



**2011-2013
COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**Community Relations –
Social Development Commission**

Milwaukee, WI

September 2010

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There are seven appendices to this report. They are:

- ▶ Telephone Survey Report
- ▶ Door-to-Door Survey Report
- ▶ Existing Data Indicators Report
- ▶ Key Stakeholders Survey Report
- ▶ Board Focus Group Report
- ▶ Consumer Interviews Report
- ▶ Staff Survey Report

These reports can be found at:

<http://www.cr-sdc.org/About/PolicyResearch/2010CSBGNeedsAssessment.htm>



Because There's No **One Way**
To End Poverty

INTRODUCTION

In 2009, the SDC embarked on one of its most ambitious attempts at conducting a community needs assessment in agency history. Although the SDC performs a community needs assessment every three years per requirements for continued Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funding, the SDC made a decision in 2009 to increase its examination of what is happening in Milwaukee County as it pertains to low-income individuals and their experience with poverty. This decision was driven in part by the agency's concerted focus to obtain quality data leading to a renewed emphasis on examining larger systemic issues. Strategic planning was also looming on the horizon and the SDC needed data to both drive and supplement this process. Lastly, the SDC simply needed to know how it could better serve its ever-growing service population.

To perform an assessment on the desired scale, the SDC partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Center for Urban Initiatives & Research (CUIR). For over 35 years, CUIR has been providing research services and technical assistance to public and non-profit organizations to help them make informed decisions. Using traditional and innovative methods, CUIR helps communities and organizations understand present conditions, make informed policy choices, and plan for the future.

Together, the SDC and CUIR set out to gather input from a variety of sources including key stakeholders in the community, low-income persons, governmental leaders, and civic organizations.

The goals of the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment were to:

1. Identify and quantify the incidence or prevalence of individual need;
2. Identify gaps in human service provision;
3. Identify barriers to attaining self-sufficiency; &
4. Identify strategies for overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency.

The assessment consisted of the following seven research components:

- 1) Telephone Survey of Milwaukee County Residents: 420 telephone surveys of Milwaukee County residents were completed using random-digit telephone dialing.
- 2) Door-to-Door Interviews of Milwaukee County Residents: 514 in-person interviews were completed by residents living in the 18 Neighborhood Strategic Planning areas located within the City of Milwaukee by Safe & Sound Community Partners and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee interns.
- 3) Review of Existing Data and Research on Poverty: Several indicators related to poverty were investigated. These indicators included: population estimates, poverty estimates, unemployment, wage data, MPS data, WIC, FoodShare, free & reduced lunch, food pantries, transportation to work, Milwaukee County Transit System data, housing stock, housing affordability, foreclosures, vacancies, tax credits, homelessness, medical care, mental health, substance abuse, health insurance, & health clinics.

- 4) Key Community Stakeholders Interviews: 182 in-depth, open-ended interviews were conducted with local officials and other community stakeholders from a variety of sectors including business/for profit; education; faith-based; philanthropy; government; health; legal; non-profit; & media.
- 5) CR-SDC Board of Commissioners Focus Group: CUIR facilitated a focus group in May 2010 with the current CR-SDC Board of Commissioners.
- 6) In-depth Consumer Interviews: 20 consumers of CR-SDC services were interviewed in-person at the CR-SDC offices from February to March 2010.
- 7) CR-SDC Staff Survey: 153 CR-SDC staff were surveyed using a Zoomerang online survey.

Eight core poverty-related areas were explored throughout the assessment, including:

- 1) Employment: Lack of jobs, education, or training; low wages & lack of benefits; problems with child care & transportation; etc.
- 2) Education: Drop-out rates; lack of preschool & child care; lack of vocational skills training; lack of awareness about educational opportunities; etc.
- 3) Housing: High housing & utility costs; shortage of affordable housing; overcrowding; unsafe neighborhood conditions; etc.
- 4) Food and Nutrition: Lack of food or lack of healthy food; lack of knowledge about nutrition; lack of alternative food sources like pantries & meal programs; etc.
- 5) Transportation: Problems with public transportation; high costs of owning & maintaining a vehicle; difficulties with transportation for daily living activities; etc.
- 6) Health and Healthcare: Lack of insurance; high medication costs; lack of treatment options for mental health and substance abuse; unhealthy lifestyles; etc.
- 7) Income: Lack of money management of family budgeting skills; lack of awareness of good financial practices; etc.
- 8) Family and Relationships: Lack of services for older adults or youth; poor parenting skills & supports; child abuse & domestic violence; etc.

The results of this endeavor yielded seven separate comprehensive reports for each of the seven research components. All of these reports are can be found at <http://www.cr-sdc.org/About/PolicyResearch/2010CSBGNeedsAssessment.htm>.

With the creation of a Policy & Research Division, the SDC is beginning to reinvent its community action function. Over the last 46 years, the SDC has provided high quality services and programming, which enable low-income individuals and families meet and overcome the challenges of poverty each and every day. Over this same time period, the SDC's foray into conducting original research leading to structured advocacy efforts has diminished in both quantity and quality. The SDC's 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment is a cornerstone in reversing this trend.

While the research driving this *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* may be static, the SDC's Policy & Research Division will examine the data in greater detail and perform additional analyses in the months and years to follow. There is a breadth of untapped information that needs to be uncovered and the SDC will make every attempt possible to examine everything that this research has to offer.

Along with the actual needs assessment come the resultant *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* components. These components are laid out in the pages to follow. First, a *Summary of Findings* report is presented in full. This 15-page report presents the results of the SDC's 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment in a short, executive summary style format. After this, data will be presented, which identifies and prioritizes the human service needs of Milwaukee County residents. A separate section then follows which presents recommendations from respondents on what can be done to reduce poverty in Milwaukee County along with a more specific look at what the SDC can do to reduce poverty in Milwaukee County. An agency response section follows the recommendations section. The SDC's response to the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment will occur at three ecological levels – micro, intermediate, & macro – with strategic planning intersecting all three. While the SDC's strategic planning process is still in its infancy, its micro/intermediate/macro responses are more fully developed and will be presented in greater detail. Lastly, the seven research reports are included as appendices and can be found at <http://www.cr-sdc.org/About/PolicyResearch/2010CSBGNeedsAssessment.htm>.

As an organic entity, the SDC is constantly evolving, developing, and growing. To this end, the action-oriented activities described here are subject to change. While the SDC has proposed to perform certain functions and carry out certain programmatic initiatives, external environmental influences are sure to have an impact on how these social artifacts become actualized. Although this *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* is a best attempt at identifying what the SDC is doing and what it plans to do in the future, it is not cast in stone. The SDC reserves the right to modify its course based on decisions made by an informed leadership. The SDC is also in a continuous process of engaging its clientele and this reciprocal relationship also has an influence on what services are delivered and how they are delivered. It is for these individuals that the SDC conducted its 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment and it is for these individuals that this *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* was written.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



Center for Urban Initiatives and Research



Community Relations - Social Development Commission: Community Services Block Grant Needs Assessment

Summary of Findings

June 2010

Prepared by **G. Scott Davis, John Kovari, and Jessica Bizub**
Center for Urban Initiatives and Research
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Acknowledgements

The researchers at the UWM Center for Urban Initiatives and Research wish to express their sincere gratitude to the more than 1,000 Milwaukee County residents and nearly 200 key stakeholders who gave their time and input into this important project. In addition, the team would like to thank Community Partners – Safe and Sound and the many UWM students who helped complete the interviews in the community.

Summary

As part of a comprehensive needs assessment for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), the Community Relations–Social Development Commission (CR-SDC) was interested in obtaining data from a broad sampling of Milwaukee County residents and key stakeholders in the community related to core areas related to poverty. The four overarching goals of this project are to:

- (1) Identify and quantify the incidence or prevalence of individual need;
- (2) Identify gaps in human service provision;
- (3) Identify barriers to self-sufficiency; and
- (4) Identify strategies for overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency.

Eight core poverty-related areas were explored throughout the project, which include employment, education, housing, food and nutrition, transportation, health and healthcare, use of available income, and family and relationships. This information will be used to advise and guide CR-SDC as they plan programming and develop advocacy efforts for and on behalf of low-income individuals.

The Center for Urban Initiatives and Research (CUIR), a local applied research center located at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, completed this major research project from August 2009 through May 2010. This project included six components, described below¹:

Telephone Survey of Milwaukee County Residents. Telephone surveys of Milwaukee County residents were completed using random-digit telephone dialing. The final data set was adjusted according to the original research plan by gender and race/ethnicity in order to more closely match estimates as reported by the US Census Bureau. The final data set is comprised of 420 completed surveys. The telephone survey is representative of Milwaukee County.

Door-to-Door Interviews of Milwaukee County Residents. In-person interviews were completed of residents living in the eighteen Neighborhood Strategic Planning (NSP) areas located within the city of Milwaukee. Milwaukee's NSP areas are designated by the local Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) agency, and are selected according to where there is a high incidence of poverty and/or need for community-based services. A total of 514 in-person surveys were completed. The door-to-door survey is more similar to the City of Milwaukee, specific to the NSP neighborhoods, than to Milwaukee County as a whole. However, it is not a representative sample.

Review of Existing Data and Research on Poverty. CR-SDC was interested in obtaining data from a number of indicators related to poverty, service gaps, barriers, and possible solutions for Milwaukee County. CUIR compiled a comprehensive report including numerous pertinent indicators related to poverty and the eight core areas of the project.

Key Community Stakeholders Interviews. The purpose of this component was to gather in-depth, open-ended input from local officials and other community stakeholders from a variety of sectors about poverty. The various sectors include: business/for-profit, education, faith-based, foundation/philanthropy, government, health, legal/judiciary, non-profit, and media. A stakeholder was considered to be someone who has an interest in or direct or indirect involvement with poverty,

¹ Full reports for each of the components, including more in-depth analysis and reporting, are available from CR-SDC at <http://www.cr-sdc.org/About/PolicyResearch.htm>. Altogether, more than 1,000 individuals provided input for this project.

its causes, effects, and solutions. The survey was conducted using three different methods of collecting data: in-person (or telephone) interviews, an online survey, and a mail survey. A total of 514 stakeholders were identified by both CR-SDC and CUIR staff, and 182 interviews were completed.

CR-SDC Board of Commissioners Focus Group. CUIR facilitated a focus group in May 2010 with the current CR-SDC Board of Commissioners. This component is frequently cited in recent best practices research on community needs assessments for CSBG-related services and activities. The CR-SDC Board of Commissioners consists of a tripartite membership from the low-income community, public, and private sectors. This focus group focused in three of the project goals, specifically the gaps in services, barriers of low-income individuals, and suggestions for overcoming these barriers, both generally and specific to CR-SDC.

