

GRANT F. LANGLEY
City Attorney

MIRIAM R. HORWITZ
ADAM B. STEPHENS
MARY L. SCHANNING
JAN A. SMOKOWICZ
Deputy City Attorneys



Milwaukee City Hall Suite 800 • 200 East Wells Street • Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202-3551
Telephone: 414.286.2601 • TDD: 414.286.2025 • Fax: 414.286.8550

SUSAN E. LAPPEN
PATRICIA A. FRICKER
HEIDI WICK SPOERL
GREGG C. HAGOPIAN
JAY A. UNORA
KATHRYN Z. BLOCK
KEVIN P. SULLIVAN
THOMAS D. MILLER
ROBIN A. PEDERSON
JEREMY R. MCKENZIE
PETER J. BLOCK
JENNY YUAN
ALLISON N. FLANAGAN
HEATHER H. HOUGH
ANDREA J. FOWLER
PATRICK J. MCCLAIN
NAOMI E. GEHLING
CALVIN V. FERMIN
BENJAMIN J. ROOVERS
ELLENY B. CHRISTOPOULOS
RACHEL S. KENNEDY
TYRONE M. ST. JUNIOR
HANNAH R. JAHN
JULIE P. WILSON
GREGORY P. KRUSE
KIMBERLY A. PRESCOTT
SHEILA THOBANI
KATRYNA C. RHODES
NICOLE F. LARSEN
JAMES M. CARROLL
WILLIAM G. DAVIDSON
MEIGHAN M. ANGER
ALEXANDER R. CARSON
JENNIFER J. TATE
Assistant City Attorneys

October 16, 2019

The Honorable Common Council
City Hall Room 205
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Re: Common Council File # 181767, an itemized report of services and resources provided in the 53206 zip code area

Dear Honorable Common Council members:

The Office of the City Attorney offers the following correspondence in response to Common Council File # 181767, requesting an itemized report of services and resources provided in the 53206 zip code area. The City Attorney assists the Common Council, the Mayor, and all City departments in numerous ways, among them: representing the City's interests in litigation, managing risks so that liabilities do not disrupt finances, supporting the City's policy initiatives through legal opinions, developing legal strategies to promote respect for individual civil liberties, and working to sustain safe and healthy neighborhoods by reducing nuisances detrimental to neighborhood quality of life. Due to the broad and varied nature of our supportive work, this office does not track legal services or litigation geographically by zip code. Therefore, it is difficult to accurately respond to this request with a precise accounting of every lawsuit, contract negotiation, employment dispute, tax assessment challenge, collections action, licensing dispute, development project, code enforcement prosecution, election matter, zoning question, Milwaukee Public Schools or Housing Authority issue, bankruptcy proceeding, or administrative law matter handled by this office and involving residents, employers and/or real estate located in the 53206 zip code.

The Office of the City Attorney improves the quality of life in the 53206 zip code area by prosecuting ordinance violations and abating public nuisance conditions. The Neighborhood Revitalization and Ordinance Enforcement section continues to collaborate with other City departments and governmental agencies, community based



organizations, and residents to address chronic neighborhood and housing-related problems. This includes investigating exploitative landlords and seeking receiverships where appropriate, initiating appropriate disciplinary action against license holders, and developing unique legal strategies that target difficult and ongoing problem properties.

In 2019, the Neighborhood Revitalization and Ordinance Enforcement section continued litigating several large scale receivership actions and/or bankruptcy adversarial proceedings against exploitative landlords and chronic debtors, most notably *City of Milwaukee v. Elijah Rashaed* and *City of Milwaukee v. Mohammad Choudry*; both defendants owned properties located in the 53206 ZIP code. Federal bankruptcy proceedings continue against Larry Hopson and James Miicke, both of whom own property in the 53206 ZIP code.

Our office also collaborated with the Wisconsin Department of Justice in its investigation of Vision/Kaja LLC's lease-to-own business and referred many seemingly unscrupulous property owners to state and federal prosecutors. As of September, 2019, our office assisted MPD District 3 in an unlicensed tavern investigation at 2516 W. Fond du Lac Avenue and partnered with MPD District 5, MPD Sensitive Crimes, and the Department of Neighborhood Services regarding prostitution related issues at a property on North Buffum Street. We also met with property managers regarding after-set activity at 1306 West Atkinson Avenue and after-set, drug, and nuisance activity at 1020 West Hadley Street. Similar achievements in 2018 in the 53206 zip code included working with MPD Districts 3, 5 and 7 to investigate after-set activity at 4473 N. 28th Street (and other properties owned by Will Sherard) and with District 5 to secure an 80-10 nuisance designation of 2857 N. 16th Street. Our office also referred a fraudulent land contract issue on the 3500 block of North 1st Street to the District Attorney's Office.

Additionally, in 2019 the City Attorney's Office worked closely with the Treasurer's Office to ensure a disabled resident who lived in the 3000 block of North 23rd Street in the 53206 zip code was able to stay in her home after foreclosure. The resident lost the home to an *in rem* foreclosure after her guardian failed to pay her property taxes over a number of years. The resident, by her agent, filed an application to vacate the *in rem* foreclosure judgment, which was approved conditional upon the resident paying off the back taxes and other outstanding fees. The resident's agent, one of her children, lived out of state and was unfamiliar with City payment processes. City Attorney staff had a number of conversations with the agent and the agent's attorney, walking them through the process. City Attorney staff also worked with the Treasurer's Office to ensure payments were properly and timely applied. The foreclosure judgment was ultimately vacated, and the resident and her relative caregiver were able to remain in their family home.

Our office regularly contributes to DNS' award-winning landlord training program and the City Clerk's licensing training program. In 2019, 32 participants associated with 53206 attended landlord training. In 2018, 43 people participated in landlord training who either lived or owned property in the 53206 ZIP code.

Sophisticated real estate and development legal work continues regarding large scale projects adjacent to the 53206 zip code. Our real estate lawyers are working with DCD on developments at the Century City property, which recently has included Good City Brewing, Strauss Brands and Talgo, and on the revitalization of the former Sears store on Fond du Lac Avenue into the Ikon Hotel.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any legal matters that may positively impact the residents of the 53206 zip code; my office is ready to assist.

Very truly yours,



GRANT F. LANGLEY
City Attorney

1049-2016-1386:263978