

## Turning the Corner

### A Closer Look at Neighborhood Change in Milwaukee

Milwaukee was chosen as one of five cities to participate in the Urban Institute's cross-city research model. Launched in January 2016, the project pilots a research model that monitors neighborhood change, drives informed government action, and supports displacement prevention and inclusive revitalization. The work was aimed at elevating the conversation about neighborhood change and gentrification and includes background research on the topic and learnings from other partner cities.

Two Milwaukee neighborhoods were included in the study: Brewers Hill and Walker's Point. The research included interviews, focus groups, and data analysis. The selected indicators of gentrification were; percent of the population that is white and percent of the population that has a bachelor's degree or higher. Displacement was reviewed in terms of housing burden, for both renters and homeowners. Both were reviewed at the block group level.

The **Brewers Hill** neighborhood of Milwaukee was originally occupied by brew-masters and workers who lived within walking distance to the downtown breweries. In the 1920's, the neighborhood shifted from primarily residents of Polish and Irish decent, to African American. In the 1970's, African American homeowners began to sell to mostly White craftsmen and artists.

Today, in Brewers Hill, the increased percentage of White and college educated residents is much greater than the city as a whole. Housing burden for renters and for homeowners was lower than the City as a whole. Business owners mentioned a growth in African American owned businesses but maintain that there is a need for businesses to invest in improving storefronts and infrastructure.

**Walker's Point** is a formerly industrial neighborhood adjacent to Milwaukee's Lake Michigan harbor. Although many of the original businesses left behind vacant storefronts and warehouses, this neighborhood has seen successful economic development featuring food and entertainment.

This neighborhood has seen a decline in the percent of the population that is White, an increase in the percent who have a college degree or higher, a substantial increase among renters who are housing burdened and a decline in housing burdened homeowners.

Both neighborhoods will be featured on tours at the Milwaukee NNIP meeting.

Our full report, as well as neighborhood data portraits are available at

<https://www.datayoucanuse.org/turning-the-corner-2/>