In-depth Consumer Interviews. Twenty consumers of CR-SDC services were interviewed in-person at the CR-SDC offices from February to March 2010. The interview template was similar to that used in the Door-to-Door Interviews, and was not in any way evaluative of CR-SDC programs.

Notes about Summary Structure. This summary report will be structured so that the four project goals are addressed across the two major respondents groups, Milwaukee County residents and Key Stakeholders. Because this is a summary, only the most prevalent results are presented.

Milwaukee County Residents: Only respondents who indicated that their annual household income is less than poverty from either the Telephone Survey or Door-to-Door Interviews are included in the discussion for Milwaukee County residents. This is because of the high number of respondents in each sample. In addition, the two sample groups are discussed separately for two reasons. First, the wording of questions often differs significantly between the Telephone Survey and Door-to-Door Interview. Second, respondents from the Telephone Survey reside throughout Milwaukee County in its entirety, whereas the interviewees for the Door-to-Door Interview are concentrated within the city of Milwaukee, specifically within the NSP neighborhoods. For these reasons, the researchers assumed that these two respondent samples are distinct from one another and a combination of the two into one data set for comparison was not appropriate. Each of the four project goals are addressed with input from Milwaukee County residents.

Key Stakeholders: As a reminder, a stakeholder for this research is defined as an individual – including local officials and leaders of other community-based organizations - who has an interest in or direct or indirect involvement with poverty, its causes, effects, and solutions. Results from two components are included in the discussion of Key Stakeholders: Community Stakeholder Interviews and CR-SDC Board of Commissioners Focus Group. The respondents from the Community Stakeholder Interviews include individuals across a variety of sectors, including business/for-profit, education, faith-based, foundation/philanthropy, government, health, legal/judiciary, non-profit, and media. The CR-SDC Board of Commissioners is a tripartite membership from the low-income community, public, and private sectors. Although similar to the other stakeholder respondents, these individuals are the leaders of CR-SDC, and their decisions will affect the future actions of the organization more directly. For the purpose of this summary, the results for these two groups are reported separately. Three of the four project goals are addressed with input from stakeholders; only incidence and prevalence are excluded, as they are inappropriate.

Project Goal 1: Prevalence and Incidence of Poverty

Selected Poverty-Related Indicators for Milwaukee County. Using information compiled by CUIR, the following are selected indicators that provide a snapshot of poverty for Milwaukee County.²

- **Poverty.** In terms of poverty, Milwaukee ranks 11th highest among U.S. cities of 250,000 people or more. Residents in the County and City of Milwaukee experience higher rates of poverty at 17% and 23%, respectively, than the statewide average of 10%. Women are slightly more likely than men to have incomes below the poverty level, and single female households account for 72% of all families in poverty. Poverty rates vary by race/ethnicity in Milwaukee County, with 33% of African-Americans, 20% of Hispanics/Latinos, 19% of Asians, and 10% of Caucasians experiencing poverty.
- **Employment.** Employment significantly affects personal and household income. The unemployment rates in the County (9%) and City of Milwaukee (11%) are higher than the statewide average (8%). Unemployment rates vary by race/ethnicity in Milwaukee County, with 12% of African-Americans, 8% of Hispanic/Latinos, 7% of Caucasians, and 4% of Asians experiencing unemployment. Median annual incomes vary by race/ethnicity in Milwaukee County, with Caucasians having the largest median income, followed by Asians, Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, African-Americans, and then Hispanic/Latinos. Income varies by gender, as well, with men making nearly 30% more than women in Milwaukee County.
- **Education.** Milwaukee County education indicators generally fall below statewide averages. The Milwaukee Public Schools District (MPS) is the largest school district in the state. The MPS graduation rate is 68%, compared to 89% statewide, and MPS's dropout rate is 32%, compared to 10% statewide. The percentages of MPS students who meet "proficiency" standards as measured by the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination are below statewide averages in every subject, and significantly below the statewide averages in mathematics and language (more than 20 points below). As of April 2008, 46% of 2005-07 MPS graduates had enrolled in post-secondary education, with 45% of those enrolling in a two-year program and 55% in a four-year program.
- **Food and Nutrition.** Access to and affordability of nutritious food can be a challenge to individuals and families with low incomes in Milwaukee County. While enrollment of Milwaukee County residents in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) has remained relatively stable since 2002, participation in the FoodShare program has increased by 16% from 2002 to 2008, and the Hunger Task Force reported a 23.4% increase in monthly food pantry participation from 2008-2009. The percentage of MPS students qualified to participate in the free or reduced lunch program has similarly increased, from 71% in 2002 to 79% in 2008.

² For specific sources of all indicators, please refer to *CR-SDC CSBG Community Needs Assessment Chapter I.3: Existing Data on Various Poverty-Related Indicators for Milwaukee County* (CUIR, 2010) at <http://www.cr-sdc.org/About/PolicyResearch.htm>.

- Transportation. Access to reliable transportation can present a challenge to low-income individuals and families. The vast majority of Milwaukee County residents drive to work alone. About one-in-twelve Milwaukeeans use the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) every day, and residents in poverty make up the highest percentage of those who use public transportation. Ninety-one percent of inner-city Milwaukee residents aged 16-17 do not have a driver's license and are not seeking one, compared with 41% of 16-17 year olds in neighboring suburbs. Furthermore, adults in the City of Milwaukee have lower licensing rates than adults in other parts of the County, making job location outside of MCTS-served areas an issue.
- Housing. Almost half of the housing units in Milwaukee County are single unit, detached, with duplexes being the next most common type of housing. Over the past few years, foreclosures and vacant housing units have increased in Milwaukee County. About 18% of Milwaukee County renter households experienced a "severe housing burden" during 2000, defined as spending more than 50% of income on housing. Furthermore, while there are 47,200 "extremely low income households" in Milwaukee County, only 30,700 housing units are affordable to those making less than 30% of the area's median income. A point-in-time survey conducted of Milwaukee's homeless revealed that 61% of those surveyed were males, 61% were African-American, 21% had a full-time or part-time job, and the most common reasons for homelessness were loss or lack of work, substance abuse, eviction/foreclosure, and high housing costs.
- Health and Healthcare. An estimated 12% of Milwaukee County residents lack health insurance, compared with 9% statewide. It has been reported that the poor are more than five times likely than those not to be uninsured for an entire year. Life expectancy for those in poverty is lower than those with more stable incomes and in Milwaukee County, life expectancy is also tied to race/ethnicity. Low birth weights and infant deaths occurred most among African-American births. Residents in the lowest socioeconomic areas of the City were more likely to forego medical and dental care, and also were twice as likely to report that they had always or nearly always felt "sad or blue" in the past 30 days. Rates of suicide and illicit substance, tobacco, and alcohol use in Milwaukee County are similar to rates in other areas of the state.

A Profile of People Living in Poverty – Respondents. For this project, Milwaukee County residents were asked whether their annual household income was less than or more than poverty using standards set forth by the US Department of Health and Human Services. Some differences exist in responses between respondents to the telephone survey and the door-to-door interviews. For example, door-to-door interviewees are more likely than their telephone survey counterparts to report annual household income as less than poverty (54% versus 20%, respectively). Across demographic variables such as gender, race/ethnicity, education level, and employment status within the respondent samples, differences exist in terms of overall percentages, but not in terms of statistical significance (except for gender).³

³ Cross-table analysis using Pearson's chi-square was used to determine whether statistically significant differences existed within groups for selected demographic items ($p < .05$).

Telephone Survey Respondents. According to US Census Bureau figures for 2008, Milwaukee County has the highest rate of poverty among all counties in the state of Wisconsin. Of all telephone survey respondents, 20% indicated that their annual household income was less than the USDHHS poverty standards. This is slightly higher than the reported 2008 poverty rate of 17% for Milwaukee County, and nearly twice the poverty rate for the state of Wisconsin (11%) as reported by the US Census Bureau.

Looking at selected demographics, of all telephone respondents:

- There was no statistically significant difference in gender for those who indicate annual household income as less than poverty (22% of all females compared to 18% of all males).
- Persons of color were more likely than Whites to indicate annual household income as less than poverty (39% of all persons of color compared to 8% of all Whites).
- The less educated were more likely to indicate annual household income as less than poverty (36% of all with a high school diploma, GED, or less compared to 14% of all with some college or more education).
- The unemployed were more likely to indicate annual household income as less than poverty (42% of all the unemployed compared to 12% of all the employed).
- Households with children were more likely to indicate annual household income as less than poverty than those without children (28% of all households with children compared to 16% of all households without children). Moreover, 48% of all single-mother households from this sample reported annual household income as less than poverty.

Door-to-Door Interviewees. High levels of poverty inside the City of Milwaukee drive up the poverty rate for the entire county, counteracting the lower poverty rates in surrounding cities and villages. Of all door-to-door interviewees, 54% indicated that their annual household income was less than the USDHHS poverty standards. This is more than twice the 2008 poverty rate of 21% for City of Milwaukee residents, more than three times the 2008 poverty rate for Milwaukee County (17%), and nearly five times the 2008 poverty rate for the state of Wisconsin (11%), as reported by the US Census Bureau.

Looking at selected demographics, of all residents interviewed during the door-to-door component:

- Females were more likely than males to indicate annual household income as less than poverty (61% of all females compared to 43% of all males). This differs from the telephone survey results.
- Persons of color were more likely than Whites to indicate annual household income as less than poverty (58% of all persons of color compared to 36% of all Whites).
- The less educated were more likely to indicate annual household income as less than poverty (66% of all with a high school diploma, GED, or less compared to 44% of all with some college or more education).

- The unemployed were more likely to indicate annual household income as less than poverty (78% of all the unemployed compared to 38% of all the employed).
- Households with children were more likely to indicate annual household income as less than poverty than those without children (67% of all households with children compared to 42% of all households without children). Moreover, 71% of all single-mother households from this sample reported annual household income as less than poverty.

Perceived Seriousness of the Problem of Poverty in Milwaukee County. Respondents were asked their perceptions about the seriousness of the problem of poverty in Milwaukee County.⁴ Of all the Milwaukee County residents and key stakeholders surveyed or interviewed for this project, virtually all agreed that poverty is a serious problem in Milwaukee County (93% each for telephone survey respondents and door-to-door interviewees, and 97% for key stakeholders).

Perceptions of Poverty Trends in Milwaukee County. In terms of poverty trends, two different questions were asked.

