the past two decades.

In the proposed MCZ, in particular, there appear to be additional issues worth studying. For instance, only 32.4% of 3- and 4-year-olds and 53% of 18- and 19-year-olds were enrolled in school in 2012. These rates are much lower than city, county and state. Further, less than 7% of the population aged 25 years and older in the proposed MCZ have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher, and fewer than 54% have earned a high school diploma or equivalent, far below the city, county and state rates.

**% Enrolled in School**



## Educational Attainment, Age 25 Yrs & Over

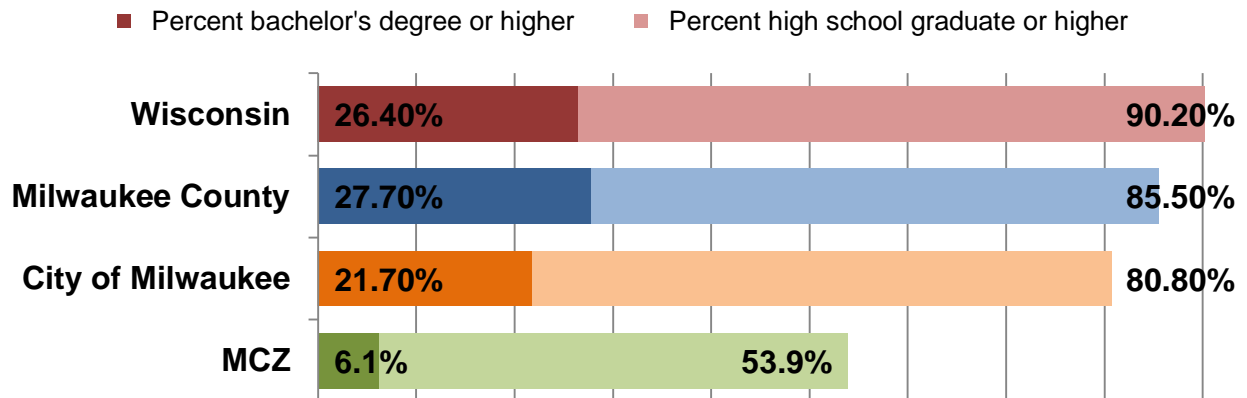
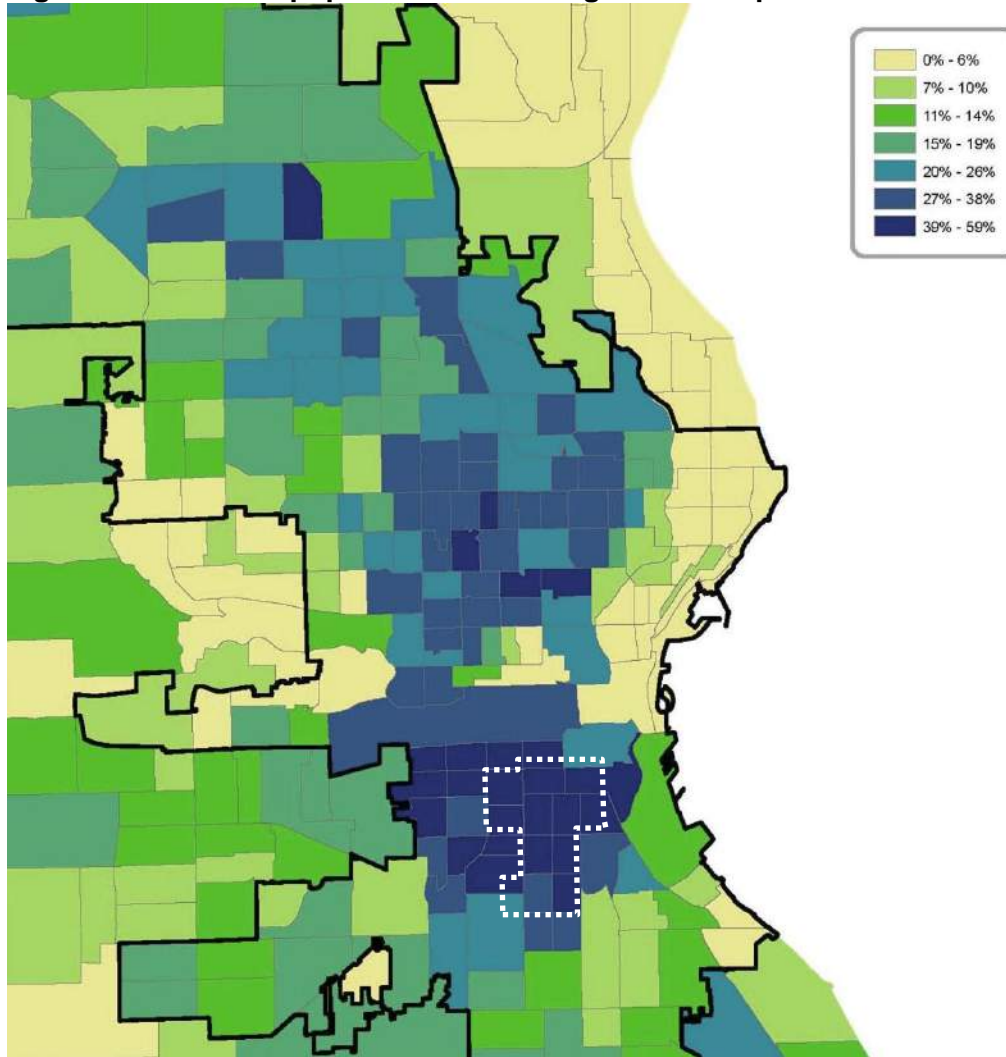


Figure 3. Percent of population with no high school diploma.



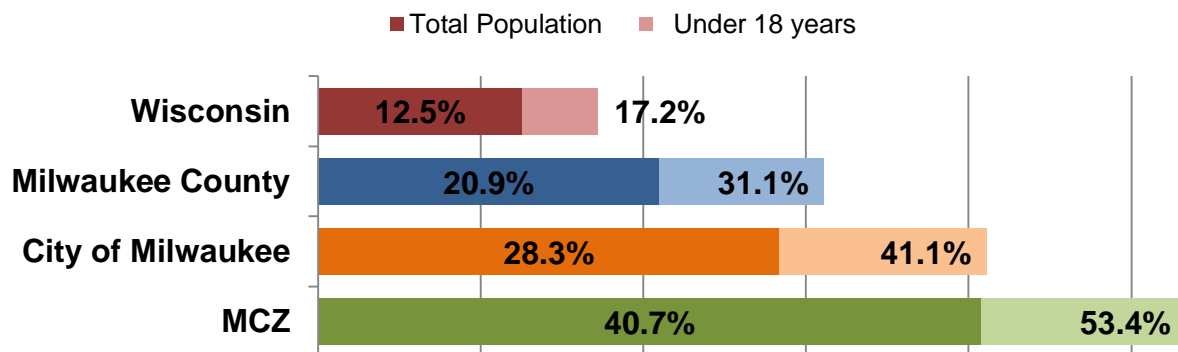
Source: Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee, 2007.

Economic Characteristics

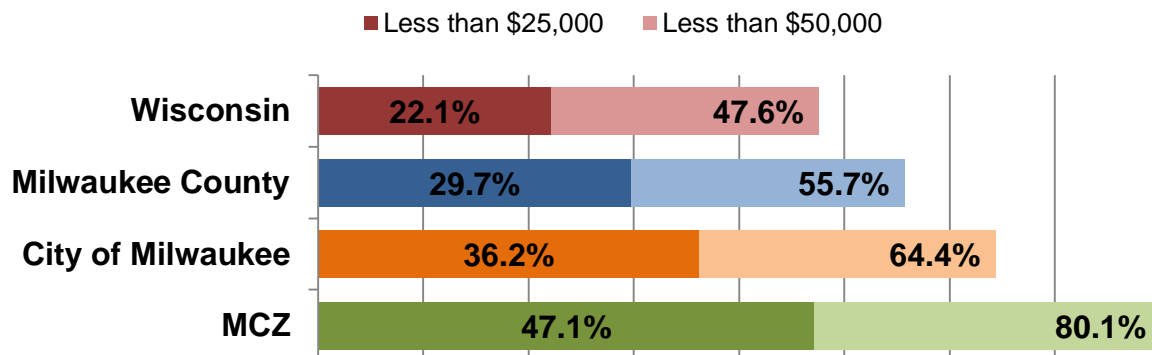
Economic characteristics in the proposed MCZ are no less discouraging. Of the proposed zone’s total population, over 17,000 (40.7%) are estimated to be below the federal poverty level. Nearly 8,000 (53.4%) of the proposed zone’s children are below the federal poverty level. Further, more than 80% of the proposed MCZ’s households make less than \$50,000 annually, and the MCZ’s median household income is nearly half that of the state as a whole. Even those residents in the district with a bachelor’s, graduate or professional degree make significantly less than those with similar degrees in the city, county or state.

Finally, the proposed MCZ has an unemployment rate more than twice that of the state and more than one-third greater than the city.

