

1981

## Center for Applied Urban Research Brochure

Center for Public Affairs Research (CPAR)  
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

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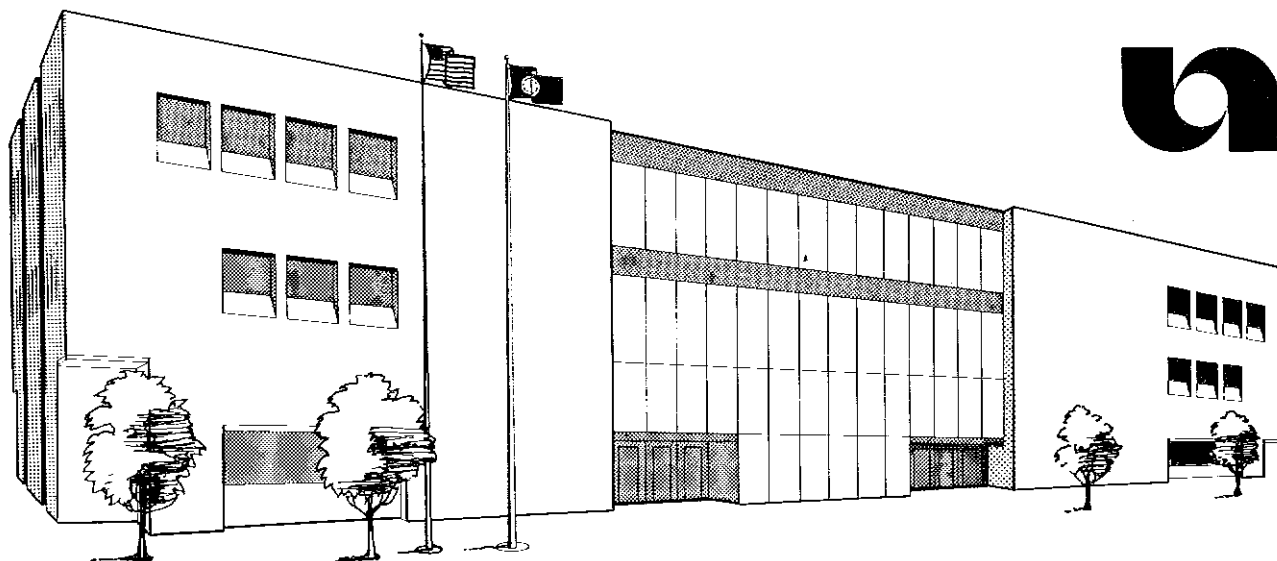
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### Recommended Citation

(CPAR), Center for Public Affairs Research, "Center for Applied Urban Research Brochure" (1981).  
*Publications Archives, 1963-2000*. 145.  
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THE CENTER FOR APPLIED URBAN RESEARCH, a department of the  
College of Public Affairs and Community Service at the  
University of Nebraska at Omaha  
is located at the  
**PETER KIEWIT CONFERENCE CENTER**  
1313 Farnam on the Mall  
Omaha, Nebraska 68182

Telephone (402)554-2764

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# The Center for Applied Urban Research

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**T**HE CENTER FOR APPLIED URBAN RESEARCH provides professional services in applied research, training, and community service. Primarily these services are provided to state and local governmental units in Nebraska, though some activities may be national or international in scope. To a lesser extent, services are provided to private groups and agencies.

CAUR, a unit within the College of Public Affairs and Community Service at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, was initially established in 1963 as the Urban Studies Center at the Municipal University of Omaha.



Types of research that CAUR conducts include evaluation, survey, record analysis, population studies, and policy analysis.

Training programs are developed for such groups as day care providers, foster parents, women making mid-life career changes, neighborhood leaders, and government officials. This training may be in the form of workshops, seminars, conferences, or home study courses.

Among the **community service** activities are needs assessments, attitude surveys, assistance in writing grant applications, the preparation of publications, and program design.

To facilitate the dissemination of research information, CAUR publishes the *Review of Applied Urban Research* and appropriate documents and reports.

A data and documents library is maintained to assist staff members in their research and to serve the University community and the public.

# Staff

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The Center has a multidisciplinary staff of social scientists, community service specialists, statisticians, and educators. The expertise of the professional staff includes the fields of economics, geography, sociology, political science, urban planning, criminal justice, social work, journalism, education, and history.

An emphasis on teamwork and freedom from the demands of traditional teaching responsibilities enhance the quality, quantity, and timeliness of the services delivered by the Center to its clients.

