

# STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – AUDIT SERVICES DIVISION REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit Report Title:** Surveys: Milwaukee County Departments Collect Information Primarily from Program Users but Guidance should be Provided to Improve Data Collection Methods

**File Number:** 22-1123  
**Status Report Date:** July 2024

**Audit Issued:** November 2022  
**Department:** Office of Equity

## Open Recommendations

<b>Recommendation #1</b>	
<b>Recommendation - November 2022</b>	
The Office of Equity lead efforts to develop a guide for departments to use when conducting surveys and gathering data. This guide should be completed and distributed to departments within a year.	
<b>Deadlines Established Y/N?</b> Yes	
Date	Management Comments:
Current – July 2024	<p style="background-color: yellow;"><b>Office of Equity Update:</b></p> <p>Surveys conducted during July 2023 have been reviewed and results have been finalized. Lessons learned from the survey and its process were used to facilitate a pilot of the community engagement framework, which helped in developing the guide that is part of a “Community Engagement Toolkit” for departments that seek to gather stakeholder feedback. This aligns with one of the original objectives of the guide, as outlined in November 2022, where it was determined that the guide’s development will incorporate “an iterative approach so that the guide(s) continue to evolve as does the County’s work and understanding of advancing racial and health equity.”</p> <p>The release of the community engagement toolkit for department leaders will occur in three distinct phases. In Phase 1, the comprehensive toolkit will be made available, providing essential resources and guidelines for effective community engagement. Phase 2 will introduce a suite of interactive tools designed to support the implementation of the toolkit's components, ensuring practical application and ease of use. Finally, Phase 3 will focus on technical assistance and capacity building, offering tailored support and training to enhance the skills and capabilities of department leaders in engaging with their communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Phase 1: The Community Engagement Guide (9/9/24) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Information on the importance of and best practices related to engaging diverse community stakeholders</li> <li>○ This satisfies recommendations one (1) and three (3).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Phase 2: Interactive Tools (12/31/24) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Self- Service Tools that support use of the Guide</li> <li>○ This satisfies recommendation two (2).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 3: Technical Assistance &amp; Capacity Building Program (Ongoing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Office of Equity has the unique role of providing support for all Milwaukee County government departments while also having the advantage of being a direct link to external systems, organizations, and resident-based leaders. Due to this, we want to provide direct support to county departments employees and other community partners in developing community engagement projects that are effective and impactful.</li> <li>○ This allows us to provide additional support, beyond recommendation two, based on information OOE has gleaned from piloting the guide.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The guide is in its final draft phase and is awaiting illustration in preparation for dissemination across Milwaukee County and to our community partners on 9/9/24.</p>
December 2023	<p><b>Office of Equity Update:</b> During this reporting period, in July 2023, Community Engagement Manager Ricardo Wynn conducted 200 surveys with community members from the House and Ballroom community. This process was implemented to help develop a guide for departments when conducting surveys.</p> <p>Findings are currently being transcribed and will be featured as a guide in our Community Engagement Tool Kit that’s scheduled to be released June 2024.</p>
May 2023	<p>During this reporting period, The Office of Equity officially hired a Community Engagement Manager who’s responsible for leading recommendations for this audit.</p> <p>Ricardo started his position on December 23, 2022. In January 2023, Ricardo was tasked with reviewing the audit and drafting recommendations based on information received. A draft was due and reviewed internally by the Office of Equity in March 2023.</p>

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	<p>Prior to developing a department guide for conducting surveys and gathering data, it is developing a process for “Community Engagement” planning is a foundational first phase. This recommendation will give departments frameworks to effectively determine their goals related to ongoing community engagement which has been shown to be an effective method to increase data collection from community members. This planning will include frameworks and guides to conduct surveys and data to best serve populations effective.</p> <p>Phase one is currently being reviewed and a full Community Engagement Planning process will be submitted by September 2023. Throughout this reporting period, the Community Engagement Manager will continue to meet with County leaders and departments for engagement throughout this process.</p>
<p>Audit Report Response - November 2022</p>	<p>*See consolidated response below.</p>

<p align="center"><b>Recommendation #2</b></p>	
<p><b>Recommendation – November 2022</b>                      The Office of Equity should lead efforts to encourage departments, via both its guide to surveys and when providing assistance to departments to include demographics of respondents and the methods used in conducting the survey including but not limited to: type of sample selection if applicable, conducted in-house or via contract, and cost of contract when results of a survey are reported to the public or the County Board.</p>	
<p><b>Deadlines Established Y/N?</b></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><b>Date</b></p>	<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p>
<p>Current – July 2024</p>	<p><b>Office of Equity Update:</b>                      We continue to uplift and demonstrate our commitment to strengthening the Office of Equity’s community partnerships and authentic stakeholder engagement. The Office of Equity is proud to announce the formation of a LGBTQ/ Queer People of Color (QPOC) Community Advisory Board. This board will serve as a vital platform to amplify the voices and experiences of LGBTQ individuals within our</p>