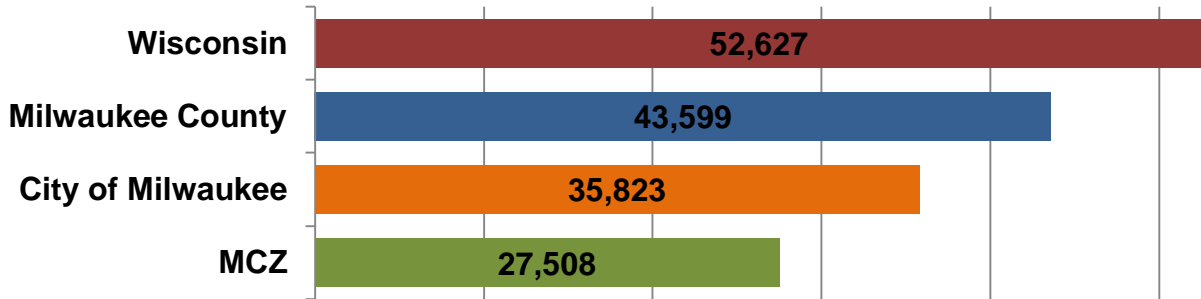
**% Below Poverty Level**



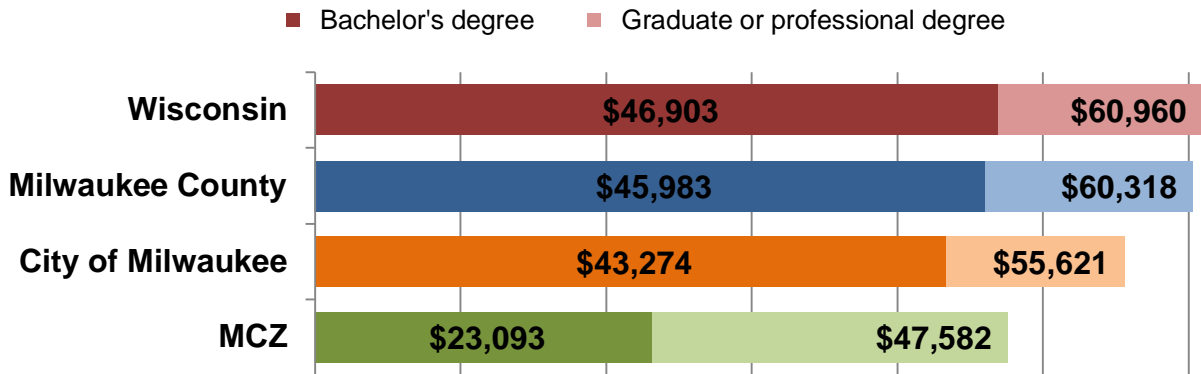
**Household Income**



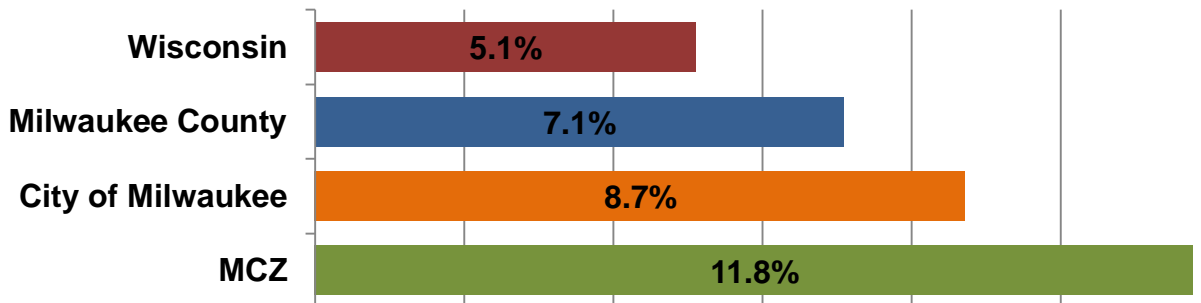
### Median Household Income



### Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months



### % Unemployed, Civilian Labor Force 16 Years and Over



### Health Status

Although infant mortality rates in Milwaukee have decreased in recent years, the rate at which African-American babies died during their first year of life increased and remains more than 3 times that of non-Hispanic white babies. In addition to this racial disparity, income also seems to play a role in infant mortality rates. According to the 2012 Milwaukee Health Report, of Milwaukee mothers in lower socio-economic groups who gave birth between 2008 and 2010, 27.2% did not receive prenatal care. This compares to 15.7% in higher socio-economic groups and an overall rate of 16.7% in Wisconsin as a whole (all socio-economic groups).

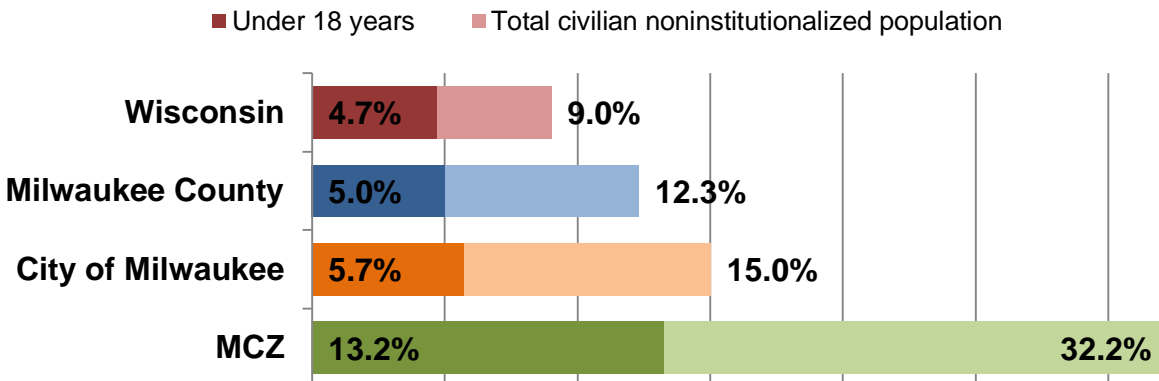
As the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment notes, *"low birth weight, prematurity and receiving late or no prenatal care are risk factors for infant mortality seen at high rates in Milwaukee's lowest income ZIP codes."* Given this information, access to health care may be an important component of improving prenatal care and birth outcomes in the proposed MCZ.

According to 2012 U.S. Census Bureau data, over 32% of the total civilian non-institutionalized population in the zone is uninsured and over 13% of the population under 18 years old is uninsured. These rates are more than double the rates for the city as a whole and increase markedly for the zone's foreign-born population. The 2013 Community Health Needs Assessment further elaborates on disparities in insurance in Milwaukee, noting that those who are *"male, 18 to 24 years old, non-white, Hispanic, with a high school education or less, in the bottom 40 percent household income bracket or unmarried"* were more likely to report being uninsured or underinsured in the past 12 months.

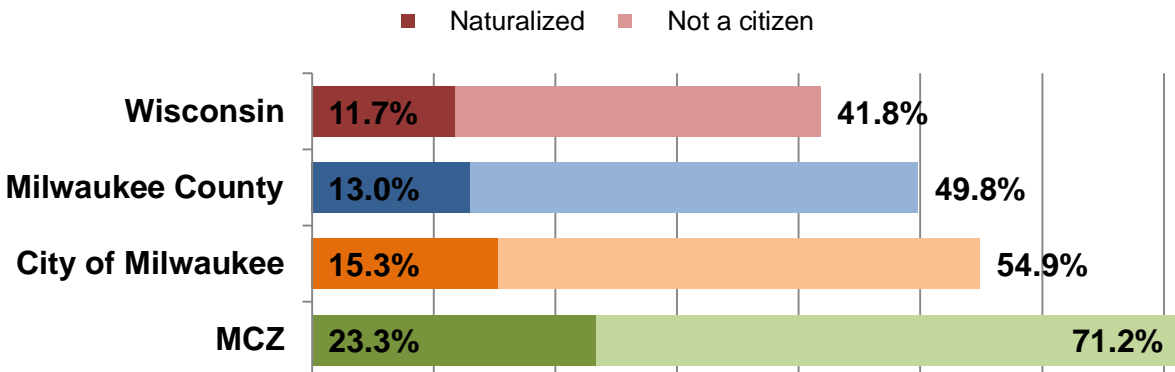
Finally and perhaps not surprisingly, the rate of households in the proposed MCZ with food stamp/SNAP benefits in the past year was nearly twice that of the city and almost 4 times that of the state. These data may be even more significant given the concentration of births in the city's Near South Side in recent years.



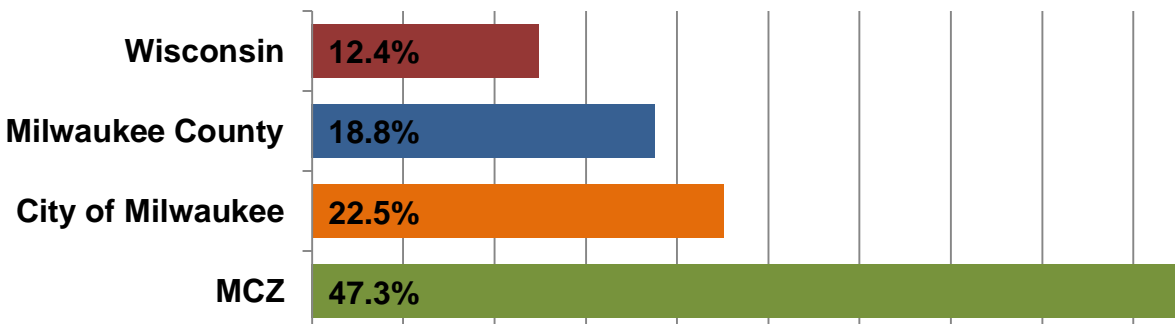
### % Uninsured



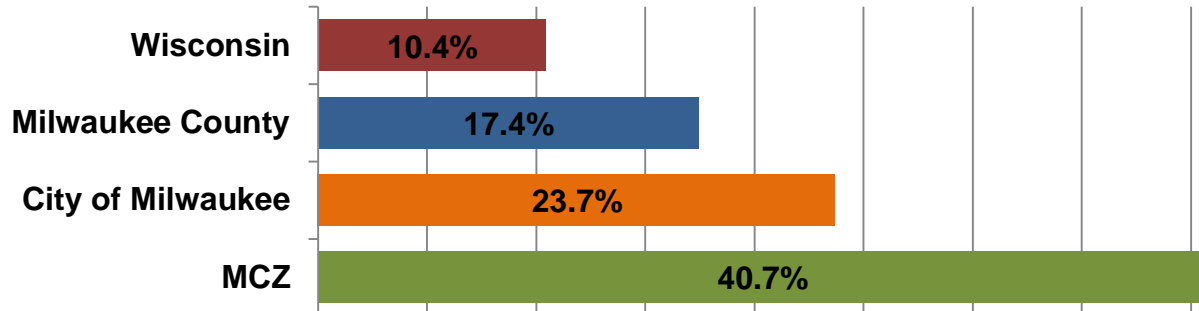
### % Uninsured, Foreign-Born Population