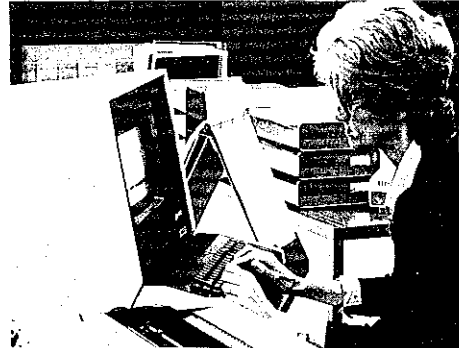
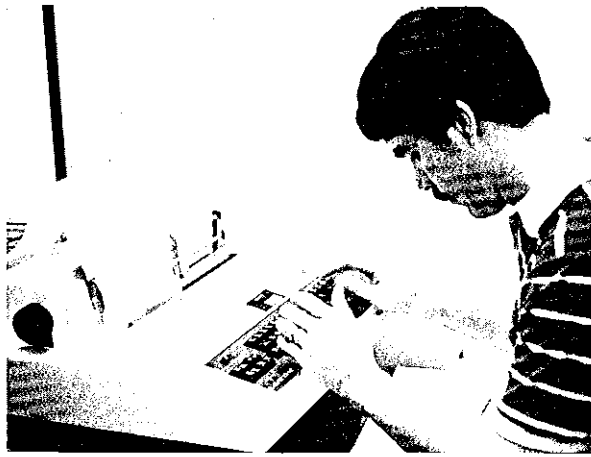
Students have the opportunity to receive practical research experience through an informal internship program. Graduate assistants and other graduate and undergraduate students are employed on a part-time basis to assist in research by interviewing and by collecting, coding, and analyzing data. Some students may design and complete projects under CAUR staff supervision.

The professional staff is supported by a full-time editor, office manager, data base coordinator, and several clerical staff persons.

Resources of the entire University of Nebraska system are available to the staff of the Center. Consultations are frequently held with other departments of the College of Public Affairs and Community Service.

Personnel at the Center are prepared to respond to almost any situation that lends itself to social science analysis or community service strategies. The following areas, however, reflect the particular strengths and interests of the staff:

- Economic Development
- Housing
- Human Services Systems
- Government Structure and Finance
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Energy Utilization
- Community Development
- Criminal Justice
- Citizen Participation
- Community Education
- Census Data Analysis



# Applied Research

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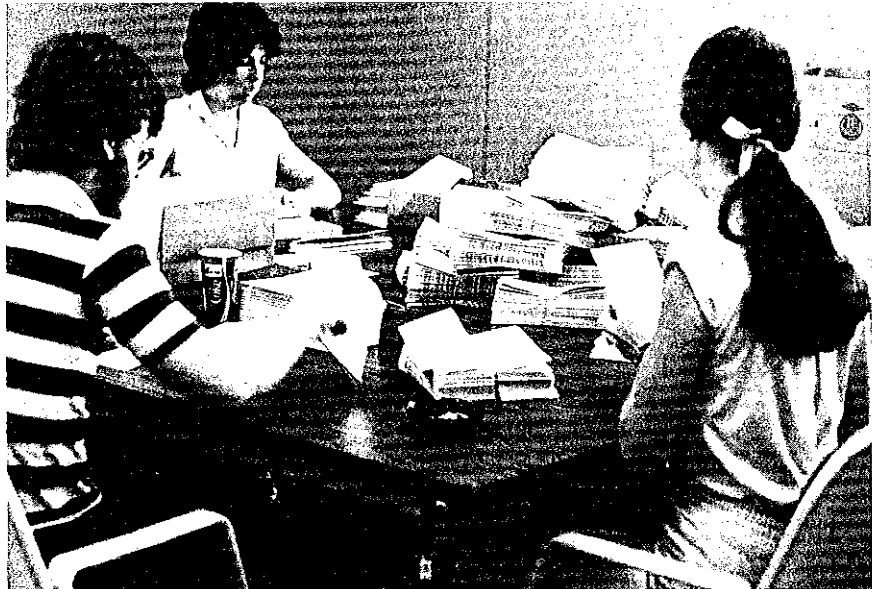
Most of the work in applied research at the Center involves using social science research techniques to create new information useful for policy making and decision making by the Center's clients.

Evaluation research measures the effectiveness of programs or the productivity of agencies and organizations.

Surveys, either by telephone, mail, or direct interview, assess needs, gather opinions, or develop programs.

Population studies identify trends, determine migration patterns, and improve planning.

Policy analysis determines the nature and impact of public policy on business and industry, education, human services, and such target groups as older citizens, minorities, and youth.



# Research Projects

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Some examples of recent research projects published by the Center include:

## **Assessment of the Primary Health Care Needs of North Omaha and South Omaha**

The need for primary health care services in defined areas in North Omaha and South Omaha was determined through interviews with major health care providers, key persons in the community, and area residents. The purpose of the research was to facilitate planning for providing better primary health care in the target areas.

## **Census Data Analysis**

Screening and analysis of 1980 Census data for Omaha and Nebraska focused upon growth and change in the population and on ethnic and racial changes.