Telephone survey respondents and stakeholders were asked whether poverty in Milwaukee County over the past three years has increased, decreased, or stayed the same. Seventy-six percent of Milwaukee County residents surveyed via telephone reported that poverty has increased, compared to 87% of key stakeholders. Nineteen percent of telephone survey respondents and 7% of key stakeholders indicated that they perceived poverty to have remained the same. Two percent of telephone survey respondents and 1% of stakeholders reported the perception that poverty has decreased over the past three years.

A slightly different question was asked of residents who participated in the door-to-door interviews. These respondents were asked whether their family's quality of life has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same over the past three years. Slightly more than a third (34%) of door-to-door interviewees reported that their family's quality of life had gotten worse. Forty-seven percent reported that their quality of life has stayed the same, while 17% reported that their quality of life has gotten better.

If one were to assume that a decrease in quality of life and an increase in poverty are essentially the same, then these measures combined suggest that 53% of residents and 87% of key stakeholders surveyed for this project perceive that poverty has increased in Milwaukee County over the past three years.

⁴ The Telephone and Key Stakeholder surveys asked respondents whether their level of agreement with a statement that poverty is a serious problem in Milwaukee County, and strongly agree and agree responses are included as affirmative. Door-to-Door Interviewees were asked whether or not poverty is a serious problem in Milwaukee County, with "yes" responses included as affirmative.

Project Goal 2: Gaps in Human Service Provision

There was no single question asked across all components that addressed gaps in human service provision. Methods used by the research team are described in each section.

Milwaukee County Residents – Respondents Living in Poverty. The researchers sought to identify the incidence and prevalence of problems experienced by Milwaukee County residents across each of the eight poverty-related “needs” areas: employment, education, family and relationships, food and nutrition, transportation, housing, health and healthcare, and income. Although telephone survey and door-to-door interview respondents were asked about service gaps differently, the results are generally similar.

Telephone Survey Respondents. The telephone survey asked Milwaukee County residents whether or not enough was being done in each of the eight core areas. Those who replied “no,” that enough was NOT being done, are assumed to suggest a service gap. Using this definition, the four areas with the most need for services for the 79 telephone survey respondents who reported annual household income less than poverty –

- Income-related service needs (84%),
- Housing-related service needs (80%),
- Family and relationship-related service needs (78%), and
- Health and healthcare-related service needs (77%).

Door-to-Door Interviewees. For the door-to-door and consumer interviews, respondents were asked several questions related to specific problems in each of the eight core poverty areas. A total of 87 problems were possible from this measure, and for those in poverty, the average number of problems being faced is 30, while for those who are not in poverty the average number of problems is 20. The four areas with the most need for services⁵ for the 240 door-to-door interviewees in poverty are –

- Food and nutrition-related service needs (77%),
- Income-related service needs (68%),
- Housing-related service needs (67%), and
- Transportation-related service needs (63%).

Key Stakeholders. Stakeholders were asked to identify the gaps in human service provision with the following open-ended question: *“What is the area / problem that people in poverty are affected by most?”* A common theme across responses to this question was that people in poverty suffer multiple, serious problems, and that there is not one single problem that affects them most, but rather a list of interconnected problems. As shown below, both stakeholder groups were very similar in perception of the problems that most affect people in poverty.

⁵ It was determined that all respondents, regardless of poverty status, face a large number of issues. Therefore, in order to identify gaps for services, it was decided to determine the median (average) number of problems for each core area for all respondents. Each respondent was categorized as having either more or less than the median number of problems. Those with more than the median were determined to show a service gap.

Community Stakeholders. The three most frequently mentioned problems facing people in poverty identified by community stakeholders are related to employment, education, and health and healthcare, with further detail below.

- Employment-related issues were cited in 44% of responses as the biggest problem facing people in poverty. Respondents also gave more specific employment-related responses, such as a lack of jobs, low wages, and more general responses of “employment.”
- Education-related problems were identified in 29% of responses as a serious problem facing people in poverty. These responses included a lack of education, as well as low “quality” education and a lack of access to educational opportunities.
- Health and healthcare-related problems were the third most frequently identified problem, which was offered by nearly a quarter of all respondents (24%). Most of these responses focused on general health and healthcare. Others were more specific, with citations related to a lack of healthcare, poor health and wellness, and mental health problems.

CR-SDC Board of Commissioners. Although specific counts of responses were not recorded for the focus group of SDC Board of Commissioners, the most frequently mentioned problems facing people in poverty identified by community stakeholders are related to employment and education, with specifics as follows.

- Employment-related issues were cited as a significant problem facing people in poverty in Milwaukee County. This included a lack of education and a lack of job readiness (e.g. soft skills). In addition, Commissioners reported another problem is that jobs that are often inappropriate for particular skill sets, and more specifically that not all jobs require a college education.
- Education-related problems were also identified as a serious problem facing people in poverty. Specific responses included insufficient education, and a lack of vocational educational opportunities at MPS. The lack of alternative educational options for those who are not college-bound was also mentioned.
- A third issue that arose from the focus group was the issue of racism and discrimination. Commissioners reported that the pervasive nature of racism affects those in poverty.

Project Goal 3: Barriers to Self Sufficiency

Both Milwaukee County Residents and Key Stakeholders were asked about potential barriers that may keep people in poverty.

Milwaukee County Residents – Respondents Living in Poverty. Telephone survey and door-to-door interview respondents were asked in different ways about the barriers that keep people in poverty differently, the results are generally similar.

Telephone Survey Respondents. Telephone respondents were provided nine pre-identified barriers and asked to indicate the likelihood that each was a barrier that keeps people in poverty. For each of the nine barriers, a majority of telephone survey respondents in poverty reported that the barrier is either very or somewhat likely to keep people in poverty. The barriers most frequently reported as somewhat or very likely to keep people in poverty are –

- Economic ups and downs (96%),
- Alcohol and other drug abuse (91%), and
- Ineffective poverty-reducing programs, a lack of poverty-reducing programs, and unhealthy family environments (each tied at 89%).

Door-to-Door and Consumer Interviewees. An open-ended question was asked for the door-to-door interviews regarding barriers. The three most frequently identified barriers that keep people in poverty were related to employment, education, and personal or character issues.

- Employment-related barriers were reported by 61% of respondents in poverty in the door-to-door interviews. The most commonly cited employment barriers were the lack of jobs, lack of job skills or training, and a lack of “opportunities.” In addition, low or inadequate pay / wages were frequently identified barriers.
- Education-related barriers were cited by 18% of door-to-door interviewees in poverty. Issues included a lack of education and a need for more education and opportunities. Others cited a poor quality of education and the public school system.
- Personal or character-related issues were indicated by 12% of these respondents. Responses ranged from laziness to a lack of motivation or a criminal history.

Key Stakeholders. For both key stakeholder groups, an open-ended question was asked regarding barriers. As shown below, differences exist between the stakeholder groups.

Community Stakeholders. The three barriers that keep people in poverty most frequently identified by community stakeholders were related to families and relationships, education, and employment.

- Family and relationship-related barriers were the most frequently identified category by stakeholders (27%). Among this theme were responses like unhealthy families and relationships in general, poor parenting, lack of role models, and poor family supports (e.g. child care). The inference made by respondents is that people in poverty grew up in poor family environments, in which they were not taught the necessary skills to escape poverty.
- Education-related barriers were reported by 23% of key stakeholders. The majority specifically stated that a lack of education or educational opportunities was a barrier to escaping poverty. Fewer respondents mentioned that the barrier to escaping poverty was a lack of a quality education, or poor education.

- Employment-related barriers were mentioned by 14% of key stakeholders as keeping people in poverty. The majority of responses in this category centered on a lack of available jobs or employment opportunities. The availability of jobs with a fair or family-sustaining wage was another factor mentioned by several respondents. A lack of job skills or training was another specific barrier cited by stakeholders.

CR-SDC Board of Commissioners. During the focus group, the CR-SDC Board of Commissioners' most frequently reported barrier perceived to keep people in poverty is related to education. The comments were related to education in general and the public school system specifically.

- Related to education in general, Commissioners stated it is a lack of soft skills, decision-making, and problem-solving skills. Other specifics included a need for basic communication skills and anger management. Without positive "life skills," individuals are not able to navigate their way successfully out of poverty, but through life in general.
- Regarding the public school system, the Commissioners identified one major barrier. There is a lack of supportive, caring adults in the school system for children. In the past, teachers were that resource, but now due to a lack of funding and too high of expectations, this does not exist. Students lack a person to go to for assistance. According to one Commissioner, the public school system has lost sight of its mission and become too politicized.

Project Goal 4: Strategies for Overcoming Barriers to Self Sufficiency

For this project goal, one open-ended question was asked of both Milwaukee County Residents and Key Stakeholders: "What do you see as the two or three most important things that could be done to reduce poverty in Milwaukee?"

Milwaukee County Residents – Respondents Living in Poverty. For the Telephone Survey respondents and the Door-to-Door interviewees, the three most frequently identified strategies to overcoming poverty by respondents living in poverty were employment-related strategies, education-related strategies, and changes to programs or resources.

- Employment-related strategies were identified by 56% of telephone survey respondents and 54% of door-to-door interviewees. Specific strategies included not only more jobs, but also better pay. More job-related training was also included in this response.
- Education-related strategies were identified by 35% of telephone survey respondents and 16% of door-to-door interviewees. In terms of specific solutions, respondents referred mostly to more or additional education or education-related opportunities. Some respondents offered more specific ways to improve the existing school system, such as increased funding, "better teachers," encouraging more parental involvement, and decreasing drop-out rates.
- Changes to programs or resources were identified by 20% of telephone survey respondents and 12% of door-to-door interviewees. A specific strategy commonly cited in this category was to increase community awareness of available programs and resources. Other respondents suggested more programs and resources for those in need or more federal aid or government support.

Key Stakeholders. There were similarities between community stakeholders and the CR-SDC Board of Commissioners regarding the most important strategies for reducing poverty in Milwaukee County.

Community Stakeholders. The most frequently identified strategies to overcoming poverty identified by community stakeholders were nearly identical to Milwaukee County residents in poverty from this study. These were education-related strategies, employment-related strategies, job training, and additions to programs or resources. The major difference between community stakeholders and residents in poverty was simply the rank order of each.

- Education-related solutions were identified in 58% of responses provided by key stakeholders as the most important thing that can be done to reduce poverty. Specific responses in this category include education in general, improving public schools, and creating better educational opportunities and/or access.
- Employment and related strategies were the next most frequently mentioned solution for reducing poverty, with 39% of responses. Generally, strategies called for more jobs and employment, both generally and the creation of new jobs. In addition, higher wages was another common reference. Others suggested that the government should be directly involved in creating new jobs (e.g. public works projects during the New Deal).
- Job training as a distinct strategy was identified in 22% of responses from stakeholders. This includes elements related to both education and employment. Job training or job skills in general were specific solutions identified for reducing poverty. Many also referenced how providing soft skills (e.g. interviewing skills, training about employee interactions, and resume writing) is an important solution. Lastly, vocational or technical training was another common response.
- Additional resources and programs was another highly cited strategy, with 20% of responses. Responses included not only additional resources and programs for people in poverty, but also better access to programs and/or resources. Other responses included very specific programs or resources; while others had more general strategies suggesting the use of best practices or proven methods of poverty reduction.

CR-SDC Board of Commissioners. Generally speaking, the strategies and solutions suggested were related to employment. The three major themes reported are access to sustainable employment, the need to keep businesses in Milwaukee, and discrimination within the business sector.

- The first theme is not only about the availability of jobs, but also the need for adequate, family-sustaining wages.
- Regarding the second strategy, it is about more than just keeping businesses in Milwaukee, but increasing economic development within the inner city. According to one Commissioner, businesses have moved right through – and out – of the city. Local government must revisit and revise policies and practices that drive businesses away.

- The third major theme was regarding institutional racism. Many indicated that businesses and trades are discriminatory, and these are persistent attitudes. Commissioners recommended that the business sector be challenged to take positive efforts to reduce this issue, and the it was the role of SDC and organizations like it to provide assistance to businesses in doing so.

The Perceived Role of CR-SDC in Reducing Poverty. Stakeholders were also asked: *“What else do you think CR-SDC could do to help reduce poverty in Milwaukee County?”* As shown below, both stakeholder groups responded essentially identical to one another.

Community Stakeholders. The three themes from community stakeholders most cited for the perceived role of CR-SDC in reducing poverty are improving education, increasing advocacy/leadership, and improving coordination of services.

- Improving education as a way to help reduce poverty was identified in 21% of responses by key stakeholders as a focus for CR-SDC. Responses in this theme include continuing/expanding the Head Start program and other early childhood education, focusing on education in general, and focusing on MPS educational outcomes such as high school graduation rates. Many noted that even though CR-SDC’s role was not education *per se*, CR-SDC’s role in promoting (quality) education would help reduce poverty.
- Increasing the advocacy and leadership of CR-SDC was identified by 17% of responses by key stakeholders. In particular, respondents mentioned that CR-SDC could increase its advocacy of anti-poverty causes or become a “stronger leader” in anti-poverty policies. Several people expressed disappointment that CR-SDC used to be, but is no longer a vocal advocate of anti-poverty issues. Several respondents also suggested that CR-SDC could do more direct lobbying of state government officials, and that CR-SDC should be more visible in the public’s eye.
- Coordination of services was the third most frequently cited recommendation for CR-SDC related to offering coordinated services. Sixteen percent of responses were identified in this category, and includes recommendations as encouraging CR-SDC to “coordinate” service delivery with other organizations (since people in poverty often receive other kinds of assistance), and offering “comprehensive” assistance to people in poverty (i.e. services which address the entire spectrum of problems facing people in poverty). Respondents mentioned that people in poverty need a wide spectrum of personalized programming to escape poverty, including everything from educational help to better healthcare and family counseling.

CR-SDC Board of Commissioners. The themes reported by the CR-SDC Board of Commissioners echo those of the community stakeholders. For this stakeholder group, the role of CR-SDC is as an active advocate and leader in the community, as well as a service provider.

- On a macro-level, the Commissioners reported that CR-SDC should take the role as a strong advocate and leader in the community regarding issues of poverty. According to one, it is incumbent upon CR-SDC to advocate for those in poverty with the entire community and across all sectors. CR-SDC should be actively engaging and challenging sectors such as the business community and political entities in not only the dialogue regarding poverty, but actively working toward the solutions. Not only should CR-SDC provide education and awareness to various sectors, but also provide clear direction on what can and should be done. This includes

clearly identifying the key issues and specific courses of action to take, such as best practice models. It is also about holding parties accountable.

- On a micro-level, the Commissioners identified the need for CR-SDC to continue its role as a provider of services that meet the basic needs of those in poverty. These include food, shelter, and housing, among others. Related to this concept, the Commissioners indicated that CR-SDC should be actively coordinating services for those in poverty, helping individuals get the various resources necessary for self-sufficiency. It was stated that only through close coordination and collaboration between organizations, services, and resources will poverty be adequately addressed.

Conclusions

In sum, the results of this research clearly show that poverty is perceived as a serious problem by both Milwaukee County residents and key stakeholders, with many inter-connected needs. The barriers that keep people in poverty are different, depending upon who is being asked, but the suggested solutions are consistent - the key strategies to reducing poverty are related to employment and education. CR-SDC as an agency should take a more active role in advocacy and leadership related to reducing poverty, working on the macro-level with all sectors, while continuing to provide the necessary services and resources for those in need.

The key findings of this research with more detail are as follows:

The Perception is that Poverty is a Serious and Growing Problem in Milwaukee County.

Across all groups, virtually all respondents think poverty is a serious problem in Milwaukee County. Furthermore, combined measures suggest that most perceive that poverty has increased in Milwaukee County over the past three years.

Employment and Education are the Major Factors Related to Poverty. Overall, responses related to employment and education were the most common when asked about the various aspects of poverty. These two themes were consistently found among the most frequently cited responses for each research question, including the problems, barriers, and solutions associated with poverty.

Many Service Needs and Gaps Exist in Milwaukee County. A common theme was that people in poverty suffer multiple, serious problems, and that there is not one single problem that affects them most, but rather a list of interconnected problems. Most respondents think that problems related to all eight core needs areas are serious and that not enough is being done for each.

Lack of Employment and Education are Major Barriers that Keep People in Poverty. Across all groups, a lack of education and employment (e.g. jobs) were found to be the major barriers keeping people in poverty. People in poverty were more likely to offer structural or systemic barriers (such as lack of educational and employment opportunities, and crime/racism), compared to the personal/family barriers offered by people who are not in poverty.

More and Better Employment and Educational Opportunities are Recommended Strategies for Reducing Poverty. The most frequently cited strategies to reduce poverty in Milwaukee County are related to employment and education. More specifically, respondents across all groups suggested more jobs, better pay, more and better education, and additional educational opportunities.

CR-SDC is Thought to Have an Important Role in Reducing Poverty in Milwaukee County. The three most frequently identified roles for CR-SDC in the reduction of poverty by key stakeholders were improving education, increasing advocacy/leadership, and improving coordination of services. This is echoed from the perspective of the CR-SDC Board of Commissioners. The role of CR-SDC is both at the macro level as a more active advocate and leader, and at the micro level as a service provider that fulfill basic human needs.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY SERVICE NEEDS & RANKINGS

The SDC’s 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment consists of seven distinct research components. Given that the SDC’s service area includes all of Milwaukee County, the most appropriate research component to be used as a guide for ranking Milwaukee County service needs is the *Milwaukee County Resident Telephone Survey* simply because it is the most representative sample of Milwaukee County residents.

From October 12, 2009 to October 23, 2009, CUIR contacted residents of Milwaukee County using random-digit telephone dialing, which includes unlisted numbers. More than 15,000 telephone calls were made, and a total of 562 surveys were completed. The final data set was adjusted according to the original research plan by gender and race/ethnicity in order to more closely match estimates as reported by the US Census Bureau (ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2005-2007). This was accomplished through over-sampling of males and Hispanics, and through the deletion of randomly selected respondents in overly-represented categories (White, females) from the data set. The final data set is comprised of 420 completed surveys.

In order to determine how household income compared with federal poverty guidelines, total household size was compared to 2009 levels set forth by the US Department of Health and Human Services. After determining total household size, respondents were asked whether their annual household income was more or less than the given value. As shown in the table below, almost one in five (19%) respondents reported annual household income less than that of poverty. Moreover, survey respondents with households in poverty are more frequent proportionally than the general Milwaukee County figures (U.S Census Bureau, American Community Survey).

Annual Household Income Compared to Poverty Level

Response	Count	Percentage	Milwaukee County
Less	79	19%	13%
More	315	75%	87%
Don't Know / Refused	26	6%	-
<i>Total</i>	<i>420</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>

To identify and rank service needs, respondents were asked whether enough is being done about the core areas to reduce poverty in Milwaukee County. Please see the table below for response percentages for each of the eight core areas.

Is Enough Being Done about Core Poverty-related Areas

Core Area	Responses			Total *
	Yes	No	Don't Know / No Answer	
Employment	17%	77%	6%	100%
Education	21%	74%	5%	100%
Use of Available Income	20%	71%	9%	100%
Family and Relationships	21%	72%	7%	100%
Health and Healthcare	24%	72%	3%	100%
Housing	26%	68%	7%	100%
Food and Nutrition	32%	61%	7%	100%
Transportation	36%	54%	10%	100%

** Due to rounding, percentage may not sum to 100%*

In all eight core areas related to poverty, a majority of respondents reported “no,” not enough was being done to reduce poverty in Milwaukee County. For Employment, nearly four of five respondents (77%) reported that not enough was being done. This was followed closely by 74% for Education, and just over seven of ten for Health and Healthcare (72%), Family and Relationships (72%), and Use of Available Income (71%). The perception that not enough is being done was also the majority for Housing (68%) and Food and Nutrition (61%). Regarding Transportation, only about half (54%) reported that not enough was being done, but there was a fairly large percentage (10%) with “don’t know/no answer” responses, which makes this result somewhat inconclusive.

The final Milwaukee County service needs & ranking are as follows:

- 1) Employment:** Available Jobs; Higher Paying Jobs; Job Training; Employment Benefits; Child Care to Maintain Employment; Transportation to Employment; etc.
- 2) Education:** Drop-Out prevention; Pre-School & Child Care Options; Vocational Skills Training; Availability of Educational Opportunities; etc.
- 3) Use of Available Income:** Money Management Programs; Family Budgeting Skills; Financial Literacy; etc.
- 4) Family and Relationships:** Services for Older Adults; Services for Youth; Parenting Classes; Parental Support; Child Abuse Prevention; Domestic Violence Services; etc.
- 5) Health and Healthcare:** Availability of Health Insurance; Assistance with Paying for Medication; More Options for Mental Health & Substance Abuse; Programs to Develop Healthy Lifestyles; etc.
- 6) Housing:** Assistance with Housing Costs; Assistance with Utility Costs; Affordable Housing; Neighborhood Safety; etc.
- 7) Food and Nutrition:** Assistance with Getting Food; Healthy Food; Nutrition Education; More Food Pantries & Meal Programs; etc.
- 8) Transportation:** More Public Transportation Options; More Efficient Public Transportation; Assistance with Buying & Maintaining a Car; Getting Transportation for Daily Living Activities; etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING NEEDS

One of the key elements of a community action plan is the inclusion of recommendations on how to address community needs. To accommodate this, one of the four goals of the SDC’s 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment was to identify strategies for overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency. Five of the research components – telephone survey, door-to-door interviews, Milwaukee County key stakeholder interviews, SDC Board of Commission focus group, & consumer interviews – probed specifically into this aspect. A summary of the results is found in the table below:

Recommended Strategies for Overcoming Barriers to Self-Sufficiency

	<i>Telephone Survey</i>	<i>Door-to-Door Interviews</i>	<i>Milwaukee County Key Stakeholder Interviews</i>	<i>SDC Board of Commission Focus Group</i>	<i>Consumer Interviews</i>
<i>Recommendation #1</i>	Employment	Employment	Education	Employment	Employment
<i>Recommendation #2</i>	Education	Education	Employment	Economic Development	Education
<i>Recommendation #3</i>	Family or Relationships	Community	Job Training	-	More Programs/Resources

For all five research components, employment was seen as the most (or second to most) recommended strategy in helping people move beyond poverty.

Two of the research components - Milwaukee County key stakeholder interviews & SDC Board of Commission focus group – probed specifically into what the SDC could do to reduce poverty in Milwaukee County. The table below summarizes these results:

How the SDC Can Reduce Poverty in Milwaukee

	<i>Milwaukee County Key Stakeholder Interviews</i>	<i>SDC Board of Commission Focus Group</i>
<i>Recommendation #1</i>	Education	Leadership
<i>Recommendation #2</i>	Advocacy/Leadership	Advocacy/Strategic Thinking
<i>Recommendation #3</i>	Comprehensive/Strategic Planning	Coordinated Programming

There are strong commonalities between the two research components. Both components point to leadership, advocacy, and strategic planning as things the SDC could do to reduce poverty in Milwaukee County.

The detailed sections starting on page 26 present excerpts from the actual reports for both the general recommendations and specific recommendations.

The two tables on the preceding page identify a number of recommendations at a number of different levels. This in turn requires a variety of strategies to best accommodate and also take action on these recommendations. At a micro service level, Milwaukee County residents need jobs and also the assistance that will help them obtain employment. Related to this is a need to obtain the education and skills required for employment. At a more macro level, the results of the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment point to the need for the SDC to be more active in advocacy, leadership, and strategic planning. As will be demonstrated in the “Agency Response” section of this community action plan on page 34, the SDC is well on its way towards addressing all of these recommendations. Furthermore, the SDC’s current and future strategic planning will surely use these specific recommendations in developing a course of action for the agency.

Not to be overlooked here is the relationship that the SDC has with other organizations, institutions, and partnerships as it fulfills its programmatic and collegial obligations. Although the SDC is the singular Community Action Agency for Milwaukee, it would be extraordinarily naïve and professionally shortsighted to think that the SDC could address all of these recommendations alone. The SDC operates in an environment of hundreds of other service providers and it has partnerships in one form or another with many of them. The SDC’s experience with CSBG American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funding fostered a brand new set of relationships and this type of relationship-building will continue in the future. As the SDC’s strategic plan develops, specific partners will be identified to help the SDC accomplish its goals and objectives. The “Agency Response” section of this community action plan will provide additional details on how the SDC plans to utilize its partnerships to best meet the needs of Milwaukee County residents.

General Recommendations

From the *Milwaukee County Resident Telephone Survey*, there was one open-ended question included in the telephone survey: “What do you see as the two or three most important things that could be done to reduce poverty in Milwaukee?” Responses were provided by 399 out of 420 respondents (95%), many of whom provided more than one solution. A total of 1,013 responses were coded across the 399 responses. Percentage is calculated using number of coded responses.

Category / Sub-Category	Count	Percentage
Employment Related	291	29%
Education Related	197	19%
Family and/or Relationship Related	90	9%
Health and Healthcare Related	79	8%
Changes to Programs and/or Resources	62	6%
Transportation Related	49	5%
Use of Income (Financial Literacy)	44	4%
Housing Related	43	4%
Community Related	37	4%
Government Action or Policy Related	37	4%
Personal or Character Issue Changes	26	3%
Food and Nutrition Related	25	2%
Other	22	2%
Child Care Related	11	1%
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>1,013</i>	<i>100%</i>

From the *Door-to-Door Survey of Milwaukee County Residents*, all respondents were asked: “Generally speaking, what do you see as the most important thing that could be done to reduce poverty in Milwaukee?” Responses to this question are as follows:

Categories / Sub-Category	Count	Percentage
Employment / Jobs	330	46%
Education	127	18%
Community	55	8%
Additional / Improved Program / Resources	54	8%
Government Action / Policy Issue	30	4%
Housing	27	4%
Family / Relationships	22	3%
Character Issues	17	2%
Other	16	2%
Healthcare	15	2%
Use of Income / Financial Literacy	8	1%
Transportation	6	1%
Food & Nutrition	5	1%
Child Care	2	<1%
<i>Overall Total</i>	<i>714</i>	<i>100%</i>

From the *Survey of Milwaukee County Stakeholders*, respondents were asked: “What is the most important thing that can be done to help reduce poverty in Milwaukee County?” One hundred seventy respondents provided answers. The top three themes for solutions include education, employment, and job training. A listing of responses can be found below.

Theme / Sub-Theme	Freq / Count	Percentage
Education	99	29%
Employment	67	20%
Job Training	37	11%
Additional Resources / Programs	37	11%
Family and Relationships	24	7%
Comprehensive / Coordinated Efforts	17	5%
Government Policies / Actions	16	4%
Community / Societal Strategies	11	3%
Housing	7	2%
Transportation	6	2%
Changes in Character / Personality	6	2%
Health and Healthcare	6	2%
Use of Income / Money Management	4	1%
Food and Nutrition	2	1%
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>339</i>	<i>100%</i>

From the *CR-SDC Board of Commissioners Focus Group*, participants were asked to provide general strategies to reducing poverty, using the open-ended question: “What is the most important thing that can be done to help reduce poverty in Milwaukee County?”

The first response to this question raised access to suitable employment, and much of the discussion revolved around economic development issues thereafter.

One thread of discussion pertained to the manufacturing sector, although some comments could be understood to generalize to the business community overall. It was suggested that Milwaukee is behind in recognizing the shift to a global economy; manufacturing is not the wave of the future. Milwaukee still thinks the “Fonzie days” are going to come back, and that “Milwaukee is Gary, Indiana in the 1970s.” Milwaukee is always accommodating to manufacturing and in fact, the tax burden on manufacturers is relatively low. The implication was that taxes do not drive away manufacturers as much as an interest in paying lower wages. Resources for business are directed through the city, not in the city (i.e., government policies are geared toward business needs, not the needs of individual residents).

It was also suggested that one reason Milwaukee Public Schools is in its current state of poor academic achievement is that manufacturers expect public policy to address business needs at the expense of addressing MPS needs – scarce resources are diverted. Education has become about politics, not the kids. The educational mission has been lost. One Commissioner argued that the business community talks, but does nothing. The gravity of the poor MPS 4th grade reading results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress is not understood or appreciated. Finally, the argument was made that there is a misunderstanding between what business wants and what educators can provide.

The issue of racism was raised as well. It was argued that institutional racism keeps minorities out of certain positions. For example, with the range of ongoing construction projects in Milwaukee, a Commissioner asked, “why can’t blacks get jobs?” Another Commissioner acknowledged that there is racism in the trades, but the trades cannot solve the unemployment problem.

For the *Consumer Interviews*, one open-ended question was asked: “What do you see as the two or three most important things that could be done to reduce poverty in Milwaukee?” Responses were provided by each of the twenty consumers, many of whom offered more than one suggested strategy. A total of thirty-nine responses were coded and grouped into eleven major categories, as shown below:

THEME / <i>Sub-Theme</i>	Count	Percentage
Employment	14	36%
Education	6	15%
More Programs / Resources	5	13%
Family	3	8%
Community	3	8%
More Transportation	2	5%
Personal	2	5%
Food – Keep Children Fed	1	3%
Government – Change Social Security	1	3%
More Housing	1	3%
Other Opportunities	1	3%
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>100%</i>

Recommendations for SDC

From the *Survey of Milwaukee County Stakeholders*, respondents were asked a short question about solutions to poverty with respect to SDC in particular: “What else do you think SDC could do to help reduce poverty in Milwaukee County?” One hundred thirty-nine valid respondents answered this question. The full table of responses is on the next page. Specifically, the three most cited SDC solution themes were education, advocacy/leadership, and comprehensive/strategic programming.

One in five respondents (21%) said that SDC should focus on or improve education as a way to help reduce poverty. Responses in this theme include continuing/expanding the Head Start program and other early childhood education, focusing on education in general, and focusing on MPS educational outcomes such as high school graduation rates. Many people realized that even though SDC’s role was not education *per se*, SDC’s role in promoting (quality) education would help reduce poverty.

Next, 17% of respondents made references to increasing SDC’s advocacy and leadership. In particular, respondents mentioned that SDC could increase its advocacy of anti-poverty causes or become a “stronger leader” in anti-poverty policies. Several people expressed disappointment that SDC used to be but is no longer a vocal advocate of anti-poverty issues. Several respondents also suggested that SDC could do more direct lobbying of state government officials. Lastly, other respondents suggested that SDC be more visible in the public’s eye.

The third most frequently cited recommendation for SDC related to offering coordinated services. Responses in this category include such recommendations as encouraging SDC to “coordinate” service delivery with other organizations (since people in poverty often receive other kinds of assistance), and offering “comprehensive” assistance to people in poverty (i.e. services which address the entire spectrum of problems facing people in poverty). For example, a few respondents mentioned that simple welfare benefits are not enough. People in poverty need a wide spectrum of personalized programming to escape poverty, including everything from educational help to better healthcare and family counseling. As one respondent noted: “SDC should change its name from Social Development Commission to Strategic Development Commission.”

Full Table: Recommendations for SDC about Reducing Poverty

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Education	29	21%
Advocacy/Leadership	24	17%
Comprehensive/strategic/coordinated programming	22	16%
Outreach	20	14%
Family supports/parenting/child care	19	14%
Collaboration with nonprofits	17	12%
Jobs/employment	15	11%
Update anti-poverty mission/goals	14	10%
Job training/skills	13	9%
Youth programming	11	8%
Foster personal responsibility	11	8%
Specific programming (e.g. W2, EITC, weatherization)	10	7%
SDC doing good job overall	9	6%
More resources/income	9	6%
Housing/homelessness	7	5%
Injustice/discrimination/ignorance	6	4%
Other	5	4%
Collaboration with business	4	3%
Economic development	4	3%
Healthcare	4	3%
Community assessments	4	3%
AODA	3	2%
Crime	3	2%
Transportation/transit	3	2%
Targeted services (e.g. to unemployed black men)	2	1%

From the *CR-SDC Board of Commissioners Focus Group*, Participants were asked: “What else do you think CR-SDC could do to help reduce poverty in Milwaukee County?”

Much of the discussion coalesced around the notion that Milwaukee lacks leadership on poverty-related issues. It was suggested that there is a lack of political and business leadership. For example, the argument was made that the proposed mayoral takeover of MPS is not an “innovative idea.” Furthermore, among the NAACP, Chambers of Commerce, and legislators – no one is pinpointing the major issues and tasking action. There is passivity among elected officials and policymakers; they don’t know where to start. However, CR-SDC can provide direction.

CR-SDC can engage in advocacy and strategic thinking. CR-SDC can lead a different vision about poverty and articulate a new direction. CR-SDC has license to take the lead, and no one else is stepping up. CR-SDC should pick some things, take them to policymakers, and then hold them accountable. One Commissioner noted that CR-SDC is great at basic needs, and CR-SDC’s function is to provide for basic needs. Yet, CR-SDC needs to advocate, although it needs to get better at it. It may be the case however, that CR-SDC doesn’t have the resources to do it, especially the Board. It was suggested that there must be some best practice models for the CR-SDC board to review, and if CR-SDC doesn’t take advantage of best practice models, “shame on us.” The upcoming CR-SDC poverty symposium can set the stage for direction on advocacy.

Coordinated programming was suggested as an approach. Moreover, collaboration with non-profits is necessary, but so is collaboration with business.

AGENCY REPSONSE

The SDC's response to the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment in the next three years will occur at three ecological levels with its strategic planning efforts intersecting all three levels.

At the macro-level, Dave Celata and his staff of Policy Analysts will lead the SDC's efforts in examining how Milwaukee can effectively end poverty through evidence-based programming and policy changes. Driven by the data from the SDC's 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment to identify the critical issues facing Milwaukee County residents, the "Milwaukee Model" will be a comprehensive multi-year effort that will focus on examining larger systemic issues and institutions.

At the intermediate-level, the SDC will be hosting annual poverty symposiums based on the current and pressing issues brought to light by the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment. These symposiums will be designed to inform, educate, and mobilize community leaders in addressing poverty-related issues. For residents, the SDC will be hosting a number of public hearings throughout the course of the next three years. Again, the topics of these public hearings will be based on the issues identified to be most critical to Milwaukee County residents as highlighted in the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment.

At the micro-level is the heart of the SDC, its repertoire of programming initiatives. In 2011 and beyond, the SDC will be offering approximately 30 separate programs for low-income individuals and families. It will be shown in the chart on page 48 that these 30 programs meet the top service needs as identified by respondents in the SDC's 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment. In fact, the SDC is and will be meeting service needs with more than one program and for multiple types of client populations.

In 2005, the SDC completed a strategic planning process for the five-year period of 2006-2010. This plan is now coming to an end and the SDC is about to embark on a new planning process for the period of 2011-2015. When SDC staff began planning for the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment, one of the goals of the assessment was to generate data that could be used in strategic planning. The 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment not only generated a significant amount of data about the SDC's external environment but it also provided a rich amount of information about what the SDC should be doing in terms of reducing poverty in Milwaukee (please see page 31 for a detailed discussion on this topic).

To provide the necessary quality assurance and accountability for the activities described in this *2011-2013 Community Action Plan*, the SDC has a number of mechanisms in place and/or planned for 2011-2013. At the agency level, the SDC Board of Commission governs using a management team model. This is scheduled to change with a move to a policy governance model in 2011. The SDC's operations are monitored by an internal independent auditing department, consisting of a staff of three individuals, which reports directly to the SDC's governing Board. The SDC also has an agency-wide Quality Assurance Unit, which reports directly to the SDC's CEO. Lastly, the SDC will be instituting a standardized client satisfaction survey in 2011 to ensure that client concerns are acknowledged and accounted for.

As mentioned in the Introduction on page five, the SDC's strategic planning effort is still in its infancy stage. What is known at the time of this writing will be discussed in the next section of this community action plan.

Strategic Planning

The SDC is currently in the process of developing a five-year strategic plan with a focus on fulfilling the SDC's mission of *Empowering Milwaukee County Residents With The Resources To Move Beyond Poverty*. Based on the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model of strategic planning, the SDC is currently implementing the following nine-step process:

- Step 1 – Assessment
- Step 2 – Strategy
- Step 3 – Objectives
- Step 4 – Strategy Map
- Step 5 – Performance Measures
- Step 6 – Initiatives
- Step 7 – Automation
- Step 8 – Cascade
- Step 9 – Evaluation

The purpose behind the SDC utilizing the BSC strategic management system is to improve the organization's performance as well as ensuring that the organization is in alignment with its mission and vision. This model will aid the agency in: (1) Maximizing value and effectiveness of the mission; (2) Assessing how well the delivery of services meets the needs of community residents; and (3) Improving internal processes and the professional development of the employees.

The key staff leading this initiative are the following members of the SDC's Executive Department: Quality Assurance Manager, Planning Manager, and Policy & Research Division Manager.

While developing the scorecard framework for the SDC, the goal is to identify 3-5 themes that will guide the agency toward accomplishing its vision of ensuring that "All Milwaukee County residents have equal access to resources needed to help them achieve economic self-sufficiency."

As can be seen in step five below, the SDC's 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment will be a valuable source of information for the Strategic Management Team and the Facilitating Team. The SDC's 2011-2015 strategic plan will most assuredly influence and guide agency operations at the macro, intermediate, and micro levels through the themes identified by the Strategic Management Team and the Facilitating Team. In fact, this process has already started with the development of the Milwaukee Model, planning of poverty symposiums & public hearings, and the institutionalizing of programming initiatives. These activities will be discussed in greater detail beginning on page 37.

An outline of the strategic planning process entails the following:

SDC's Balanced Scorecard Outline		
Task	Responsible Staff	Timeframe
1) Conduct Agency-Wide Assessment	Strategic Management Team Consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO • Executive Leaders • Quality Assurance 	September 2010
2) Determine Budget for the Initiative	Strategic Management Team	September 2010
3) Introduce and Conduct Training on the BSC Model	Facilitating Team consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Assurance • Planning Manager • Policy & Research Division Manager 	September 2010
4) Identify Theme Teams (Staff will be Selected from Various Departments)	Strategic Management Team	October 2010
5) Identify 3-7 Themes Based on the Following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission • Vision • Results Conducted From the Agency-Wide Assessment and Program Assessment • 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment 	Strategic Management Theme Team(s) & Facilitating Team	October 2010
6) Identify 10-15 Strategic Objectives for Each Theme	Theme Teams & Objective Owner Teams	November 2010
7) Implement Strategic Mapping Process	Facilitating Team	November 2010
8) Develop Strategic Initiatives for Each Objective	Objective Owner Teams & Program Experts Consisting of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Supervisors • Line Staff 	December 2010
9) Develop Strategic Measures for Each Objective Initiative	Objective Owner Teams & Program Experts	December 2010
10) Develop an Enterprise-Wide Strategy Map	Facilitating Team	January 2011
11) Analyze Various Software Options (e.g. BSC Database Toolkit, Cognos, Oracle, Business CorVu (Rocket Software))	Strategic Management Team & I.T. Department	January 2011
12) Launch the Plan – Year 1	Strategic Management Team, Facilitating Team & Communication Team	January 2011
13) Continue the Plan – Yrs. 2-4	Strategic Management Team, Facilitating Team & Communication Team	2012-2014
14) Finish the Plan – Year 5	Strategic Management Team, Facilitating Team & Communication Team	January 2015
15) Monitor and Evaluate the Strategy Plan (Develop Evaluating Checklist)	Quality Assurance Team, Internal Auditing Department	Ongoing Throughout the 5-year Plan

Macro-Level: Milwaukee Model

Vision & Goal

The SDC Policy & Research Division envisions a community with effective and efficient structures, policies, and programs that yields a poverty rate of zero. To realize this vision, the division will research, design, and advocate for a comprehensive, evidenced-based plan for eliminating poverty in Metro Milwaukee. This project, entitled, “The Milwaukee Model,” is outlined below. The Milwaukee Model will structure and focus the division’s work on realizing its ambitious vision.

Premise

This project begins with the understanding that “There is no one way to end poverty.” Instead, an effective response to poverty must recognize and respond to the multiple causes of poverty. This understanding begs two questions: 1) exactly how many methods are there to end poverty and 2) what impact does each method actually have on the poverty rate? SDC recognizes the complexities of socio-economic issues and the endogenous relationship that exists between these issues.

Traditionally, responses to poverty have operated in silos, without a clear understanding of how responses interact and fit into the bigger picture. Instead of advocating for one or two responses to poverty, this model recognizes that each response is a piece of the puzzle.

Project Goal

Define exactly how many policy and programmatic methods exist for eliminating poverty, define how they interact, measure the impact that each method has on the total poverty rate, and construct a tailored model for eliminating poverty in Metro Milwaukee.

Model

The Milwaukee Model seeks to build a community without poverty. To do so, everything impacting the poverty rate will be researched and analyzed—including public policies, programmatic responses, and the structure of economic and social institutions. This work will include analyzing existing data and research, conducting original community-based research, and performing national comparative analyzes between Milwaukee and peer cities. The most effective forms of the most effective methods will be identified and placed as a wedge in the model. The sum of this model’s components will yield a community without poverty.

Structure & Division of Responsibilities

In order to achieve the goals of this project, the division will set up an organizational structure that is based on industry best practices for policy organizations and think tanks. The division will operate under a team-orientated philosophy. Each team member will have areas of focus based on his/her skill set, experience, and personal interests; however, team members will support each other throughout all components of the project.

Tools & Resources

Staff will utilize the following items, when needed, to achieve the division's objectives.

