

Breaking Down Barriers to Participation

in the Department of City
Development's Planning Efforts

City Plan Commission
April 19, 2021



AGENDA

- GARE Overview
- How We Got Here
- What We Heard
- Proposed Actions and Strategies
- Lessons Learned
- Next Steps

MAYORAL POLICY STATEMENT

“...Recognizing that racial disparities and behaviors that perpetuate racism have negatively impacted our community and the ability of some of our residents to experience freedom and equality, I am directing each member of the cabinet to ensure that racial equity is a core element of all of their departmental operations...”

June 24, 2020



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

June 24, 2020

Administration's Policy Statement on Advancing and Achieving Racial Equity and Inclusion

The City of Milwaukee is fully committed to implementing strategies, policies, and practices designed to advance and achieve racial equity and inclusion in education, housing, workforce development, criminal justice, violence prevention, and the delivery of quality and timely government services. This commitment is paramount to my administration's mission to promote racial, social, and economic equity for all residents.

Recognizing that racial disparities and behaviors that perpetuate racism have negatively impacted our community and the ability of some of our residents to experience freedom and equality, I am directing each member of the cabinet to ensure that racial equity is a core element of all of their departmental operations.

Specifically I expect departmental initiatives and strategies to be designed, analyzed, implemented, and evaluated for racial equity.

I expect leadership to foster, demonstrate, and expect a culture of inclusion, equity, and social justice from themselves and all employees.

I expect the use of transparent processes and data driven decision making in determining the steps necessary to eliminate disparities, and

I expect well documented partnerships and collaboration and engagement from all community stakeholders.

I firmly believe that the transformation of government and our success in advancing and achieving racial equity will require healing and personal and professional commitments to challenge and change our structures, our environments and ourselves.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Barrett".

Tom Barrett
Mayor

MAYORAL DIRECTIVE

Directs all Departments to carry out action steps to:

1. Improve existing and new services using racial equity best practices
2. End disparities in City government
3. Strengthen outreach and public engagement for communities of color
4. Strengthen partnerships with community stakeholders



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

MAYORAL DIRECTIVE Promoting Racial Equity and Inclusion Mayor Tom Barrett

8/26/20

DIRECTIVE

Racial disparities exist in virtually every key indicator of child, family, economic and community well-being. It is critical for the City of Milwaukee government to achieve racial equity within City government itself and in the communities we serve. We must work to:

- Build capacity and strengthen relationships so that each City department can work more effectively and collaboratively to advance racial equity, inclusion, and anti-racism;
- Identify and change policies and practices that may be contributing to racial disparities and inequity; and,
- Develop a shared racial equity framework with data-driven tools and measures to evaluate progress.

I am, therefore, directing the Department of Administration (DOA) to form and lead a Racial Equity and Inclusion Leadership Team comprised of volunteer staff members from each City department. The team members must be passionate about promoting racial equity and inclusion, must be willing to participate in mandatory training, data analysis and/or research, and must be able to balance work responsibilities and priorities with the work of the Racial Equity and Inclusion Leadership Team. Please ask for volunteers within your department and forward the names of your two designees (one must be a manager) to dilope@milwaukee.gov by the close of business on Wednesday, September 9, 2020.

The Racial Equity and Inclusion Leadership Team will be tasked with leading efforts within their respective Departments and guiding citywide efforts to:

- 1) Improve existing and new services using racial equity best practices;
- 2) End disparities in City government;
- 3) Strengthen outreach and public engagement for communities of color; and
- 4) Strengthen partnerships with community stakeholders.

Common Council Resolution #190098

“Resolution committing the City of Milwaukee to take actions toward achieving racial equity and transforming the systems and institutions of racism that impact the health and well-being of the community”

Common Council Resolution #190098

City Departments directed to:

- *“Work with the Equal Rights Commission to identify and recommend a process to ensure that racial equity is a core element of departmental operations.”*
- *“Examine departmental policies, rules, and practices to ensure that they are promoting equity and access to services.”*
- *“Work with nationally recognized technical assistance organizations, such as Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE) initiative, to develop goals and strategies to improve health disparities among communities of color in the City.”*

Education

Jobs

Housing

Criminal Justice

Arts and Culture

Health

Environment

Equitable Development

GARE

- Government Alliance on Race and Equity
- National networking of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.
- Racial inequity in the U.S. predicts how well you will do

MAKING CHANGES

Racial Equity Toolkit

An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity



LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY

- To break down barriers that residents--particularly residents of color--face in participating in DCD's neighborhood and comprehensive planning processes.
- Proposed Implementation Plan with actions to work on breaking down barriers

Developing the Implementation Plan

1. Internal Brainstorming with DCD (March 2020)
2. Survey to community organizers (August 2020)
3. First Discussion Group with LISC and community organizers (December 2020)
 - ➡ Identified top barriers to participation & potential actions
4. Internal review with DCD Planning
 - ➡ Developed draft strategies to break down barriers
5. Second Discussion Group with LISC and community organizers (March 2021)
 - ➡ Reviewed draft implementation plan & received feedback on implementation

What we heard...