### % Uninsured, Population Age 25 and Older With High School Education or Less



## Households With Food Stamp/SNAP Benefits in the Past Year



## Births Per 1,000 Women, Past 12 Months

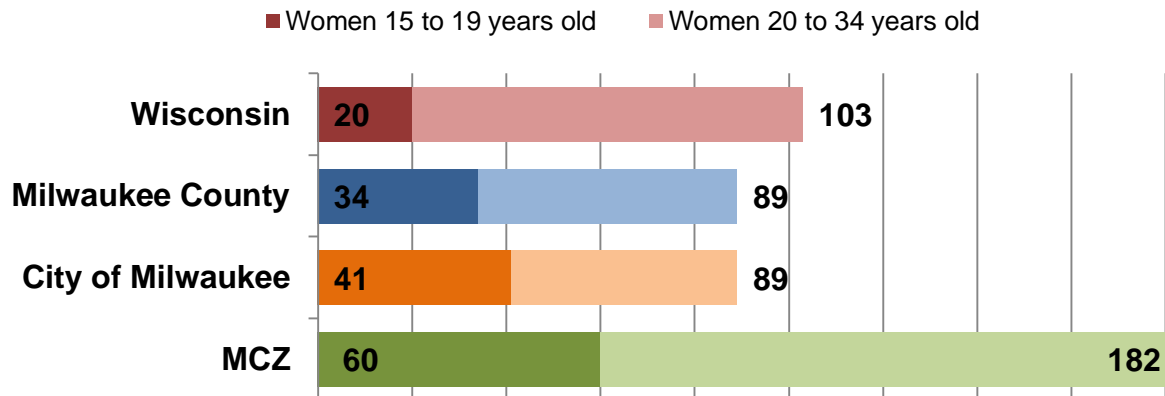
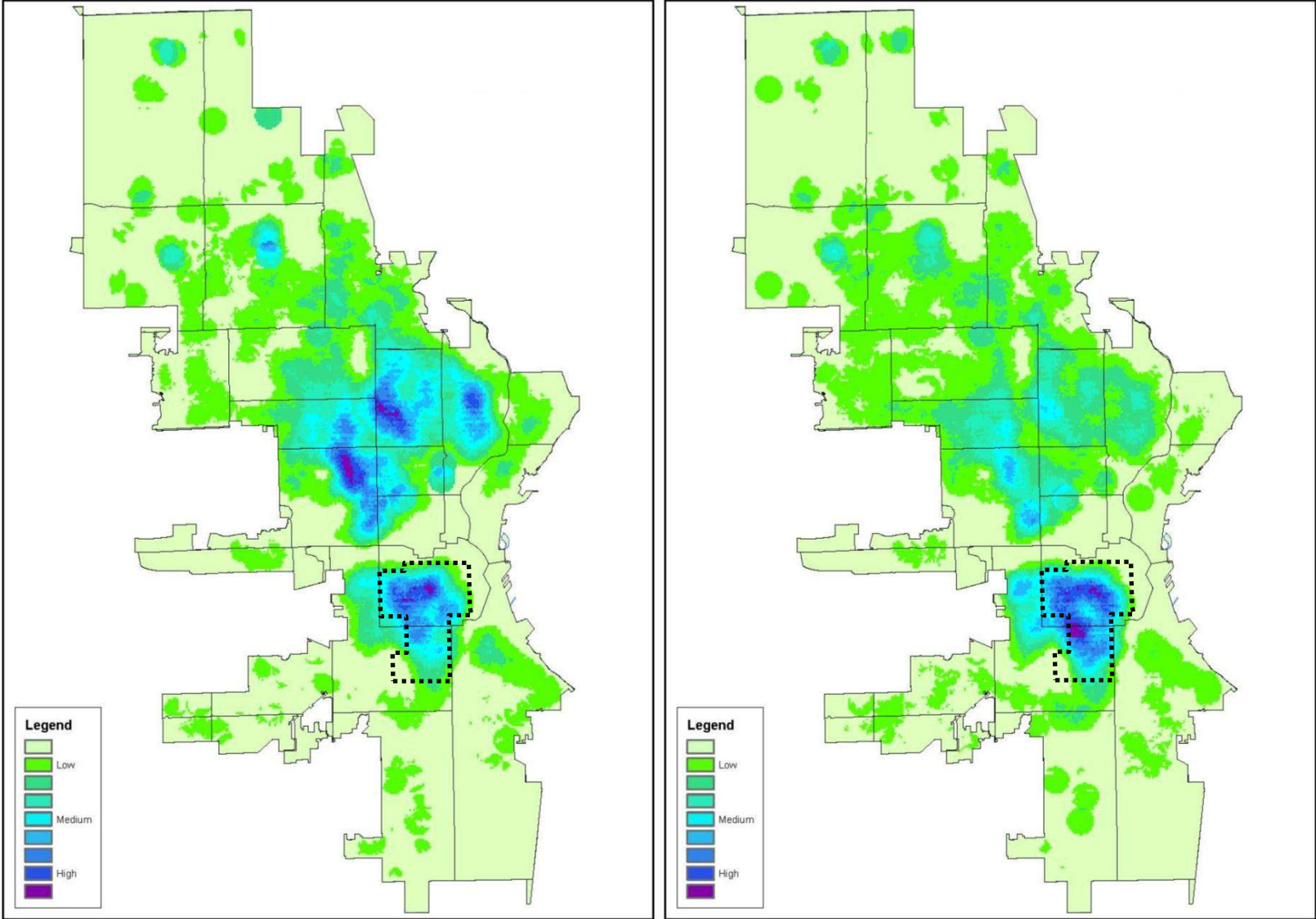


Figure 4. Concentration of births. 1993 to 2004.



Source: Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee.

### Family Support

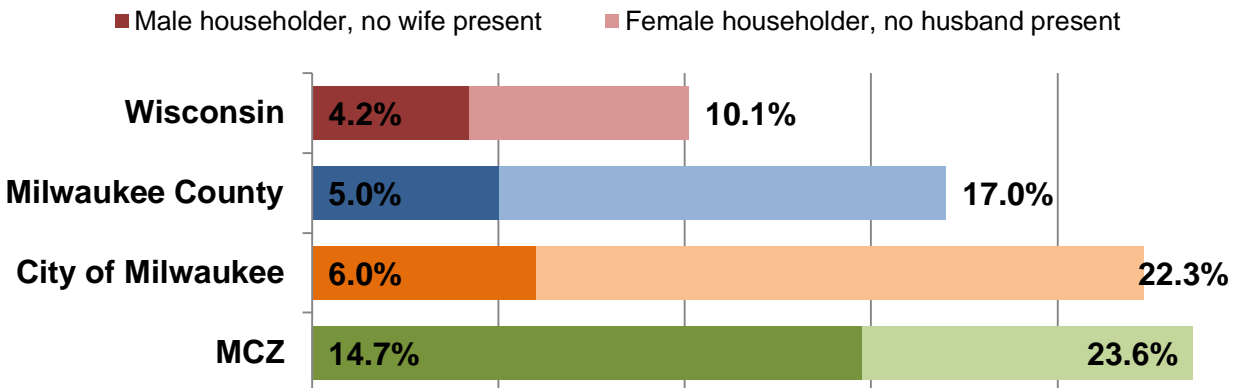
In addition to the data provided above, issues of family support may be important to the MCZ. Although difficult to define or measure quantitatively, family support may play a crucial role in how the MCZ responds to change, both positive and negative. Most parents want their children to succeed, but many may be unable or, in some cases, unwilling to help in as many ways as possible.

For instance, several studies have found that low-income families are more likely to be headed by single, unemployed, uneducated or young parents. Poor families struggling to make ends meet may also experience stresses not as frequently associated with middle- and upper-income families and may not have as much time or energy available to interact with their children. This is certainly not to say that low-income families are bad families, but that poverty may have much to do with the availability of family and community support structures, which in turn can affect a child's development.

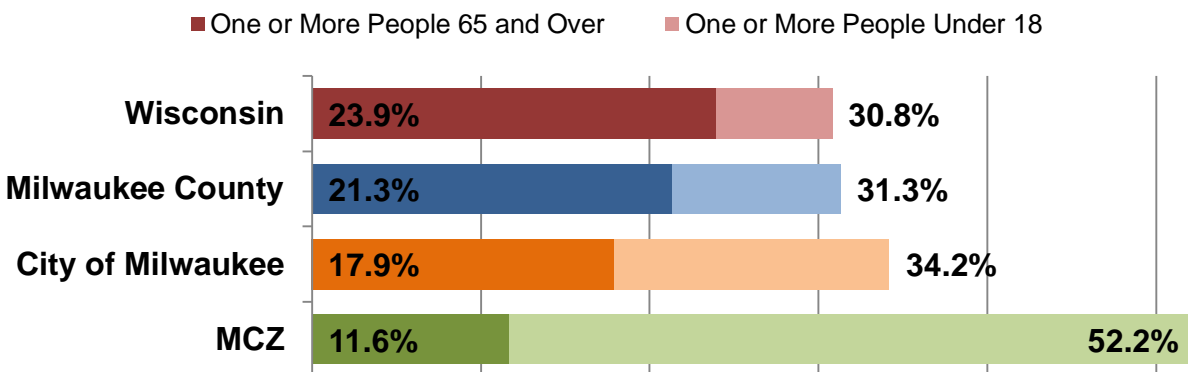
According to a 1999 study by Pennsylvania State University, *“fathers’ payment of child support was positively associated with measures of children’s well-being...Two additional measures of father-child relationship – feelings of closeness and authoritative parenting – were positively associated with children’s academic success and negatively associated with children’s externalizing and internalizing problems.”* In the same way, a child’s extended family – such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other caring un-related adults – may play an important role in child development in the absence of one or both parents.

In the proposed MCZ, single-parent households make up a greater proportion of the population than the city, county or state. Interestingly, adults 65 years and older make up much less of the area’s households than the city, county or state, but appear to be as or more involved in these households, as 7.1% of households in the proposed MCZ have grandparents living with grandchildren. These data may suggest that, compared to the city as a whole, the proposed MCZ has a greater percentage of extended families sharing housing units.

