

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: February 28, 2022

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

From: Isaac Rowlett, Strategy Director

Subject: Strategic Planning Update

File Type: Informational Report

This informational report provides updates regarding how Milwaukee County is advancing its strategic plan.

POLICY

This report aligns to Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity & Health.

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity & Health
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BACKGROUND

This report is being submitted to the Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning (HEHNSP) Committee on a quarterly basis per the request of the HEHNSP Committee Chairwoman Felesia Martin and Vice Chairman Shawn Rolland.

ALIGNMENT TO 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

This report directly aligns to all of the County's strategic objectives, as it details how each of the strategy teams are progressing to advance each of the objectives.

BODY

At the beginning of 2021, Milwaukee County established seven strategy teams to guide the advancement of each of the nine strategic objectives. Each team is made up of 5-10 representatives from across all County departments. In some cases, participants include representatives from external organizations such as municipal governments and nonprofit organizations.

The teams include the Diversity & Inclusion Team (1A & 1B), the Equitable Contracting Team (1C), the Service Alignment Team (2A & 3A), the Integration Team (2B), the Racial Equity Lens Team (2C), the Fiscal Health Team (3B), and the Inclusive Communities Team (3C).

Below are updates from each of the Strategy Teams as of February 28, 2022.

Team I: Diversity & Inclusion

The Diversity & Inclusion (1A & 1B) Strategy Team has broken into two subgroups to do a deep dive into Workforce Diversity: 1A (attracting talent, hiring process et al) and Workforce Inclusion 1B(organizational engagement, culture, accountability et al). The overall plan is for each subgroup to Identify areas of focus and need within each specific strategy point. Additionally, guided by benchmarks set within the Milwaukee County Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Model that was created in late 2021, create plans to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in these spaces. This plan will also include a timeline of action and what needs to be done to make it a reality. The outcomes of these subgroups will form a comprehensive Diversity & Inclusion strategy that will be introduced later into 2022.

The Milwaukee County D&I Maturity Model was created in late 2021 to serve as a mechanism for assessing where the County is at within the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion journey. The model is created to help departments look at their own areas based on key benchmarks and assist them in creating a culture of belonging. The model recently completed an initial design process and is currently in review for any changes needed.

Team II: Equitable Contracting

The equitable contracting group continues our work of identifying methods internally that will lead to increased spend with minority and woman owned businesses. In our effort to understand the County's decentralized contracting process, we learned that the process has inconsistencies and procedural deficiencies in some key areas. From advertisement methods, to length of time solicitations are open, to outreach efforts with minority and woman owned businesses, opportunity exists for the County to improve in

these and other internal barriers that are present. The group continues to discuss potential remedies related to equitable contracting and are beginning to finalize initial recommendations that we anticipate will improve opportunities and outcomes regarding the County's contracting spend with minority and woman owned businesses.

Team III: Service Alignment

The Service Alignment team is focused on aligning the services provided by the county of the needs of the County's residents, with a particular focus on impacted communities. In addition, the team aims to move more investments "upstream" in order to address racial disparities in areas of the social determinants of health before they manifest in future health disparities.

This team has two significant updates from the previous report:

1. The team has upload three data sets on the County's [Strategy Dashboard](#). First, the "Workforce Data" section allows anyone who visits the site to explore the extent to which each county department and office reflects the full diversity of the county's residents. Second, the "Overdose Data" enables users to explore the latest data on fatal overdoses from the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner and nonfatal overdose events from the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management. The dashboard includes geographic distribution, time trends and demographics among nonfatal and fatal overdose incidents. Third, the "Medical Examiner Mortality Data" provides monthly breakdowns of deaths across Milwaukee County in order to highlight the County's progress toward reducing racial disparities in life expectancy and improving length of life for all county residents.
2. The Service Alignment (SA) team prepared an inventory of its existing services, including details such as what services are offered, why they are offered, to whom they are offered, and what is invested in each. This inventory is a rich resource to understand how the County is structured and how future investments need to be made to meet the County's strategic priorities. In the third quarter of 2021, an enhancement to this inventory was carried out. The SA team liaisons were asked to align each service listed in the service inventory to the County Health Ranking framework and Health and Equity framework. The goal of this exercise was to align our services to the already developed frameworks that offer a path to improved community wellbeing. The gathered information was analyzed and then presented to both a group of county-wide leaders and the dashboard team to identify the framework that will allow best alignment with the county wide services. The team is also seeking insights from the UW- Madison Population Health institute on this initiative. The goal is to ultimately combine county-wide services and present them on the Strategy Dashboard. This will allow us to better understand our areas of strength and weakness. We will also be able to use data to better allocate resources to further residents' wellbeing.

Team IV: Integration

The strategy team (Integration Team) for the strategic focus area 2B was charged with the objective of “breaking down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered.” The team has been focused on the County’s organizational structure as a main way to enable us to achieve our vision. There were a number of integration recommendations presented to the County Board at the end of 2021 and a few of those recommendations moved along with the 2022 budget process. This included the creation of the Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance which used to be the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget in the Department of Administrative Services. The other change was expanding the scope of the Office of African American Affairs to the Office of Equity. These changes went into effect in the beginning of 2022.