Research Based:

- (1) 2010 SDC Community Services Block Grant Needs Assessment
- (2) Public Data Sources (US Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, etc.)
- (3) Academic Research
- (4) Public Hearings
- (5) Client Interviews
- (6) Surveying & Focus Groups
- (7) Data Analysis & Statistical Modeling

Advocacy Based:

- (1) Create and distribute reports
- (2) Meet with public officials and community stakeholders regarding project findings
- (3) Organize community education events to discuss project findings
- (4) Build a network of partners focused on advocating for change based on research findings
- (5) Letters to the editor and general media contacts
- (6) Blogging and web-based networking

Research Structure

Given the scope of this project, research topics will be categorized into three areas: public policies, anti-poverty programs, and socio-economic structures. These three categories will be researched and analyzed in three separate phases before being combined into one model, which will be tailored for Metro Milwaukee. The parameters of each category are outlined below.

- (1) **Public Policies:** This category will include all federal, state, and local laws and rules that impact the poverty rate without providing a service—e.g. the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- (2) **Anti-poverty Programs:** This category will include all public and private programs that provide a service, the intent of which is to address issues of poverty.
- (3) **Socio-economic Structures:** This category will explore the structures of the community's institutions and their impact on the poverty rate—e.g. racial disparities, Gini coefficients, etc.

Active Rollout

The Milwaukee Model will use an active rollout as research findings become available. Updates will be provided at the mid-point of each phase and a report on each category will be drafted at the completion of each phase. Staff will then begin a community education and advocacy campaign on a completed category while simultaneously continuing its research on the next category.

Production Benchmarks

The division will generate the following products throughout the course of this project. This list of benchmarks includes definitive, tangible products as well as more abstract outcomes.

- ▶ Comprehensive Report (x1)
- ▶ Category Reports (x3)
- ▶ Research Phase Updates (x3)
- ▶ Blog Documenting Project (x1)
- ▶ Letters to the Editor (≥ 3)
- ▶ Public Education Events (≥ 3)
- ▶ Meet with All Elected Officials Regarding Project (≥ 1)
- ▶ Meet with Community Groups Regarding Project (TBD)
- ▶ Public Hearings (based on research/advocacy needs)
- ▶ Establish & Inform Advocacy Network (x1)
- ▶ Recommendations based on Research (x1)

Timeframe

The division recommends a 30-month period from July 2010-December 2012 for this project due to its scope and depth. This time period will ensure that annual outputs are not disjointed, stand-alone products. Instead, staff will use annual outputs as incremental steps towards the division's ambitious vision. It should be specified that the division will produce and release products throughout this 30-month period. By December 2012, the division will use these incremental products to construct the complete Milwaukee Model and advocate for the adoption of its findings.

Intermediate Level: Poverty Symposium & Public Hearings

In 2007, the SDC hosted the first of what has become an annual symposium on poverty. The first symposium on poverty focused on addressing, reducing, and ultimately eradicating poverty and its ramifications in Milwaukee. The victims of poverty are not only individuals and families but the community and society as a whole. Copious studies have been conducted and much has been written and discussed (including numerous panels and seminars) regarding the impact of poverty on Milwaukee. The statistics and reports give Milwaukee the dubious distinction of being at or near the top of many negative categories including, but not limited to, the following:

- Economic disparity among persons of different races
- Residential segregation
- Disparities in levels of home ownership
- Disparities in mortgage lending
- Insurance redlining
- Educational disparities with respect to both achievement and levels of funding
- Disparities in levels of unemployment along racial lines
- Disparities in wealth (net assets)
- Levels of teenage pregnancy
- Levels of violent crimes
- Lack of business and employment opportunities for persons of color

The 2007 poverty symposium addressed these issues via featured speakers, original research by respected scholars, expert panelist discussions, and breakout sessions for symposium participants.

The success of the 2007 poverty symposium led to similar events in 2008 and 2009. In 2010, the SDC's poverty symposium is being driven by the results of the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment. The following pages consist of the "Call for Presentations" for the 2010 poverty symposium. In this "Call for Presentations," the purpose, goals, and format of the event will be presented in further detail.

Following the "Call for Presentations," a brief overview of the SDC's public hearings will be presented. As part of its renewed emphasis on community action, the SDC began hosting public hearings again in 2009 after a long hiatus. The two most recent public hearings were held on the topics of black male joblessness and payday lending. The next one will be held on alcohol & other drug abuse.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Call for Presentations
2010 POVERTY SYMPOSIUM:
PUTTING THE COMMUNITY IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT
Wednesday, November 10, 2010 • 8:30 AM – 2:30PM
Italian Community Center • 631 East Chicago Street • Milwaukee, WI 53202

The Social Development Commission (SDC) is issuing a call for presentations for the 4th Annual Symposium on Poverty. Proposals may be submitted by any group in the Milwaukee community that has experience with one of the 5 issues being discussed at this year's event. All presentations are required to include a community education component and a community-based planning component. Selected partners will be able to utilize a large public stage to present the work of the organization, solicit feedback from the community on an issue of its own design, and connect with potential volunteers, funders, the media, major community stakeholders and members of the public.

Event Goal

The goal of the 2010 Poverty Symposium is to deliver a high quality one-day event that provides robust discussions and meaningful education on the many poverty-related issues in the Milwaukee community. The Poverty Symposium should educate, motivate, and create opportunities for action for a wide audience on issues directly affecting low-income residents in Milwaukee County.

Target Audience

The 2010 Poverty Symposium is targeted at a wide range of audience members. Representatives from the private sector, the public sector, academic institutions, community-based organizations and a wide variety of community members will all be invited to participate in the daylong event.

Event Format

Researchers from UW-Milwaukee's Center for Urban Initiatives and Research will open the Symposium with a presentation on the SDC's 2010 Community Needs Assessment. This triennial assessment provides a unique perspective on poverty directly from community members. This timely report will provide event participants with a current and accurate understanding of the issues and needs facing the Milwaukee community. (Final reports now available at www.cr-sdc.org/About/PolicyResearch.htm). Following the presentation by UWM researchers, participants will have the opportunity to participate in 1 of 5 tracks in a morning session and afternoon session. Lunch will be provided during an interactive keynote presentation.

Issue Areas

From the 2010 Community Needs Assessment, 5 areas have been identified as high priorities from community respondents and will be the primary focus of this year's Symposium. To better understand these high priority areas and their prevalence in the Milwaukee community, the Symposium will include tracks dedicated specifically to relevant issues within each area. Key words presented here are not intended to be inclusive, but rather a general guideline:

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS – healthy marriages/relationships, role modeling/mentorship, family communication, parenting skills, parental involvement strategies, domestic violence and abuse, fatherhood, ex-offender family support, discipline, conflict resolution and anger management, advocacy, etc.

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE & PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES – law enforcement relationships, public health, neighborhood watch groups, gang problems, crime reduction strategies, coalition building, advocacy, etc.

ASSET DEVELOPMENT/FINANCIAL LITERACY – financial literacy education, homeowner assistance, foreclosure counseling, free tax preparation, Individual Development Accounts, entrepreneurship, managing assets, education savings plans, advocacy, etc.

COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT – public transportation, housing, economic development, job training, reentry and reintegration, urban community building, healthy food initiatives, coalition building, recreational programming, green space initiatives, advocacy, etc.

JOB CREATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT – job training, job access, skills mismatch, adult education, soft skills training, wrap around and supportive services for job seekers, high growth employment areas, advocacy, etc.

SDC is seeking partners in the community that have knowledge and experience in each of the 5 areas listed. Presenters are expected use their institutional background to develop a track on one of the issue areas listed above. More specific criteria are listed under “Submission Instructions.”

Presentation Format Requirements

All presentations must include a community education session and community based planning session known as a **charrette**. Beyond this basic format requirement, applicants are free to propose the content of the presentation based on institutional experience and knowledge. The specific criteria used to evaluate the content of each proposal and choose presenters are detailed in a succeeding section entitled “Review Process.”

Community Education Event – 1.25 hours, 10:30AM – 11:45AM**

The first session of each track should focus on providing information on the topic to event participants. The content of this information could include – but is certainly not limited to – the national and local history of the topic, trends related to the topic, relevant demographic information, service and funding gaps, and community needs unique to Milwaukee. The format of this session could include – but again not limited to – a panel discussion, expert presentations, interactive lecture, etc.

Community Based Planning Model: Charrette – 1.5 hours, 1:00PM – 2:30PM**

A charrette is a model used to facilitate community-based planning. Charrettes are short-term, intense community planning sessions that focus on a tangible outcome. Traditionally, charrettes are used to gather community input in land-use planning and the design of a specific site, however, SDC asks that applicants use this model creatively and apply it to planning and/or to work already underway. Adapt the charrette to facilitate a community planning session that focuses on a specific issue within the topic at hand and produces a tangible outcome for participants.

Presenter Expectations

As a presenter at the 2010 Poverty Symposium, the SDC expects that presenters will:

- A.** Provide a high quality facilitation of sessions that includes both a Community Education and Community Based Planning component.
- B.** Attend a planning meeting with SDC staff prior to the event.
- C.** Adhere to the general format and allocated time for sessions.
- D.** Provide any handouts or presentation materials in electronic form prior to the Symposium.

Presenter Benefits

This is a unique opportunity to:

- ✓ *Showcase* your work and ideas to a wide audience for little to no monetary investment;
- ✓ *Network* with vested community stakeholders on issues important to your organization;
- ✓ *Cultivate* valuable relationships that may lead to future partnerships and additional support;
- ✓ *Elevate* your organizational profile in the Milwaukee community;
- ✓ *Receive* valuable feedback through large-scale community engagement.

In addition, the SDC will:

- ✓ promote the event to a wide audience base at no charge to the presenters.
- ✓ promote our presenting partners, their backgrounds, and presentation(s) on SDC's site.
- ✓ provide a space for display of organization materials.
- ✓ provide up to a \$500 account for printing and duplication of materials needed for Symposium.

****Session times are subject to change.**

Submitting an Application & Contact for Information

Submissions must be completed and received by the SDC by 3:00 PM on Friday, August 20, 2010.

Please direct all physical materials to:

**Social Development Commission
4041 N. Richards Street
Milwaukee, WI 53221
Attn: Brittany Rosales, Policy & Research Division**

We encourage the submission of materials via e-mail. Please direct electronic materials and any questions to Brittany Rosales at [**brosales@cr-sdc.org**](mailto:brosales@cr-sdc.org). All applicants will receive notification of their status via e-mail on Monday, August 30, 2010. Chosen applicants will receive a phone call on the selection date.