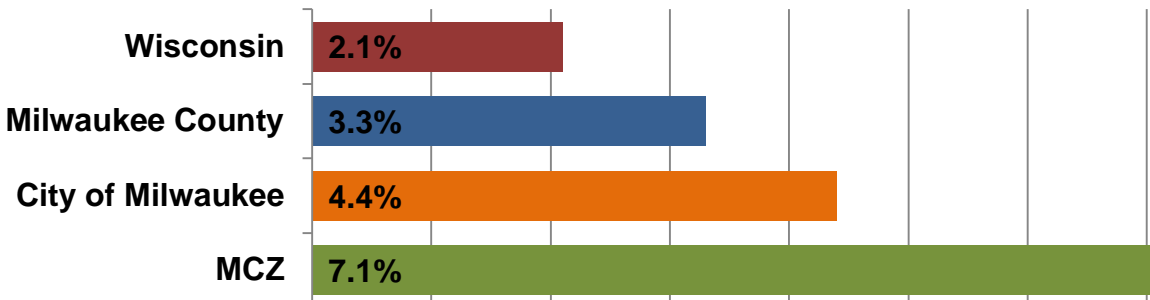
## Household Composition, by Gender



## Household Composition, by Age



## Households With Grandparents Living With Grandchildren

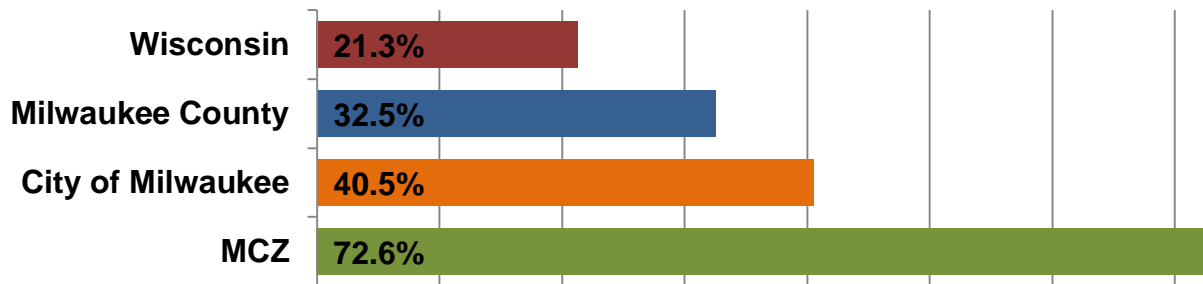


Housing Characteristics

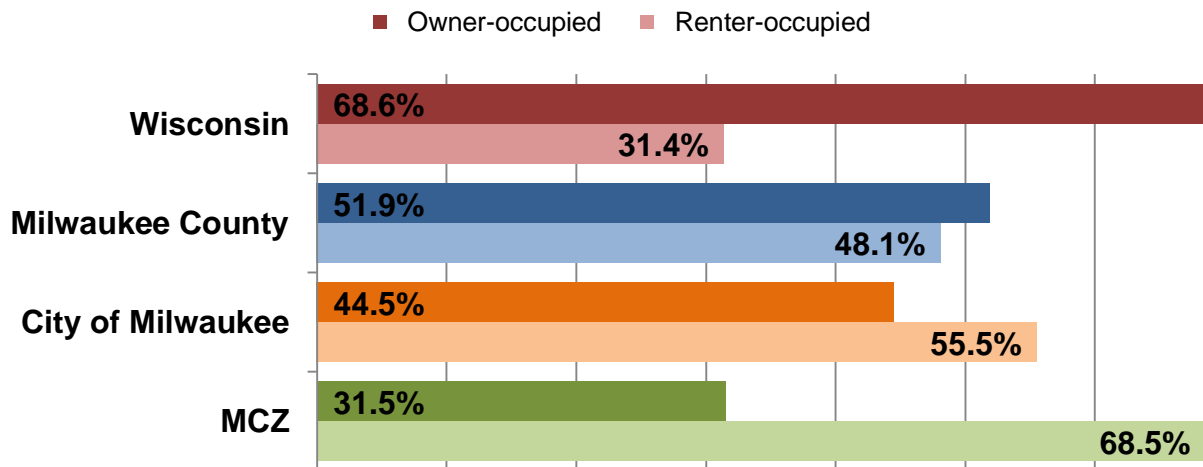
In addition to the structure of households, the availability of safe and affordable housing may be another important consideration when discussing current conditions in the proposed MCZ. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, the area has a higher proportion of housing units built before 1939, a greater percentage of renter-occupied housing units and lower median home values than the city, county or state.

The proposed MCZ also has a greater percentage of occupied housing units with more than one occupant per room, and residents in the area spend a greater portion of their income on home ownership and housing unit rental costs than residents in the city, county or state.

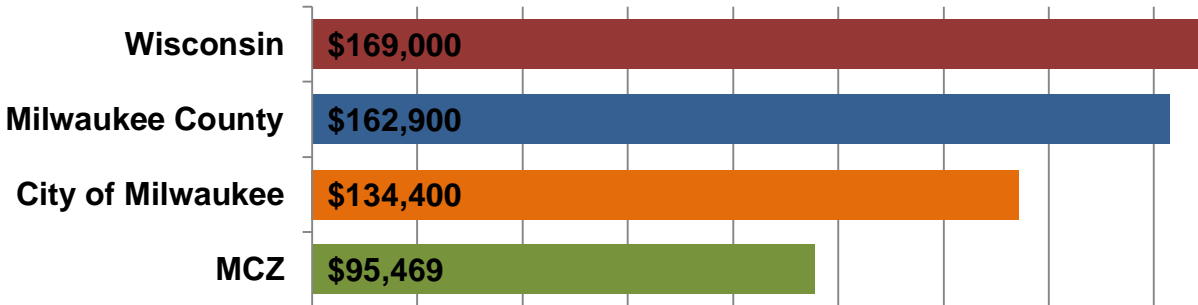
**% of Total Housing Units Built 1939 or Earlier**



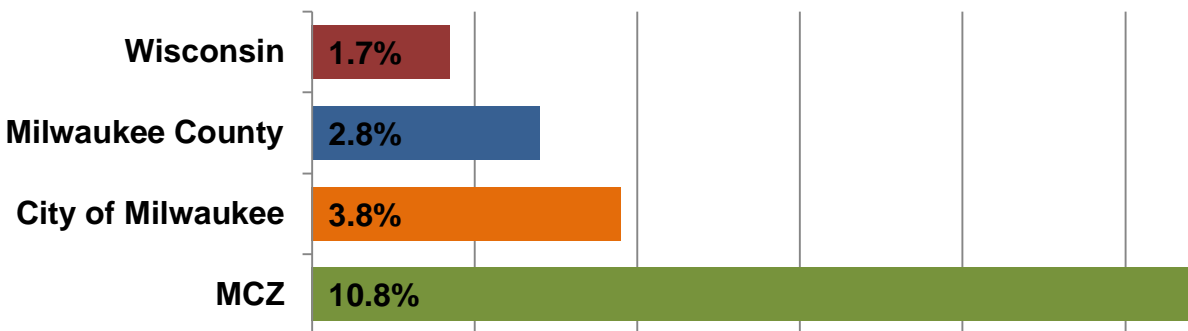
**Housing Status**



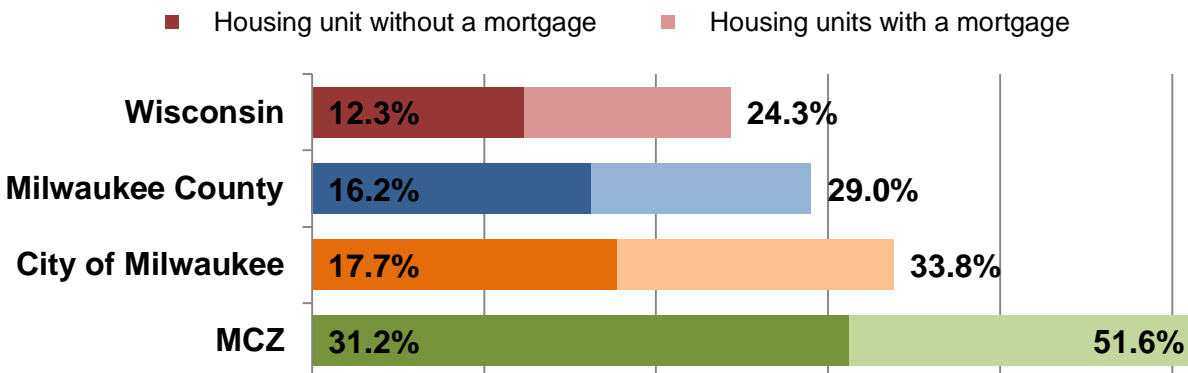
## Median Home Value, Owner-Occupied Housing Units



## % of Occupied Housing Units With More Than 1 Occupant Per Room



## Housing Units Paying 35% or More of Household Income on Ownership Costs



### Community Support

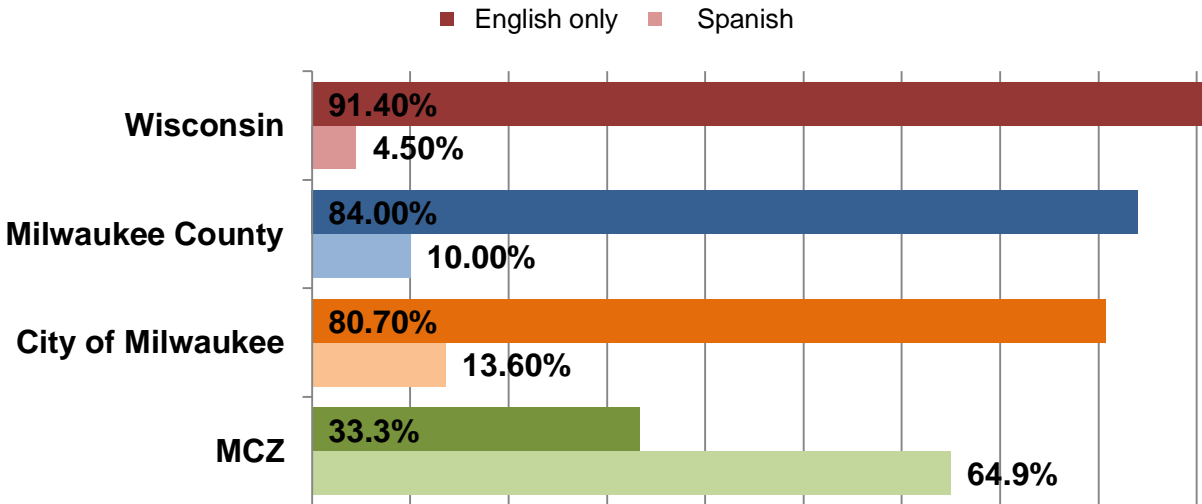
Finally, in addition to the conditions depicted by these data, it may be inferred that the people who live and work in the proposed MCZ have a visceral sense of the area's needs. Issues relating to poverty, educational attainment or health may be exacerbated by linguistic or acculturation challenges, leading to a sense of isolation and lack of community. To better engage and empower residents of all socio-economic standing and various cultural and ethnic heritages, it will likely be necessary to revolve problem-solving around existing social networks. Given the rich diversity of the city, this must be done in culturally-relevant ways.

For instance, in the proposed MCZ, only one-third of the population 5 years and older speaks English as the only language at home. This compares to over 80% at the city, county and state levels. Conversely, nearly 65% of the zone's population 5 years and older speaks Spanish at home, compared to less than 15% at all other levels.