The Integration Team has been doing a deeper dive into the additional recommendations presented in 2021. This work includes conducting stakeholder interviews, risk assessments, cost benefit analyses, and environmental scans. Findings of this work will be presented to County leadership.

Team V: Racial Equity Lens

The 2C Strategy Team, tasked to “Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions”, has developed a process to conduct a countywide Racial Equity Census to evaluate the County’s ecosystem of equity initiatives, support racial equity capacity building across departments and strategic plan strategy teams, and help ground the implementation of strategies to strengthen internal racial knowledge and infrastructure. The team will work with the County’s Office of Equity to administer the racial equity census in the second quarter of this year and support the development of racial equity guidance and technical assistance tools to drive the County’s efforts to become a more equitable and anti-racist institution.

Team VI: Fiscal Health

Due to the scale of the County’s fiscal challenges, the Fiscal Health Strategy Team recommends placing focus on numerous efforts to enhance the County’s fiscal sustainability. Following are updates on numerous areas of focus from the Fiscal Health Strategy Team.

- *Sales Tax:* The Fiscal Health Team is supporting efforts to advocate for the 1% sales tax increase as an option for stabilizing the County’s finances and for raising revenues to meet the scale of the County’s needs. County leaders continue to have productive discussions with state legislators, community leaders, and external partners to generate support for action during next year’s legislative session.
- *Pension:* Recommendations of the Retirement Sustainability Task Force are being examined regarding the future state of the pension system.
- *Health Care:* The Employee Benefits Division and the county continue to seek opportunities to contain and reduce health care costs, while also continuing to

provide high quality health care services for employees. Largely a result of changes made to health care plans in past years, county health care costs have been flat and even reduced in recent years, which is contrary to industry trends and actuarial forecasts for the overall health care market. During 2021, working with our health care provider, the county saved over \$2 million on prescription drug costs through increased rebates. In 2022, expected savings on rebates combined with other services is expected to equal approximately \$4 million. The Benefits Division continues to explore other options on health care plan design, including potential expansion of wellness program services.

- *Capital Infrastructure:* The five-year capital plan covering years 2022-2026 will be used as an updated base for evaluating infrastructure needs and addressing infrastructure maintenance backlogs. As part of the development of the 2023 capital budget, the Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance is working with departments to evaluate options to reduce infrastructure maintenance backlogs into the future.
- *Grants:* With the implementation of a centralized grants unit in 2021, grant development capacity has been expanded and information is being tracked to measure grant application success rates. In 2021, the Grants & Special Projects Division supported Milwaukee County departments with submitting 39 grant applications, totaling \$125.9M of which 21 have received awards totaling \$35.4 million, with 7 grant applications pending (totaling \$77.7M). The increase in grant awards received and applied for is consistent with Milwaukee County's strategic goal to invest in equity, invest upstream to address root causes of health disparities, and to enhance the county's fiscal health and sustainability.
- *ARPA:* The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Task Force and departments are focused on utilizing ARPA funds in a manner that is fiscally sustainable, and to meet the needs of the County and the community. Efforts are also underway to seek benefits from ARPA for a timeline that extends beyond the life of the grant. For example, the ARPA Revenue Loss subcommittee is administering the "Fiscal Health Challenge," which includes a process where County departments can submit proposals for one-time or limited term spending needs, which will have an ongoing return on investment and/or ongoing operational efficiencies into the future. Several proposals have been submitted which will result in energy efficiency savings that are also consistent with County climate action goals. There are also proposals which will result in permanent increases in revenue collections. In addition, ARPA funds are being utilized to address the County's deferred capital infrastructure backlog. ARPA funds will also be utilized for community support programs. More detailed updates will be presented to the ARPA Task Force in March.

Team VII: Diverse & Inclusive Communities

The 3C Strategy Team, tasked to "Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities", is comprised of representatives from various County departments, as

well as municipal leaders and elected officials.

The team started with a broad scope process of identifying impact opportunities across two foundational drivers: 1) To increase quality of life and opportunity for residents within the urban core of the County; 2) To address barriers to inclusion and increase positive experiences and access to opportunity in suburban municipalities. These drivers were further narrowed to three key objectives: 1) Identify barriers and put forth recommendations to remove Milwaukee as the most segregated metropolitan in the nation; 2) Create welcoming spaces to improve access, quality of life, and culture throughout the County; 3) Actualize the County's influence to advance policy, resources, and decisions making in support of the County's health and racial equity vision.

Based on these objectives, the team has worked to identify achievement tactics, completed asset mapping, and has briefed the County's Intergovernmental Cooperation Council on its work with an ask to collaborate with municipal leaders through the ICC's Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion subcommittee. Currently, the team is in the process of establishing workgroups to transition its work from a theoretical frame to an implementation stage that will necessitate the expansion of the team's membership around an action plan.

FISCAL EFFECT

The report is informational only and there is no fiscal impact.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

- Margo Franklin
- Dan Terrio
- Sherri Jordan
- Lamont Robinson
- Mary Jo Meyers
- Isaac Rowlett
- Samta Bhatnagar
- Claire Miller
- Jeff Roman
- Joe Lamers
- Dan Laurila
- Leanne Delsart

PREPARED BY:

Isaac Rowlett, Strategy Director

APPROVED BY:

Joe Lamers, Director of the Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk