

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: 12/11/2024

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Amos Morris, Executive Zoo Director 12/11/2024

Subject: Milwaukee County Zoo Strategic Plan and Master Plan Refresh

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

This report is for informational purposes and no action is requested at this time.

POLICY

Chapter 108, Achieving Racial Equity and Health

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| Wisconsin State Statutes: | |
| Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances: | 108 |
| Specific Adopted Budget: | |
| Specific Adopted Budget Amendment: | |
| Specific Adopted Capital Project: | |

BACKGROUND

In 2022, all County Departments were asked to develop a Strategic Plan that outlines departmental priorities and aligns with the County’s overall Vision. The Milwaukee County Zoo, in partnership with the Zoological Society of Milwaukee (ZSM), created a strategic plan for the entire coalition, establishing a unified mission and vision for the years ahead. This plan was shaped by extensive input from Zoo-wide participation, including the staff of the Milwaukee County Zoo and ZSM, as well as contributions from multiple Blue Ribbon Panels and engagement sessions with community leaders and outside experts. Attached to this report is the five to ten-year Strategic Plan, which includes facility improvements to consider over the next seven to ten years as part of the master plan refresh.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions
- 3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

The Milwaukee County Zoo, in partnership with ZSM, serves communities across the region and northern Illinois. As one of Wisconsin’s top 25 attractions and the state’s largest membership program, the Zoo plays a vital role. It is a vibrant public space that brings together diverse populations, inspires and engages visitors of all ages, and fosters empathy for the natural world. The Zoo connects family experiences to meaningful social change and remains committed to being inclusive. By intentionally creating a welcoming culture, it celebrates the full diversity of the community and supports Milwaukee County’s commitment to racial equity.

FISCAL EFFECT

None

TERMS

None

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Amos.Morris@milwaukeecountywi.gov, Vera.Westphal@milwaukeecountywi.gov

PREPARED BY:

Vera Westphal, Deputy Zoo Director

APPROVED BY:

Amos Morris, Executive Zoo Director

ATTACHMENTS:

MCZ+ZSM Strategic Plan Narrative (PDF), MCZ & ZSM Strategic Plan & Master Plan Refresh Presentation (PDF)

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk
David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive
Isaac Rowlett, Strategy Director, Strategy, Budget, and Performance

Shawn Rolland, Chair, Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning
Caroline Gómez-Tom, Vice-Chair, Human Needs and Strategic Planning
Kelsey A. Evans, Committee Coordinator, Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning and Parks and Culture
Jane Geyer, Research Analyst, Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning
Deanna Alexander, Committee Member, Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning
Felesia Martin, Committee Member, Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning and Parks and Culture
Kathleen Vincent, Committee Member, Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning
Sheldon A. Wasserman, Chair, Parks and Culture
Steve F. Taylor, Vice-Chair, Parks and Culture
Priscilla Coggs-Jones, Committee Member, Parks and Culture
Juan Miguel Martinez, Committee Member, Parks and Culture
Jack Eckblad, Committee Member, Parks and Culture
Anne O'Connor, Committee Member, Parks and Culture
Sandra Saltzstein, Research Analyst, Parks and Culture
Tracey Dolphin, Director of Animal Management and Health, Zoo
Matthew Haseman, Director of Facilities, Zoo
Emily Salentine, Director of Marketing and Communications, Zoo
Andrew Stockel, Director of Operations, Zoo
Vera Westphal, Deputy Zoo Director