In addition to language hurdles, other challenges may arise which warrant a community-driven response. For example, over 11% of individuals aged 16 and older take public transportation to work. This is a greater percentage than the city, county and state. Perhaps more notably, the MCZ's carpooling rate is more than double that of the city, county or state, likely due to the fact that a significant proportion of occupied housing units do not have vehicles.



## Language Spoken at Home, Population 5 Years & Over



## English Speaking Proficiency, Population 5 Years and Over

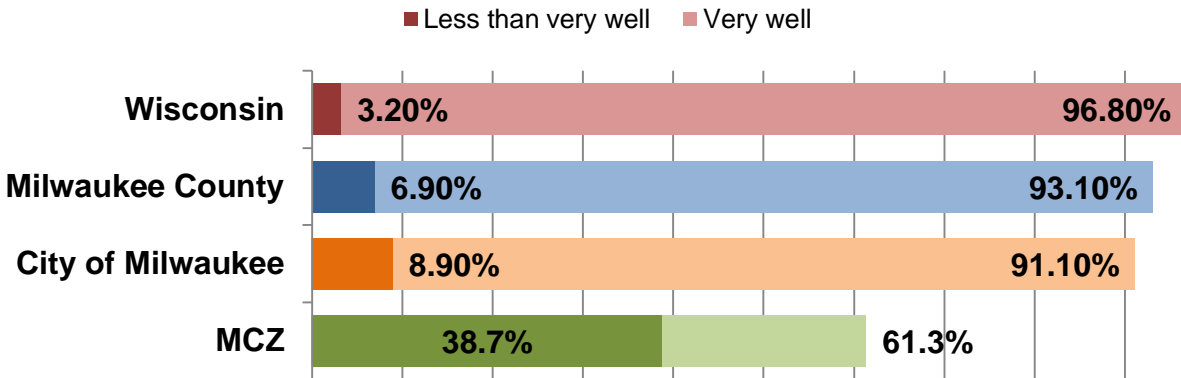
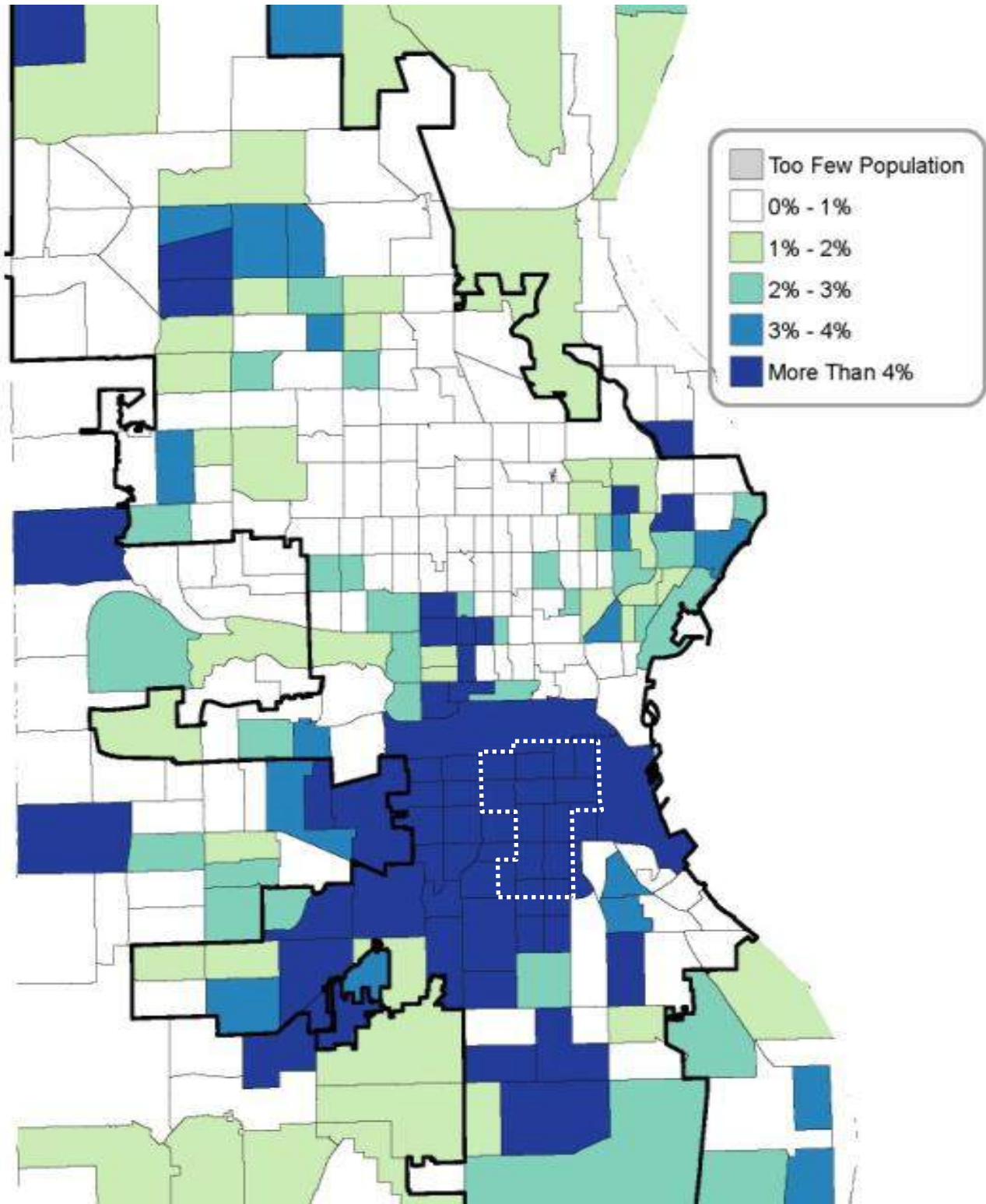
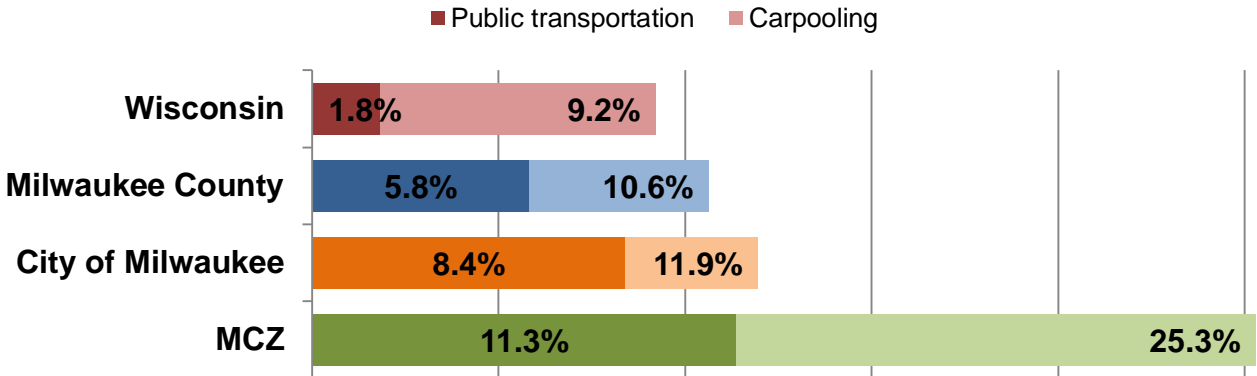


Figure 5. Percent of Population Speaking English Not Well or Not at All, 2010.

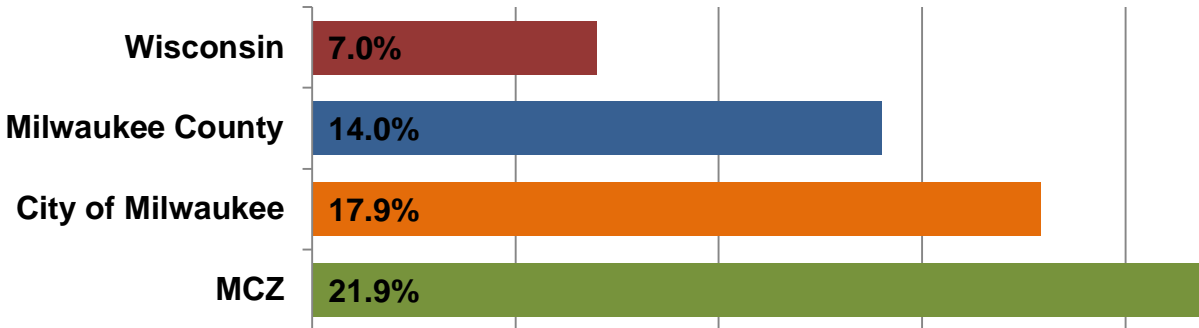


Source: Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee.

## Commute to Work, Population 16 Yrs & Older



## % of Occupied Housing Units With No Vehicles Available



## C. Existing Resources

### National

There may be resources available for the proposed MCZ at a national level – both public and private – but it should be noted that the zone’s strength lies in its commitment of local resources, most notably its existing people and institutions. Potential resources at the national level may include:

- *Private assistance from similar initiatives.*

The Harlem Children’s Zone created a Practitioners Institute in 2003 to “*educate funders, community stakeholders, educators, faith-based members and policy makers about the organization’s history, philosophy and approach.*” For “a reasonable fee,” the Practitioners Institute shares ideas and best-practices through either a 3-hour or a 3-day workshop, with the hope that communities will be able to eventually organize their own strategies. So far, over 100 communities have participated, as well as groups from over 40 countries (none from Wisconsin).

- *Federal programs.*

The HCZ’s comprehensive, data-driven model was also the basis for President Obama’s 2010 call to create “Promise Neighborhoods” across the country. This U.S. Department of Education program was aimed at improving the educational outcomes of students in distressed urban and rural neighborhoods through “cradle-to-career” services. Funding for the initiative increased from \$10 million in 2010 to \$30 million in 2011 and \$60 million in 2012.

No new grants were awarded in 2013, but on January 9, 2014, the president extended this idea by announcing 5 additional “Promise Zones” in San Antonio, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, southeastern Kentucky and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Fifteen additional Promise Zones will be announced by the end of Obama’s term, with the goal of addressing poverty and income inequality by providing local governments, businesses and agencies “*aid in cutting through red tape to get access to existing resources.*”

Although no new federal funding will be available for Promise Zones, federal agencies will engage directly with local leaders to coordinate resources and expertise for job creation, economic activity, violence reduction, increased educational opportunities and

developing private investment for a term of 10 years.