## **Downtown Housing Study**

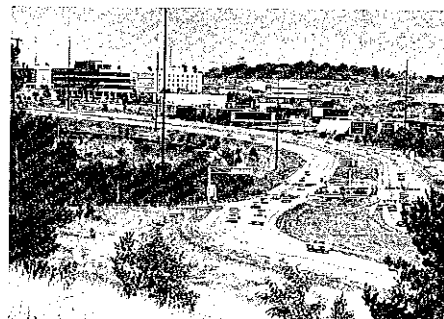
This study determined the needs and interests of downtown employees in housing in downtown Omaha.

## **Economic Indicators for Omaha**

Data on patterns of intra-urban migration, the changes in number of births and deaths, sales of new cars and trucks, building and demolition permits, mortgage loans, and bankruptcies were tabulated by subareas and by quarter.

## **Radial Freeways and the Growth of Office Space in Central Cities**

Prepared for the Department of Transportation of the Federal Highway Administration, the study investigated seven metropolitan areas throughout the United States to determine the impact of radial freeways upon the location of office development and the resulting economic impact on the communities.





### **Impact of Leadership Training on the Development of Selected Nebraska Communities**

The role leadership played in fostering economic and community development in towns of 2,500 to 5,000 population was investigated.

### **International Trade: Identification of Reverse Investment Prospects**

This survey was conducted in order to identify firms interested in being targets for foreign investments.

### **Older Hispanics in Nebraska: Their Characteristics, Attitudes, and Needs**

Data about the needs of older Hispanics in Omaha, Lincoln, and in Scotts Bluff County were collected and analyzed. Information was generated on demographic and residential characteristics, interactions, service utilization, and attitudes of the target population.

### **Private Industry Council Forecasting Survey**

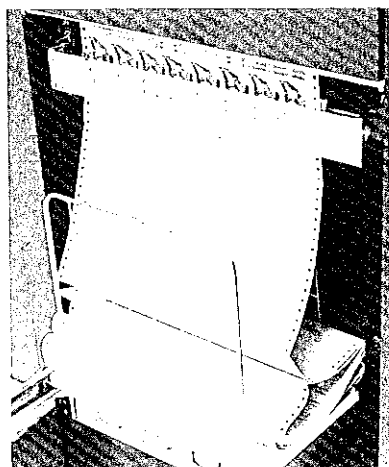
This project created a data base for use in determining employment and training needs, particularly at the entry level. Areas of employment that offered the best potential for jobs in private industry were identified.

### **Educational Needs Assessment and Impact Survey (Metropolitan Technical Community College)**

This comprehensive study involved conducting nine sets of surveys: county, service area, high school seniors, current students, alumni, faculty at Metro Tech, faculty at other post-secondary institutions, faculty at area high schools, and private and public employers. The final report analyzed all of the data collected and recommended course offerings and curricula.

### **Survey of Nebraska Women's Employment Participation, Attitudes, and Needs**

This study involved a random survey of women throughout the state to determine labor force characteristics, attitudes toward working women, and needs for training and information.



# Training Projects

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The Center serves as a focal point for bringing educational resources together to solve problems associated with community life. When necessary, consultants who are experts in their fields are hired to work with a director from the CAUR staff to develop training projects to help private organizations, government units, and community groups.



Some examples of recent training projects include:

## **Foster Parent Training Program**

Several states as well as a Canadian province have indicated interest in adopting the Foster Parent Training Program. Teams of social workers and foster parents are trained to present the course in their own localities. A curriculum on Fostering the Adolescent has also been developed and a series of home study modules prepared. A newsletter is part of the training activity.

## **Day Care Providers Training**

Three different training projects for day care providers have been developed at CAUR.

The first one provided a series of workshops throughout the state, three home study modules, and a newsletter. Such subjects as child discipline and guidance, home made play materials, nutrition, and first aid and safety were covered.

Administrative and business training for day care center directors was developed under the title, "Practical Skills for Administrators," and included a series of two-day workshops around the state.

The third day care project was training providers in the use of child safety restraints and seat belts when transporting children.

## **Career Planning**

"Mid-life Career Planning for Nebraska Rural Women" was a workshop curriculum developed at the Center. Local community college counselors were trained to present the workshops in several locations in Nebraska.

### **Legal Training for Child Welfare Workers**

With the Criminal Justice Department, CAUR developed a series of legal training modules for child welfare workers. Videotapes were included as part of the material presented in a series of workshops.

### **Community Goal Achievement Workshops**

This workshop was aimed at increasing the problem solving and goal achievement capabilities of Omaha neighborhood organizations.



Other conferences and workshops in which CAUR has played a major role include the Urban Revitalization Conference, the annual national conference of the Urban Affairs Association, the Land Revitalization Conference, the Nebraska Association of Housing and Renewal Organizations Convention, two Nebraska Neighborhood Workshop/Conventions, and a series of five workshops on public housing management sponsored by the National Association of Housing Redevelopment Officials.