From the survey and first workshop, four main barriers to participation emerged:

1. Not hearing about meeting or opportunities to participate
2. Lack of advance information about the subject matter being discussed
3. Feeling that input is not being listened to by the City
4. Lack of existing relationships with City staff and not feeling welcome in the process

**How do we break down
these barriers?**

Continue what is already working...

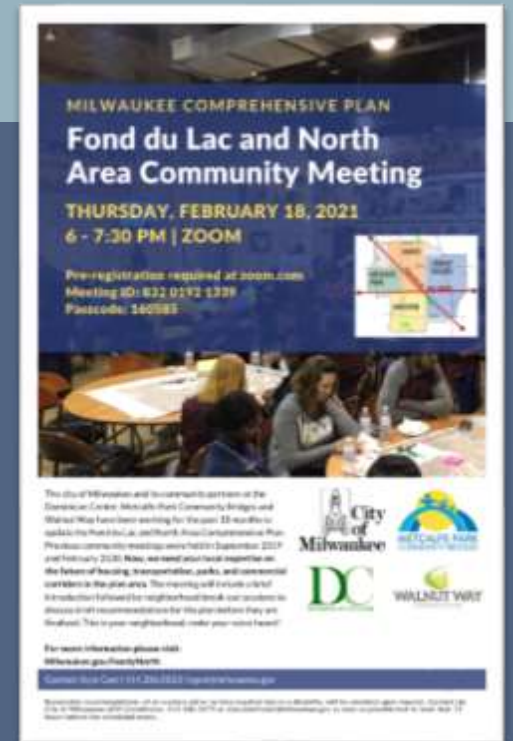
- Partner with and compensate community organizations during planning studies
- Engage public at local community events
- Provide food at community meetings
- Engage in one-on-one meetings and smaller focus groups



Barrier #1: Not hearing about meetings or opportunities to participate

- Use social media more (already started)
- Use more traditional notification methods for residents who aren't online (*e.g. radio, door hangers, mailings, ads, etc.*)
- Provide more meaningful ways for input outside of public meetings (*e.g. online surveys, interactive online platform*)

We can do these things right away!



Barrier #2: Lack of advance information about the subject matter being discussed

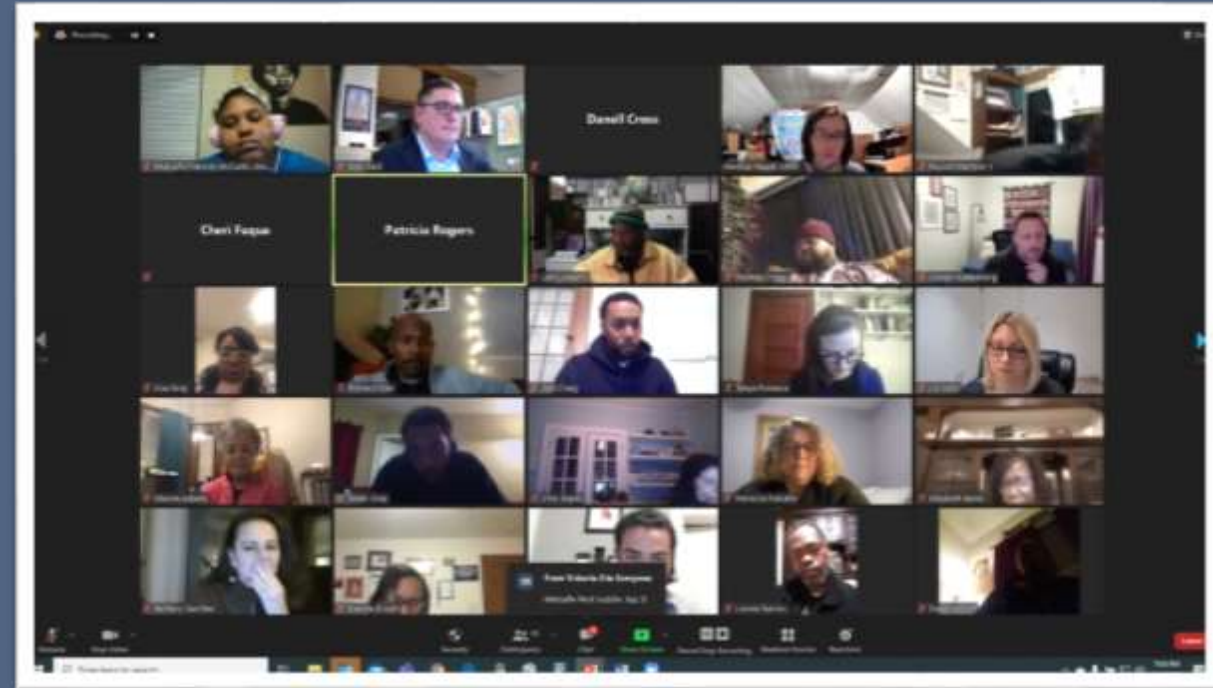
- Educate community groups and residents about DCD processes through tailored training sessions (*training module for community members*)
- Provide more information ahead of public meetings (*agenda on invites, information on website*)