According to the White House's Promise Zones question and answer fact sheet, interested communities can email [promisезones@hud.gov](mailto:promisезones@hud.gov) to receive information as it is released. To apply to be a Promise Zone, an applicant must be a local government or nonprofit organization. Only one application may be submitted within the boundaries of a unit of general local government per application cycle. Potential Promise Zones must also:

1. Encompass one or more census tracts across a contiguous geography.
2. Have an overall poverty rate over 33 percent.
3. Encompass a population of at least 10,000 but no more than 200,000 residents.
4. Local leadership must demonstrate commitment to the Promise Zone effort.

### State

- *Department of Children and Families.*

The mission of the DCF is to “*improve the economic and social well-being of Wisconsin’s children, youth and families. The Department is committed to protecting children and youth, strengthening families, and supporting communities.*” According to its website, the department’s goals include ensuring that:

1. Children are nurtured, safe and engaged.
2. Prevention and early intervention efforts throughout the state are enhanced.
3. Families will have access to quality early care and education.
4. Parents will secure and maintain meaningful jobs.
5. Fathers will be more engaged in the lives of their children.

The department may be able to help facilitate coordination and cooperation of services in the proposed MCZ and should be consulted early in the planning process.

- *Department of Public Instruction.*

In April 2014, the Wisconsin DPI, led by State Superintendent Tony Evers, created a Promoting Excellence for All Task Force. Since April, the task force has met 5 times and has been commissioned to release a final report and a resource for educators focused on identifying “*classroom-centered best-practices that can address Wisconsin’s*

*achievement gaps.*” The task force’s pending list of practices and strategies may be an important resource for the proposed MCZ, and the department is likely another important partner.

- *Department of Transportation.*

The DOT’s on- and off-ramps present significant infrastructural barriers and opportunities in the proposed MCZ, from Interstate 94 to National Avenue. Planners in the MCZ may wish to consult with the department to see if and when there may be opportunity to revisit the design of these ramps. There may be potential to increase available real estate, bolster economic development and increase neighborhood safety.

- *Department of Workforce Development.*

The DWD is the primary state agency responsible for “*providing job services, training and employment assistance to people looking for work.*” The department may play an important role in promoting or coordinating employment services in the proposed MCZ, especially for those with disabilities, welfare recipients and the unemployed. The department may also be an important partner in promoting equal rights and vocational rehabilitation.

- *Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority.*

WHEDA programs, especially those supporting home-ownership opportunities, may need to be pursued more aggressively in the proposed MCZ through coordinated programming and community outreach. In addition, the authority’s existing economic development efforts in the city, such as the WHEDA-led public-private initiative “Transform Milwaukee,” may also prove useful pieces to the MCZ plan.

### County

- *Health and Human Services.*

Milwaukee County provides several service programs to families with children in need of support, including case management, housing and other resources. These programs should be evaluated as to how they can be coordinated with existing youth services.

- *Housing Division.*

The County has recently announced a foreclosure initiative targeting housing for customers of county services. These and other resources may provide quality housing for families in the proposed MCZ and should be coordinated thoughtfully.

- *Parks Department.*

The proposed MCZ's major parks, Kosciuszko and Pulaski, provide opportunities to organize existing and future programming at centralized, public locations. Coordinating with the County to best utilize programs in these spaces may be important to the success of the MCZ.

### Local Public Partners

Ultimately, while state and federal resources may certainly play a role in the establishment and development of MCZ, it appears that the continued success of a Milwaukee Children's Zone will rest largely on the commitments and collaborations of local partners. Potential public partners include:

- *Department of City Development.*

Although much of the 12<sup>th</sup> Aldermanic District is covered by the Near South Side Comprehensive Plan, few of the plan's suggested catalytic projects have been implemented in the proposed MCZ south of Burnham Street. MCZ planners may wish to coordinate with DCD to implement other projects on vacant or underutilized parcels in the area, such as the MP's parcel on 10<sup>th</sup> and Cleveland.

- *Department of Public Works and Department of Neighborhood Services.*

Both DPW and DNS could explore the potential for the establishment of a Targeted Investment Neighborhood with increased DNS monitoring of and DPW service for environmental issues related to children, including recreational opportunities, pedestrian safety, healthy food and safe housing.

- *Milwaukee Health Department.*

The department's Lead Poisoning Prevention program currently provides case management and testing; how this and other programs can be integrated with existing youth organizations in the HCZ should be explored. A similar exploration could also be

performed for the Health Department's Maternal and Child Health Division.

- *Milwaukee Public Libraries.*

The Forest Home Library site, and any potential replacement, may be an important component of MCZ programming.

- *Strong Neighborhoods Improvement Plan.*

Stabilizing foreclosures and providing housing opportunities in the proposed MCZ may be important projects in the next several years, and the SNIP may provide an opportunity to provide resources for such efforts.

- *Others.*

Other governmental partners include the Milwaukee Public School district, Milwaukee Area Technical College and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, which is planning major infrastructure improvements in the area.

#### Other Local Partners

Within the proposed MCZ, there are dozens of additional private and nonprofit partners who may be willing to help establish a cradle-to-college concept for children in the area. These potential partners may include:

- *Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee.*

According to its website, "*although Boys and Girls Clubs has a long history and is the area's largest youth serving agency, many believe we're just places to "gym and swim" type activities. We're so much more than that – we offer more than 100 programs year-round to meet the needs and interests of our members.*" In and around the proposed MCZ, there are school club locations at the Allen-Field, Lincoln Avenue and Mitchell Elementary schools, in addition to a Legacy Club located at 1975 South 24<sup>th</sup> Street.

- *Centro Hispano.*

Located in the northeast portion of the proposed MCZ, Centro Hispano is a nonprofit community-based organization serving the city's Latino population. According to Centro Hispano's website, "*its bilingual (Spanish/English) and culturally competent staff delivers educational programs and social and human services to families, children, youth, and the aging to help them overcome the social, economic, linguistic and cultural barriers to*



*self-sufficiency.*” For instance, the organization manages 6 housing complexes and provides wrap-around support services for low-income elderly residents.

- *Journey House.*

Journey House is a community center serving the Clarke Square neighborhood with a focus on helping families escape generation poverty through a self-help philosophy. According to its website, Journey House has “*a successful history of volunteer supported family and youth programming.*” The center also appears to have experience in collaborative programming. For instance, in 2013 Journey House collaborated with Milwaukee County Parks and the Green Bay Packers to install a professional-grade football field at Mitchell Park.

- *La Causa.*

According to its website, “*La Causa services positively impact the lives of nearly 10,000 clients a year...La Causa employs more than 275 committed, quality staff who provide a broad range of family-centered services through our Early Education and Child Care, K4-8<sup>th</sup> Grade La Causa Charter School, community enrichment Center, Social Services and Crisis Nursery and Respire Center.*” These services are provided in the heart of the proposed MCZ and may be an important component of the MCZ plan.

- *Local Initiatives Support Corporation.*

According to its website, “*LISC Milwaukee mobilizes corporate, government, and philanthropic resources on behalf of local neighborhoods, providing loans, grants and equity investments, policy support, and the technical and management assistance needed to achieve their goals.*” LISC Milwaukee currently assists 5 neighborhoods in Milwaukee, including the Clarke Square neighborhood, which is partially included in the proposed MCZ.

- *Sixteenth Street Community Health Center.*

The 16<sup>th</sup> Street Community Health Center, established in 1969, provides services including: adult and pediatric medicine, behavioral health, women’s health, HIV prevention and treatment, and physical and occupational therapy. In addition to these services, the center also has a Department of Environmental Health, which works with public, private and nonprofit partners to “*identify abandoned or contaminated properties*

*on Milwaukee's south side and through those partnerships, seeks to restore and attract new development that brings good family supporting jobs to the neighborhoods served by the agency.*" The center's strong relationship with the community and its various stakeholders is likely an important asset to the proposed MCZ.

- *St. Anthony School.*

Serving approximately 2,000 primarily Spanish-speaking students in Milwaukee's Near South Side, St. Anthony School is one of the largest Catholic K3-12 schools in the nation. According to its website, the school includes *"a medical clinic, English programs for parents, early childhood literacy training, college preparatory programs, an International Baccalaureate program and soccer teams for all ages."*

- *United Community Center.*

The United Community Center's mission is to *"provide programs to Hispanics and Near South Side residents of all ages in the areas of education, cultural arts, recreation, community development, and health and human services. The UCC assists individuals to achieve their potential by focusing on cultural heritage as a means of strengthening personal development and by promoting high academic standards in all of its educational programs."* It is located on 9<sup>th</sup> Street at the north end of the proposed MCZ.

- *Others.*

Other private and nonprofit partners might include the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership/Big Step, Menomonee Valley Partners and the Zilber Foundation.

## IV. BLUEPRINT COMMISSION

The Common Council, through Resolution Number 140227, establishes an Executive Committee of 7 members to develop and propose a 5-year plan for the creation of a Milwaukee Children's Zone. The BCEC, with the assistance of additional private partners and public officials, shall develop the 2020 Milwaukee Children's Zone Plan by December 2015.

### A. Composition

#### Executive Committee

The Blueprint Commission shall be led by an Executive Committee of 7 members consisting of:

- One member appointed by the Common Council President, who shall serve as Chair.
- One member appointed by the Youth Council.
- One member appointed by the Chair of the Community and Economic Development Committee.
- The Mayor or the Mayor's appointee.
- 3 community members representing diverse sectors of the community, including education, social services, health, business, faith-based or related agencies or organizations.

#### Additional Blueprint Commission Participants

Up to 4 additional City officials shall assist as Blueprint Commission participants. These participants shall be selected by the Chair of the Executive Committee and may include any of the following:

- Chief Judge of the Milwaukee Circuit Children's Court.
- Milwaukee County Executive.
- Chair of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors.
- Superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools.
- Board of School Supervisors.
- Wisconsin Secretary of Health Services.
- Wisconsin Secretary of Children and Family Services.
- Wisconsin Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction.

Additionally, up to 22 members of the community shall be invited to participate in the blueprint Commission planning process by the Chair of the Executive Committee. These participants may include representatives from:

- Milwaukee Area Technical College.
- University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.
- Medical College of Wisconsin.
- UW Center for Population Health.
- Sixteenth Street Community Health Center.
- United Community Center.
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee.
- Safe and Sound.
- WRTP/Big Step.
- Wisconsin Council on Children and Families.
- Faith-based organizations, such as the Catholic Archdiocese, MICAH or Interfaith.
- Organizations or associations representing the business community.
- News or media businesses or associations.
- Others in the philanthropic community.