### **Neighborhood Resource Program**

CAUR developed a Neighborhood Resource Program to provide opportunities for neighborhood organization leaders to acquire skills and knowledge to assist them in solving neighborhood problems. A neighborhood resource library, workshops, and technical assistance were provided.

### **Data Processing and Local Government**

This seminar for local government officials, administrators, and other personnel who are not data processing specialists explained how computer technology could improve local government effectiveness.

### **Administrative Planning Workshop**

This workshop was originally designed in conjunction with the Public Administration Department for training management at the Beatrice State Development Center.

### **South Central Nebraska Rural Development Strategies**

An analysis of development needs and strategies for action were prepared for a thirteen-county area in south central Nebraska. Demographic and economic data were collected through surveys of community leaders and the general population. A series of area meetings and a regional conference were held to set goals, disseminate information, and to plan procedures.

# Community Service

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Community service sometimes involves combining research or training with direct community service activities. A particular project may sometimes involve all three.

CAUR assists governmental units, community groups, and the private sector in data collection, statistical analysis, problem solving, and organization. Clients have been helped to design surveys, assess needs, improve delivery of services, develop programs, strengthen planning efforts, and gain useful skills.

Some examples of community service projects include the following:

## **Norfolk**

CAUR conducted a needs assessment and attitude survey in new community development areas. A brochure was prepared to explain the availability of housing rehabilitation grants and loans.

## **Blair**

Attitudes toward government services and shopping patterns of residents were determined by a survey.

## **Kearney, Bellevue, Waverly**

These cities are among those in Nebraska assisted in writing grant applications for community development projects.

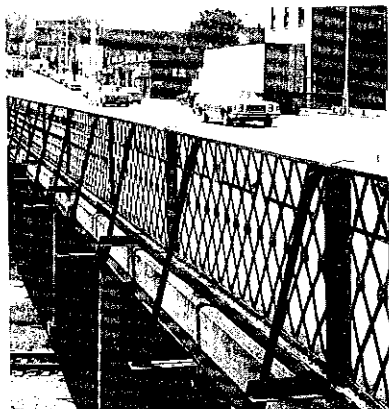
## **Omaha Neighborhood Tours**

Tours of two Omaha neighborhoods, one in the north part of the city and one in the southeast, were developed emphasizing their historical, economic, and social aspects. A slide show was prepared to introduce one tour, and a booklet with maps and pictures accompanied the other.

## **Prospect Hill Neighborhood**

Neighborhood leaders were helped with a needs assessment, in identifying possible funding, in writing grant applications, and in a neighborhood mini-park project.

Other neighborhood organizations have been assisted in various ways.



#### **Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study for Computer Utilization**

CAUR conducted a needs assessment and feasibility study for the City of Omaha to determine its immediate and long term requirements for computerization in city government.

#### **Franklin Community Federal Credit Union**

This group was assisted in the preparation of brochures and flyers to promote its Consumer Fair, and technical assistance was given for the preparation of a series of consumer information flyers in both English and Spanish.

#### **Community Development Society**

Both the national and state newsletters are produced through CAUR.

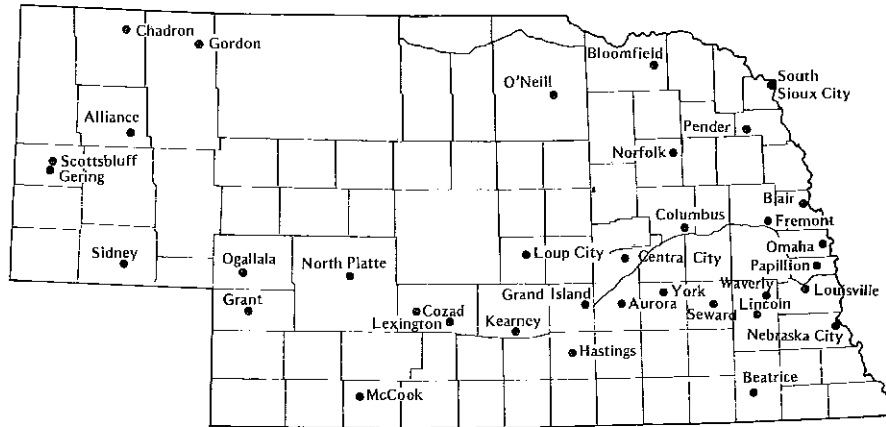




*You are invited*



The Center for Applied Urban Research invites you to visit its offices, meet its staff, see what it has done in the areas of research, training, and community service, and discuss what it can do for you. Inquiries may also be made by telephone or by letter.



## NEBRASKA CITIES SERVED BY CAUR