

WEDC Misrepresentation of Jobs Impact in Sherman Park

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WEDC claimed to create 483 jobs in the economically depressed Sherman Park neighborhood, but all were actually in the suburbs. Neighborhoods in economic distress need job creation strategies at the scale of the problem.

MILWAUKEE - At a news event in Milwaukee's Sherman Park Neighborhood today elected officials and community leaders spoke out about revelations that the jobs agency created by Governor Walker, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), misrepresented its impact on jobs in the area.

Speakers at the event included elected officials such as State Representative LaTonya Johnson, State Representative Evan Goyke, State Representative David Bowen, and Alderman Chevy Johnson. The event also included community leaders such as Reverend Willie Brisco, President of WISDOM, and Martha De La Rosa, Executive Director of Wisconsin Jobs Now.

Citizen Action of Wisconsin [revealed late last week](#) that WEDC claimed only to create 483 jobs in the economically depressed Sherman Park neighborhood, the scene of civil unrest ten days ago. However, Citizen Action research discovered that the small number of jobs claimed by the WEDC were not created in Sherman Park, but in exurbs like Hartland.

[WEDC CEO David Hogan responded](#) to Citizen Action's research today, but admits that WEDC's impact map inaccurately attributed jobs to Sherman Park that were created in other areas such as western Waukesha County. Hogan said in his response: "When the physical address data cannot be precisely plotted, such as when a P.O. Box is provided, the system generates an approximate location. That is what happened with the companies identified by Citizen Action." This statement constitutes an admission that WEDC does not even have accurate records of where its tax credits, loans, and grants are supposedly creating jobs. In one

case the jobs were created 25 miles to the west in Harland. The response suggests that this was only a problem with an impact map on the website, but in fact

[WEDC's written profile of what jobs were supposedly created in Assembly District 18](#) contains the same errors.

The Sherman Park neighborhood and other communities in Milwaukee's urban core [have borne the brunt of the outsourcing and deindustrialization](#)

that has taken place since the 1970s. WEDC actually claims to have [created more jobs in up scale Waukesha County than in Milwaukee County](#), despite the much greater need for expanded opportunity.

WEDC's inability to track the locations of the jobs it claims to create is a symptom of a bankrupt economic strategy. It is clear that Sherman Park and other economically devastated areas like it have been abandoned by Governor Walker's failed economic policies. Now that the dust has settled in Sherman Park, we need public interventions at the scale necessary to truly guarantee full opportunity for everyone in our great state.

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