## B. Planning Priorities

Community planning and development are not new to the Near South Side. The City, various nonprofits, private developers and financial institutions have been working in the proposed MCZ to implement both physical and social improvements, but it is clear that challenges remain. The following priorities shall guide the planning and preparation of the BCEC in developing a 2020 Milwaukee Children's Zone Plan.

### Common Council Resolution

The BCEC will officially begin meeting in the last quarter of 2014. However, upon passage of a resolution establishing the Milwaukee Children's Zone, City officials shall work to prepare for the BCEC's first meeting and shall provide ongoing support, including:

- *Priority A1: Community Notification.*

The City shall work to notify the community of the MCZ initiative, including the circulation of this document with stakeholders capable of further sharing information.

- *Priority A2: Resources.*

The City's Intergovernmental Relations Division shall identify potential local and state resources as area budgets develop, especially noting potential budget placeholders in the next 2015-2016 biennial state budget.

- *Priority A3: Reporting.*

In 2015, the BCEC shall, at least quarterly, report to the Common Council on its progress, status and continuing operation. Communication files shall be opened in March, June, September and December of 2015.

### Initial Organization and Planning

At least 3 BCEC meetings shall be held in the last quarter of 2014 to establish a framework for plan development, including:

- *Priority B1: Background & Procedure.*

The first meeting of the BCEC shall include presentations on and introductions to the proposed MCZ. In addition, the BCEC shall establish operational details, including meeting procedure, schedules and the creation of Blueprint Commission working groups. Working groups shall be responsible for developing objectives and identify

strategies for each group's focus area.

Potential working group focus areas may include early development and care of children, education of children and youth (public and private), health and wellness (including mental health), youth support, parent and guardian support, adult education and training, community safety (including juvenile justice), economic development (including employment, training and business), housing and infrastructure, financing and philanthropy.

- *Priority B2: Visioning.*

The remaining 2014 meetings of the BCEC shall establish initiative vision and goals, and major products and responsibilities, including the responsibilities of working groups. The BCEC shall establish a common understanding of the approaches, proposals and ideas generally established in this document and further identify other ideas or necessities relating to plan development. The MCZ vision must be supported by key stakeholders in the public, private and nonprofit sectors and should consider at least a 5-year timeframe.

- *Priority B3: Networking.*

The BCEC shall review and approve designated community partners and shall work to develop and respond to other potential stakeholders, including regional, county and state entities. The BCEC shall continually maintain working relationships with community partners to better revise and expand its 2015 schedule, including community meetings.

In an effort to more fully identify and engage local and regional partners and as a means of preserving "institutional memory" for the initiative, the BCEC shall plan for a holistic method of recording and marketing meetings, documents and other resources. Both key MCZ stakeholders and the community must understand the consequences of actions taken, the reasons for their success or failure, missed opportunities and the implications of proposed projects and programs.

Potential area service providers, investors and experts shall be included in the formative planning process because they bring the capacity, stability and institutional memory necessary for not only initial plan development, but continued plan success.

#### First Quarter, 2015

The BCEC shall hold at least 3 meetings in the first quarter of 2015 to develop specific plan

components and to define stakeholder involvement, including:

- *Priority C1: Working Group Action Plans.*

In the first quarter of 2015, the BCEC shall hear initial reports from working groups establishing plans of action for work in 2015.

Action plans shall identify possible initiatives, necessary stakeholders, possible sponsors or funding sources, necessary resources and deadlines for execution. In developing action plans, working group goals should be not only to help identify potential lead stakeholders willing to expand or test the viability of an idea, but to garner ideas and support from additional stakeholders not currently active in the community. Action plans are essentially tangible representations of working group brainstorming.

Working groups shall also include in their reports how they will prepare for and conduct initial community issues meetings, including how notices will be delivered to residents regarding these meetings.

- *Priority C2: Benchmark Measures.*

The BCEC shall establish benchmark measures by at least its second meeting of 2015. Benchmarks shall include specific measures, how or where these measures will be obtained and the party responsible for collecting the information.

To adequately measure success, the BCEC shall work with local leaders to determine how achievement will be measured. These measures shall evaluate plan outcomes, not inputs, and may include qualitative as well as quantitative information. For instance, an educational component of the plan could be measured by degrees earned, not strictly dollars spent or hours committed.

- *Priority C3: Preliminary Reports.*

Working groups shall prepare and present preliminary reports based on the action plans and benchmarks established in priorities C1 and C2. Reports shall contain necessary background information – including physical, social and economic indicators – and the scope of services proposed.

These reports may also identify preliminary, achievable and small-scale pilot projects which may be implemented immediately. The success of early action projects, however

small, may be essential to the development of momentum in the MCZ and encourage long-term implementation of plan ideas. This may involve encouraging committed stakeholders to proceed with a project to inspire reluctant stakeholders to participate in the planning and implementation process.

Finally, community outreach need not be part of preliminary working group reports, but working groups must report back to community stakeholders on their progress. Working groups shall include community outreach as a component of their final reports.

### Second Quarter, 2015

The BCEC shall hold at least 3 meetings in the second quarter of 2015, not including working group meetings or community engagement activities. The goals of the second quarter shall be to finalize specific plan components through community involvement and stakeholder support.

- *Priority D1: Community Engagement.*

By at least its first meeting of the second quarter, the BCEC – either alone or through its working groups – shall facilitate discussion within the community on subjects or issues identified in first quarter work. Preliminary community discussions shall determine the directions most appropriate to resolving community issues and achieving the vision of the MCZ. Both active and passive participation techniques may be used.

Community outreach shall be conducted with community needs in mind, allowing residents not present at meetings to review meeting results and contribute to the collection of data and opinions. The Commission shall explore means of connecting residents, especially low-income residents, to the planning process by providing residents a value for the time they have given up.

Everyone involved in the planning process must have a common understanding of the issues and conditions affecting the proposed MCZ, and the development of honest working relationships between community stakeholders will be integral to the plan's success. To build a continuum of solutions, it will be vital to involve the community early so residents of the proposed MCZ can take ownership of the initiative.

- *Priority D2: Working Group Reports.*

Throughout the second quarter, working groups shall report to the BCEC their final



recommendations for strategies, services and products. The BCEC shall compile, organize and summarize working group materials – including the results of community engagement sessions – into a working outline of the 2020 MCZ plan. Working groups shall report to community stakeholders.

- *Priority D3: Community Data Book.*

Good data is critical to plan quality. The BCEC shall gather data necessary for the quick and accurate administration of the MCZ initiative and to assure a clear understanding of the scope and depth of problems and assets in the community. The BCEC shall also report to and work with community stakeholders interested in and capable of recording and compiling necessary data.

Stakeholders shall be instructed how to report data to the BCEC, which will compile data into a community data book of current and ongoing characteristics at the local, regional and state levels. Information in the data book may include qualitative and quantitative trends in development, transportation, community service delivery, population and household characteristics, public safety, education, health and employment.

### Third Quarter, 2015

The BCEC shall meet at least 3 times in the third quarter. Activities in this quarter shall focus on developing a draft 5-year plan, including implementation and evaluation of the proposed MCZ.

- *Priority E1: Operational Roles.*

The BCEC shall meet with stakeholders to discuss the working outline, determine their final insights and assess the scope of their interest, including sponsorship and funding. The BCEC shall address any remaining issues or concerns and establish operational roles for the proposed plan. These roles shall be prioritized by interest and resources and shall take into consideration the potential for translating best-practices in the MCZ to broader impact areas, including neighborhood, city-wide and county-wide levels.

- *Priority E2: Recommendations for City, County and State Policy.*

The BCEC shall develop a list of recommendations for local, regional and state changes in policy or programming. Recommendations shall be prioritized by need and expected realization. Preliminary recommendations shall be forwarded to the City's Intergovernmental Relations Division for review.

- *Priority E3: Evaluation Methodologies.*

The success of the proposed MCZ shall be measured by the benchmarks provided in priority C2. These may include measures of job creation, economic activity, improved educational opportunity, improved public safety, reduced poverty and the leveraging of private capital. The BCEC shall develop a plan for using benchmarks to evaluate program outcomes.

In addition to this evidence-based approach, the BCEC shall also develop a plan for institutional evaluation, including:

1. The responsiveness of stakeholders to the community's needs and assets, including the appropriateness of implementation partners selected to execute MCZ plan components.
2. The extent to which the MCZ strategy targets and aligns existing local efforts and investments within the community.
3. The potential for the MCZ to align with and leverage regional or state efforts relating to children's outcomes.
4. The ability of the community to sustain the MCZ strategy, including the potential for future programmatic and fiscal assistance and the strength and extent of partnership commitment.
5. The ability to manage, share, use and report data for evaluation and continued program improvement.
6. Residents' continued involvement in the implementation of the overall MCZ strategy.

As noted in priority D3, multiple stakeholders may contribute data through periodic transfer to the BCEC. It is hoped that the BCEC evaluation plan, using the community data book, will help identify the needs of children and families in the proposed MCZ, track the services they receive and document their progress and outcomes. The data will also help to further develop and improve the MCZ's service systems.

#### Fourth Quarter, 2015

- *Priority F1: Institutional Platform.*

Once the planning process is completed, one or several lead stakeholders will need to

manage and maintain the MCZ vision, including data collection and evaluation. Although the MCZ will be a continuum of existing and potential community resources, having a plan for continued administrative oversight may prove useful in establishing momentum and maintaining success.

The BCEC shall recommend a method for ongoing fiscal and programmatic coordination. This may be a stand-alone legal structure or institutional platform responsible for reporting to the Common Council and conducting ongoing support for the proposed MCZ after the BCEC is dissolved.

As funding or ideas surface that were not anticipated at the time of plan development, the plan may need to be implemented differently to accommodate additional stakeholders or plan components. The BCEC shall anticipate these changes and adopt a plan flexible enough for continued development.

- *Priority F2: Final 2020 MCZ Plan.*

The BCEC's final plan shall bring all project ideas together into a comprehensive document. The plan shall be clear, direct and compact, aiming for readability, not bulk. Background information and data shall be used only when needed to clarify an issue or project. The plan shall include at least an introduction, statement of vision, detailing of strategies by a presentation of projects or initiatives, and a summary implementation matrix identifying:

1. Each project or initiative, including an identification of those most viable.
2. Each project's measures of success.
3. How these projects will be applied within the MCZ.
4. The timing of implementation.
5. Identified sponsors or funders.
6. Responsible stakeholders.
7. Additional illustrations or explanations for each project, as appropriate to provide necessary guidance and to show how each project supports the MCZ's vision.

The final plan shall be presented to the Common Council.

- *Priority F3: Formally Launch MCZ.*

The BCEC shall prepare the final plan in a fashion that can be delivered to MCZ stakeholders and shall present the plan in an appropriate manner at a community ceremony. Upon formal launch of the MCZ, the Blueprint Commission and its Executive Committee shall be dissolved. Ongoing fiscal and programmatic collaboration shall be coordinated according to the institutional platform provided in priority F1.

**Figure 6. Planning Timeline.**

Action	2014				2015											
	AUG/ SEP	4th Quarter			1st Quarter			2nd Quarter			3rd Quarter			4th Quarter		
		OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Common Council establishes the MCZ.																
Priority A1: Community Notification.																
Priority A2: Resources																
Priority A3: Reporting																
Priority B1: Background & Procedure																
Priority B2: Visioning																
Priority B3: Networking																
Priority C1: Working Group Action Plans																
Priority C2: Benchmark Measures																
Priority C3: Preliminary Reports																
Priority D1: Community Engagement																
Priority D2: Working Group Reports																
Priority D3: Community Data Book																
Priority E1: Operational Roles																
Priority E2: Policy Recommendations																
Priority E3: Evaluation Methodologies																
Priority F1: Institutional Platform																
Priority F2: Final MCZ 2020 Plan																
Priority F3: Formally Launch MCZ																

## CONCLUSION

The structure of the Milwaukee Children's Zone includes significant community involvement and clear commitments by key partners. As demonstrated in the successful implementation of the Harlem Children's Zone, this model recognizes that creating a continuum of leadership and support is not an easy task, but it is one which reaps large rewards in the community.

As a collaboration between public officials, representatives from faith and business communities, community organizations, parents, teachers and children, the planning of the Milwaukee Children's Zone will require careful contemplation and thoughtful, culturally-sensitive dialogue. This planning document is the first step in achieving this continuum of solutions.

Over the next year and a half, the BCEC will work to develop and refine a plan for addressing issues in the proposed MCZ. The BCEC will solicit and engage key stakeholders and the community to build this capacity and will be responsible for meeting management, consensus building and public engagement. In this way, the MCZ vision and plan will be rooted in the aspirations of the area's residents, creating an environment where children and families can succeed, regardless of socio-economic status.

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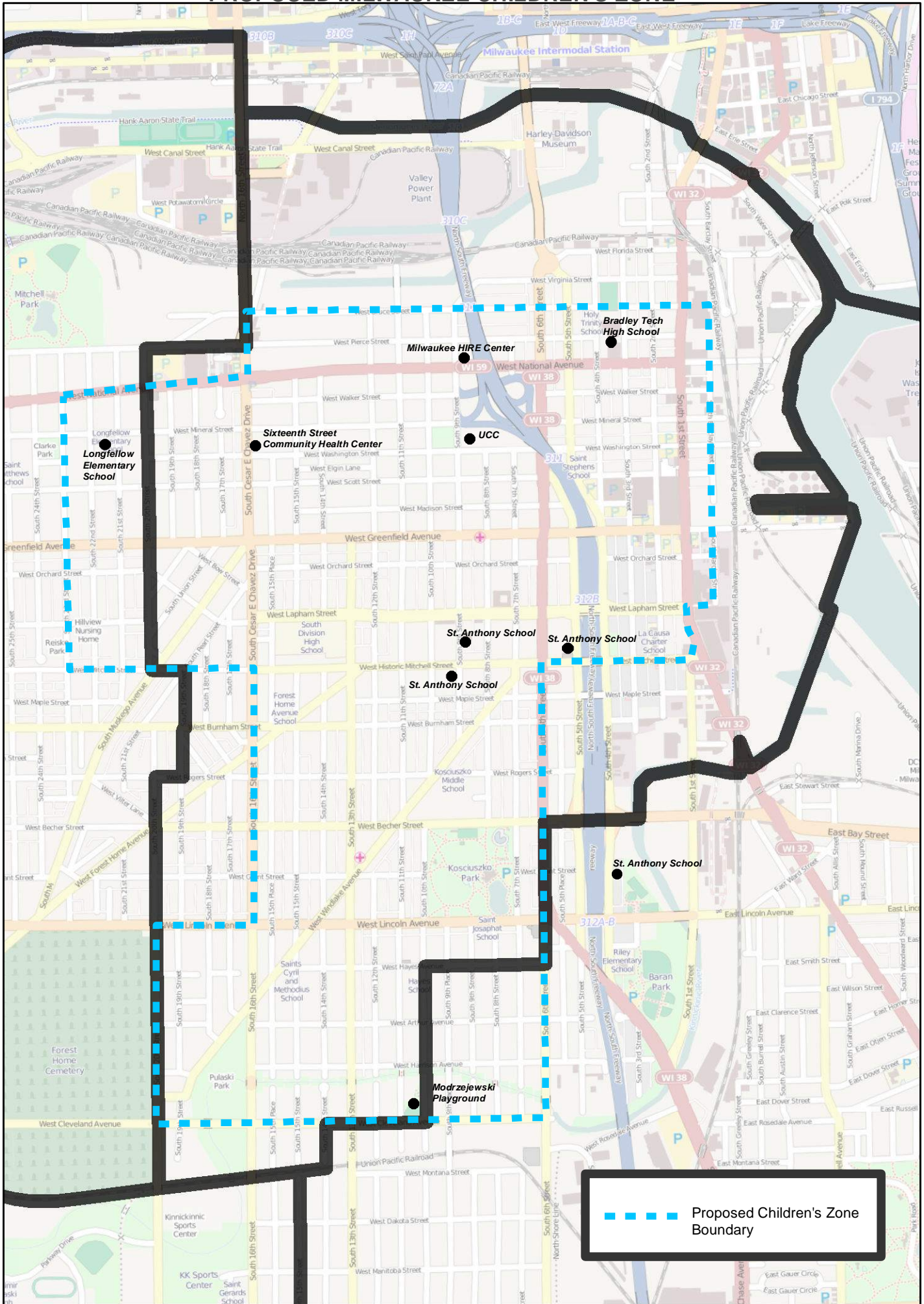
Edited by: Ted Medhin, Legislative Research Supervisor

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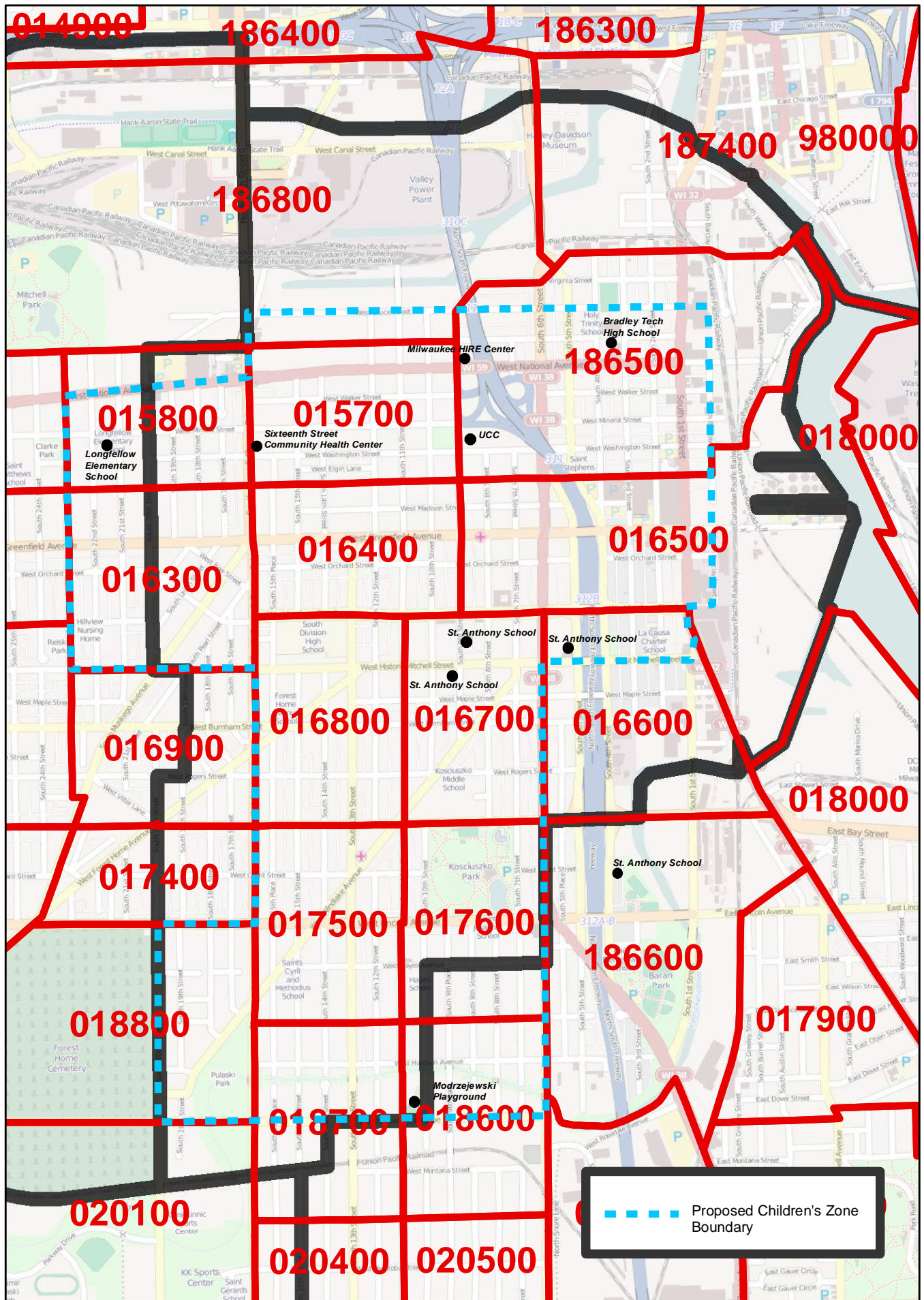
## APPENDIX

# PROPOSED MILWAUKEE CHILDREN'S ZONE





# CENSUS TRACTS AND SELECTED INSTITUTIONS IN AREA OF PROPOSED MILWAUKEE CHILDREN'S ZONE



- - - - - Proposed Children's Zone Boundary