These are ongoing actions that can be fully implemented within a year or two.

Barrier #3: Feeling that input is not being listened to by the City

- Better communicate how planning recommendations will be implemented and the timeframe
- Demonstrate and track progress of implementation (*Track in annual work plans and prioritize projects in NRSAs*)
- Make it easier for residents to participate in re-zoning requests (*e.g. use Legistar for CPC files, allow e-comment, continue virtual participation, expand CPC public noticing to renters*)

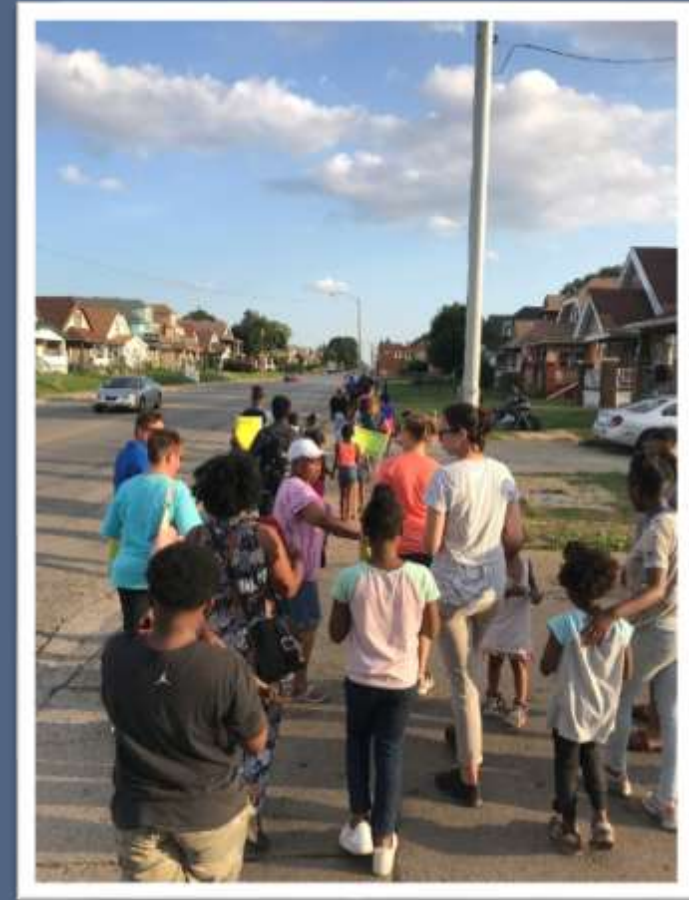


These are ongoing actions that can be fully implemented within a year or two.

Barrier #4: Lack of existing relationships with City staff and not feeling welcome in process

- “Co-host” planning meetings where neighborhood partners serve in lead roles. *(Coordinate on meeting format)*
- Compensate residents for their time and expertise when making significant time commitments in neighborhood planning. *(Pilot Neighborhood Advisory Council model in 2021)*
- Strengthen relationships with community organizations and residents through continuous information exchange. *(Proactively share information about planning projects and development requests)*
- Diversify planning staff. *(Work with local universities and Department of Employee Relations on multiple strategies)*

These require ongoing effort.



Potential Supporting Actions by Other City Departments

- Standardize and expand the use of translation and interpretation services (DOA)
- Expand the use of texting via the e-Notify system (ITMD)
- Align the Capital Improvement Planning process more closely to the Area Planning Process (DPW)
- Develop a citywide list of neighborhood organizations that is regularly updated (TBD).

GARE Toolkit:

Implementation Plan includes mechanisms for:

- Accountability for ensuring implementation
- Methods to evaluate and communicate results
- Seeking ongoing feedback and refinement

Lessons Learned

- Ask people what they need!
- Expect a lot of issues to come up—be flexible.
- Every department and division has different programs and opportunities to engage meaningfully.

Next Steps

- Make revisions to draft plan & share documentation of the process as a resource for other departments (*avoid duplication and asking the same questions again*)
- Implementation!
- Evaluate results and make adjustments