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	<p>community, ensuring their needs and perspectives are integral to our policies and initiatives.</p> <p>This Community Advisory Board will be dedicated to identifying and addressing the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ individuals, advocating for equitable treatment, and promoting a culture of acceptance and support. Through collaboration, education, and action, we aim to create a more inclusive environment where every individual can thrive regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.</p> <p>For recruitment and member selection, we will be engaging community members to share results of the surveys that were previously collected. We also will be engaging county employees across Milwaukee County in addition to appropriate community organizations with aligned missions and visions.</p> <p>The “Awareness Survey” was developed to engage House and Ballroom LGBTQ+ communities. As a result, we were able to gather:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demographic Data that includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Race, Age, Gender, income, and highest level of education</li></ul></li><li>• Milwaukee County Knowledge<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Assessment of knowledge of Office of Equity and Milwaukee County Services</li></ul></li></ul> <p>The Milwaukee County Office of Equity accelerates Milwaukee County’s vision to be the healthiest county in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity. Through this data, we are continuing to not only increase civic trust but to build bridges between community and government to reduce the gap in government effectiveness and increase the power and impact of resident voices. One reason for engaging this subsample community was to understand the needs and concerns of House and Ballroom communities in Milwaukee County. From the surveys, we found that this population of LGBTQ QPOC community is aware of services offered by Milwaukee County and OOE, but has interest in learning more about how to be connected to services and resources. These findings alone can help us make more informed decisions around effective community outreach and engagement of this and other populations who have been marginalized.</p> <p>While we will be developing strategies to share the results of recent surveys with the public and the County Board, it's essential that we uphold the highest standards</p>
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	<p>of transparency and accuracy. To achieve this, we are implementing some additional research with this sub-sample population to further the survey results. By doing this, we are maintaining the trust from the public as a path to increase civic trust with Milwaukee County residents and our Milwaukee County leaders.</p>
<p>December 2023</p>	<p><b>Office of Equity Update:</b> During this reporting period, Community Engagement Manager Ricardo Wynn continued to meet with department leaders and trusted community partners. From the meetings, it was clear that when it came to engagement community, effective engagement with trusted partners was an area of development. Therefore, in addition to the survey guide being developed, an “Awareness Survey” was developed using quantitative methods to help create guidance to departments when gathering and conducting surveys.</p> <p>The survey was created to learn more about the community’s understanding and knowledge of County Resources, the Office of Equity Resources, community resources, and other community needs. The participation in this survey answering survey questions. The participation was completely voluntary, and participants was allowed to stop you may stop at any point. The survey was done anonymously, and participants were informed that all responses will only be shared with the Milwaukee County Office of Equity, OOE Community Engagement Manager, and its affiliates.</p> <p>While surveys were completed with 200 responses, data is currently being transcribed and will be gathered and disseminated based on findings from the audit recommendations.</p>
<p>May 2023</p>	<p>As mentioned in previous recommendation, the new community engagement manager was hired December 2023. Community Engagement Manager will continue to meet with needed leaders in departments to best engage department leads to be more effective around recommendations from the audit.</p> <p>In addition, the Community Engagement Manager will set on-going meetings as needed to ensure that implementation for recommendations are met in a timely manner. For example, throughout this reporting period, new tasks and timelines have been set to ensure that all recommendations given in 2022 are met in a timely manner to be achieved in 2023 due to new hire occurring at the end of 2022.</p>

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	On-going meetings and calls will be scheduled and hosted when needed to ensure timelines are met.
Audit Report Response – November 2022	*See consolidated response below.

<b>Recommendation #3</b>	
<b>Recommendation - June 2022</b>	
The Office of Equity lead efforts to develop a guide to maximize the results of community engagements that departments are participating in and provide the guide to departments within one year.	
<b>Deadlines Established Y/N?</b>	Yes
<b>Date</b>	<b>Management Comments:</b>
Current – July 2024	<p><b>Office of Equity Update:</b></p> <p>The community engagement guide was revised in early 2024 and has since been introduced to multiple Milwaukee County departments and leaders as part of a pilot. Through these efforts, we assessed the effectiveness of the engagement continuum and demonstrated its applicability across various sectors. The activities that occurred during the pilot period highlighted the importance of community-driven strategies, reinforcing our commitment to initiatives that reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of Milwaukee County residents.</p> <p>Some examples of activities that occurred during the pilot period:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The community engagement continuum was presented during Milwaukee County Vision Week 2024. During vision week, the Community Engagement manager and other Office of Equity leaders presented strategies and tools to advance equity during the series “Digging Deeper”: Applying Racial Equity Lens to your work.” Over 100+ Milwaukee County employees attended.</li> <li>2. Consultation on projects related to improving the infrastructure of Milwaukee County (e.g., Safety Building, Climate Action 2050 plan, Senior Centers, etc.)</li> </ol>

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	<p>3. Facilitation of community engagement sessions in partnership with the Community Development Alliance (CDA) to better understand and respond to housing needs of residents</p> <p>During this reporting period, OOE also released the Health &amp; Racial Equity Accelerator ("Equity Accelerator"). The Equity Accelerator is a collection of resources which promote Milwaukee County's vision of race and health equity. It includes definitions of essential terms used in Milwaukee County, easy access to reports and plans from across Milwaukee County, a platform for networking with peers from other jurisdictions, and an interactive Equity Impact Planner to guide users through essential planning aspects while incorporating equity principles into their work.</p> <p>The Equity Accelerator complements the Community Engagement guide and toolkit because it provides access to tools that help leaders plan efforts using a racial and health equity lens. They get specific support with incorporating community engagement when paring the Equity Accelerator with the Community Engagement guide.</p> <p>By actively engaging with community members and leading effective community engagement efforts throughout Milwaukee County, we gain invaluable insights that guide our decision-making processes. This collaborative approach ensures that our policies and programs are relevant, equitable, and impactful. The inclusion of community input allows us to address real issues, foster civic trust, and build a county that thrives on shared values and mutual respect. Moreover, by engaging Milwaukee County residents, we can create sustainable solutions that enhance the quality of life for all residents. Through this, we can establish a responsive and inclusive initiative that stands as a model of excellence, driven by the voices of those we serve.</p>
<p>December 2023</p>	<p><b>Office of Equity Update:</b> During this reporting period, the Office of Equity has continued to work collaboratively with trusted partners to continue to maximize the gatherings from the audit report.</p> <p>As a result, the revised community engagement framework was completed June 2023. This was mentioned in our racial equity toolkit and will be featured in our strategic plan.</p>

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	<p>Our revised framework is a directly response to the findings from the audit and resulted in the framework being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centered in racial equity and health</li> <li>• Serves as a tool for shared learning and action through community engagement</li> <li>• Increases participation of most impacted residents and communities</li> <li>• Fosters genuine partnerships with established credibility in hard-to-reach communities</li> <li>• And helps to builds the leadership, organizational, and advocacy capacity of County residents</li> </ul> <p>While the community engagement framework serves as a guide, we will continue to maximize our participation and guidance to departments and educate them on the ways to effectively engage community. While the toolkit and guide are scheduled to be available in 2024, we will continue to work closely with needed stakeholders and partners to ensure the framework is being implemented for all departments throughout the county. This also includes on-going revision of workshops and strategies.</p>
<p>May 2023</p>	<p>Currently, the Office of Equity is working collaboratively internally and externally to maximize results gathered from the audit report and community stakeholder. While the Office of Equity currently has a Community Engagement framework, the final draft of that framework will be completed June 2023. Throughout this reporting period, the Community Engagement manager will continue to work closely with needed stakeholders and partners to ensure the framework drafted will be effective for all departments throughout the county.</p> <p>In addition, due to the new hire, a list of recommendations to maximize findings and recommendations, a list of workshops and strategies are currently being drafted and will be finalized September 2023. The Office of Equity team met with the Audit Compliance Manager and the Milwaukee County Office of the Comptroller Audit Services Division April 2023 to discuss the status of the</p>



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	recommendations and next steps. On going meetings will be scheduled as needed to ensure deadlines are met and completed.
Audit response – November 2022	*See consolidated response below.

<p><b>*Audit Report Consolidated Response – November 2022</b></p>	<p>The recommendation will be implemented using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A collaborative process, involving County staff, departments, and community stakeholders to inform the work and the adoption of best practices,</li> <li>• An iterative approach so that the guide(s) continue to evolve as does the County’s work and understanding of advancing racial and health equity, and</li> <li>• A holistic view of how these are integral to County work around expanding resident voices in how we advance equitable decision-making.</li> </ul> <p>The Community Engagement Manager in the Office of Equity will be responsible for implementing recommendations, with work supported by members of the Office of Equity team and relevant collaborators in other County offices and departments. The Community Engagement Manager serves to socialize, and development standard practices related to the community engagement framework, including mechanisms to collect and analyze community input to inform decision-making.</p> <p>The implementation will be completed by October 1, 2023. The resulting resources will be introduced and distributed via a variety of communication channels in order to ensure widespread awareness of the resources.</p> <p>Alternate solutions to problems noted in the report if the recommendations are not to be implemented. This year Milwaukee County has a FUSE Executive Fellow in the Office of Equity. The FUSE Corps program is designed to augment local government capacities around racial equity. As part of that work, we are also exploring and designing infrastructure where data is transparent and shared across offices and departments as well as shared back with the residents whose voices, we are hearing. Aligning these recommendations with that work is high priority. We hope to implement a FUSE innovation lab, a design thinking approach to ideation and development which engages resident and community partners along with key County stakeholders, to support the visioning and prototyping of this work. With this Milwaukee County would serve as a leader for other jurisdictions and deliver a proof-of-concept and model approach to community engagement and data collection.</p>
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**Newly Closed Recommendations**

None

**Closed Recommendations**

None