Submission Instructions

Prior to submission, please ensure the following items are addressed/included with proposal:

1. **Issue Area Addressed.** Please choose one Issue Area that the proposed sessions will address.
2. **Session Title.** Please provide a session title that will attract people to the session.
3. **Session Narrative(s).** Please provide a 200 – 300 word description of the proposed session(s). Please use complete sentences to describe the proposed session(s), no bullet points or lists please. Cover the following areas/questions in this section:
 - How will this session address the Issue Area you have selected?
 - Why is the presentation significant?
 - How will it advance participants knowledge of, or capacity for, the Issue Area?
 - What is the presentation format? (panel, interactive game, lecture, roundtables, etc)
 - How will the audience be involved in the session?
 - How does data and/or research inform or shape the sessions?
 - What materials and/or handouts will be included the sessions?
4. **Session Objectives.** Please list three learning objectives for each session. (“At the conclusion of the session, participants will...”)
5. **Intended Audience.** Please describe the intended audience(s) for the sessions.
6. **Organizational Sketch(es).** Please provide no more than a 75-word description of each organization that is submitting a proposal with special attention to previous work in the chosen Issue Area.
7. **Organizational Statement of Commitment.** Please provide no more than a 200-word description of how the organization (or collaboration) plans to commit to action on the Issue Area for the following year. Describe in detail how the Community Based Planning: Charrette component will be used in future work.
8. **Primary Contact Information.** Please provide the primary contact person’s name, position, organization, street address, city, state, zip code, telephone, fax number, and e-mail address.
9. **List of Presenters.** Please provide a projected list of presenters. It is suggested that proposals contain a minimum of two presenters, but no more than five.

Review Process

Submissions completed and received by August 20, 2010 will be evaluated by a review panel consisting of SDC staff, community volunteers, and members of the Board of Commission. The SDC reserves the right to choose a balanced slate of presenters based on submitted proposals received. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- A. **Theme and Focus Area.** Extent to which the content and objectives of the proposed sessions relates to the Symposium theme and chosen Issue Area. (15%)
- B. **Objectives.** Clarity and explicitness of sessions’ objectives. (10%)
- C. **Significance of Content and Presentation.** Extent to which session(s) offer something new, raise significant issues, and are well-grounded in the current climate in Milwaukee for the Issue Area chosen. (10%)
- D. **Organizational Experience and Commitment to Issue.** Demonstrated experience with work in issue area and demonstrated long-term commitment to action in Issue Area. (45%)
- E. **Value Added.** Clarity of value to participants and the community. (10%)
- F. **Collaboration.** Presentation proposals that are submitted as a partnership or multi-organization collaboration. (7%)
- G. **Format.** Extent to which proposal follows format specified in “Submission Instructions” (3%)

Public Hearings

Public hearings are held by industry regulations of the SDC by the SDC pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes Section 66.0125(3)(c)4. The testimony and information gathered is used by the SDC to assist in efforts to analyze the issues, recommend solutions, develop policy, promote public education, and respond to the concerns expressed at hearings. All community members are invited to attend and speak at public hearings to provide their personal experiences, observations, and opinions on the topic issue.

The SDC Board of Commissioners has made the holding of public hearings an agency priority. As such, the Policy & Research Division will be hosting additional public hearings in 2010 and beyond on a variety of topics based primarily on the results of the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment. The next public hearing is scheduled for October 2010 and the topic will be alcohol & other drug abuse (AODA). According to SDC's 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment, an overwhelming majority of Milwaukee County residents view AODA as a barrier to getting out of poverty. The SDC wants to dig deeper into this relationship to: 1) Better understand the community's perceptions, and 2) Use testimony to inform public officials on this issue.

Micro-Level: Agency Programming

The SDC is first and foremost a human service agency whose mission is *Empowering Milwaukee County Residents With The Resources to Move Beyond Poverty*. To accomplish this mission, the SDC offers 30 separate programs to meet the needs of low-income Milwaukee County individuals and families. To demonstrate how the results of the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment will drive service provision at the SDC in 2011, the chart entitled, “MILWAUKEE COUNTY SERVICE NEEDS and SDC PROGRAMS (2011)” on the next page was created.

In the SDC’s 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment, the following eight service needs were identified and prioritized:

- 1) Employment,
- 2) Education,
- 3) Use of Available Income,
- 4) Family and Relationships,
- 5) Health and Healthcare,
- 6) Housing,
- 7) Food and Nutrition, &
- 8) Transportation.

These needs are listed in the first row of the horizontal axis with the highest-ranking need (education) on the left and the lowest-ranking need (transportation) on the right. The first column of the vertical axis lists the SDC programs to be offered in 2011. The shaded and numbered cells correspond to a specific program offering services to meet a particular need. What this chart illustrates is that the SDC’s repertoire of programming will be meeting all eight core needs as identified in the 2010 CSBG Community Needs Assessment by Milwaukee County residents. Moreover, the SDC will be offering multiple programs for each service need. If one of the goals of conducting community needs assessments is to match programming to service needs, then the SDC is certain to meet this goal in 2011 and beyond.

As was mentioned on page five, the SDC is a constantly evolving organization subject to oftentimes unpredictable environmental influences. While it is critical to have a strategic plan in place to navigate a best course of action, there are times when opportunities become available, which may not have been accounted for in a strategic plan. The same holds true for misfortunes. In human services, these incidents result in the addition of new programming and the loss of existing programming. The SDC will make every effort possible to incorporate the prioritized service needs resulting from the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment in its future programming options. While the planning for the 2011 program year is all but finalized, the 2012 & 2013 program years are less concrete. There is no reason to believe that future programming will stray from the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment. However, as the Community Action Agency for a populace of almost one million people, there may be instances where services are needed, which do not align with the eight service needs discussed throughout this plan.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY SERVICE NEEDS and SDC PROGRAMS (2011)

Milwaukee County Service Needs SDC Programs	Employment (Rank=1)	Education (Rank=2)	Use of Available Income (Rank=3)	Family & Relationships (Rank=4)	Health & Healthcare (Rank=5)	Housing (Rank=6)	Food & Nutrition (Rank=7)	Transportation (Rank=8)
1) Basic Skills		2						
2) Boosting Employability & Soft Skills Training	1	2						
3) Career and Orientation 750	1	2						
4) Community Education		2		4				
5) Community Services Alternatives & Youth Restorative Justice				4				
6) Competency-Based Diploma Program		2						
7) Creating Lasting Family Connections				4				
8) Education and Training Programs	1	2						
9) Energy Assistance			3			6		
10) Energy Conservation Demonstrations						6		
11) Family & Individual Resources Support Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12) Family Support Center	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13) Financial Literacy and Get Checking			3					
14) GED/HSED Testing		2						
15) Head Start		2		4	5		7	
16) Health Education & Referral Center					5			
17) Healthy Relationship & Marriage Enhancement Program				4				
18) Milwaukee Asset Building Coalition			3		5			
19) Neighborhood Improvement Project						6		
20) Prescription Advocacy & Referral Service					5			
21) Senior Companions				4	5			
22) Success Through Rewarding Internships & Volunteer Experiences	1	2						
23) Transitional Jobs Program	1	2						
24) W-2 Eligibility & Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
25) Ways-to-Work	1		3					8
26) Weatherization						6		
27) Weatherization Rehab & Asset Preservation						6		
28) Welcome Center			3	4	5		7	
29) Youth & Family Development Program	1	2		4	5			
30) Youth Food Program							7	
	<i>10/30 Programs</i>	<i>14/30 Programs</i>	<i>8/30 Programs</i>	<i>11/30 Programs</i>	<i>10/30 Programs</i>	<i>8/30 Programs</i>	<i>6/29 Programs</i>	<i>4/30 Programs</i>

Milwaukee County Service Needs & Rankings:

- 1) **Employment:** Available Jobs; job training; higher paying jobs; employment benefits; child care to maintain employment; transportation to employment; etc.
- 2) **Education:** Drop-out prevention; preschool & child care options; vocational skills training; availability of educational opportunities; etc.
- 3) **Use of Available Income:** Money management programs; family budgeting skills; financial literacy; etc.
- 4) **Family and Relationships:** Services for older adults; services for youth; parenting classes; parental support; child abuse prevention; domestic violence services; etc.
- 5) **Health and Healthcare:** Availability of health insurance; assistance with paying for medication; more options for mental health & substance abuse; programs to develop healthy lifestyles; etc.
- 6) **Housing:** Assistance with housing costs; assistance with utility costs; affordable housing; neighborhood safety; etc.;
- 7) **Food and Nutrition:** Assistance with getting food; healthy food; nutrition education; more food pantries & meal programs; etc.
- 8) **Transportation:** More public transportation options; more efficient public transportation; assistance with buying & maintaining a car; getting transportation for daily living activities;

CONCLUSION

In the winter of 2008-2009, the SDC began a planning process in anticipation of conducting a community-wide needs assessment in order to fulfill its contractual obligations for continued CSBG funding. By the time of its initial completion in June 2010, the SDC's 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment consisted of seven separate reports totaling over 300 pages of data and narrative. Over the course of the last three months, SDC staff have only begun to scratch the surface of the exhaustive content that this assessment has to offer. One of the first tasks SDC staff performed was to incorporate the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment into its *2011-2013 Community Action Plan*.

The SDC's *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* is framed to be more of a discussion on how the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment will be incorporated into agency operations than it is a tactical strategy for accomplishing specific goals and objectives. The latter falls mainly under the purview of strategic planning. At the time of this writing, the SDC was only beginning to initiate its strategic planning for 2011 and beyond. Thus, the SDC's *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* is a conceptually-oriented fulfillment of community action plan technical requirements.

The sectional components of the SDC's *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* have included:

- ▶ A *Summary of Findings* from the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment;
- ▶ A prioritized list of service needs resulting from the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment;
- ▶ Recommendations from assessment respondents on how to reduce poverty in Milwaukee;
- ▶ Recommendations from assessment respondents on how the SDC can reduce poverty in Milwaukee; and
- ▶ SDC responses to the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment, which include the Milwaukee Model, poverty symposiums, public hearings, agency programming, and strategic planning.

Together, these components have shown that the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment will drive specific areas of SDC operations in 2011 and beyond. The future of SDC programming will no doubt be predicated on the input gathered from Milwaukee County residents in 2009 & 2010. The SDC's current strategic planning effort is incorporating assessment results into goals, objectives, and outcomes. Its influence is especially prominent in the SDC's newly formed Policy & Research Division.

While the actual results of the 2010 CSBG Needs Assessment have not been analyzed in great detail here, the underlying themes of employment and education will be critical issues for the SDC as it moves into the future. In today's recessionary economic climate, this should be no surprise. It is thus an obligation that the SDC best respond to these two issues. While direct service programming may be of great benefit to low-income individuals and families, a larger systemic orientation is needed for the long run. As the Community Action Agency for Milwaukee County, the SDC is in a unique position to address both of these environs. The current *2011-2013 Community Action Plan* is the SDC's statement to do so.