

M I L W A U K E E C O U N T Y



RACIAL EQUITY BUDGET TOOL



2024 BUDGET CYCLE

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By achieving racial equity, Milwaukee is the healthiest county in Wisconsin.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY VISION STATEMENT

Overview

Racism has been and is a public health crisis in Milwaukee County. According to the County Health Rankings, Milwaukee County is, and has consistently been, one of the lowest-ranked counties for health in Wisconsin and, according to Federal Reserve Economic Data, Milwaukee County is one of our nation's most racially segregated areas.

According to 2019 statistics, a white person lives, on average, nearly 14 years longer than a black person and the infant mortality rate is nearly three (3) times higher for black infants compared to white infants. Race is a social construction with no biologic basis, yet racism may produce an assigned societal value based on the way a person looks that has resulted in race being a consistent predictor of a person's quality and length of life.

The Racial Equity Budget Tool (REBT) is a structured racial equity lens for departments to use to critically assess the impacts of budget decisions on communities of color. The tool is structured around Milwaukee County's strategic focus areas to help departments and decision makers better understand the pain points and opportunities to advancing the County's vision.

Milwaukee County's Racial Equity Budget Tool (REBT) is designed to:

Make intentional connections between the strategic plan and the budget.

Use racial equity as the key guiding principle for important decisions regarding investments or disinvestments.

Initiate conversations on topics related to the three-year strategic objectives among department leaders and employees.

Provide baseline data on departmental efforts to inform enterprise-wide decisions.

Milwaukee County Strategic Focus Areas

In 2019, Milwaukee County launched its first strategic plan in 20 years. This plan explicitly recognizes that racism is a public health crisis and leads with the vision that: **By achieving racial equity, Milwaukee is the healthiest county in Wisconsin.**

As part of the strategic plan, Milwaukee County leaders have committed to use a racial equity budget tool to ensure resource allocations advance the strategic focus areas and vision. The questions in this budget tool were guided by the strategic plan and were informed by best practices from other jurisdictions and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE).

1. Create Intentional Inclusion

- Reflect the full diversity of Milwaukee County at every level of County government.
- Create and nurture an inclusive culture across the Milwaukee County government.
- Increase the number of Milwaukee County contracts awarded to minority- and women-owned business.

2. Bridge the Gap

- Determine what, where, and how we deliver services based on the resolution of health disparities.
- Break down silos across Milwaukee County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered.
- Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions.

3. Invest in Equity

- Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities.
- Enhance Milwaukee County’s fiscal health and sustainability.
- Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities.

Instructions

1. Submit only one REBT per department.

The REBT should reflect an analysis of the suite of budget decisions per department. Within answers to each question, **details may be provided at the division level**, as determined appropriate. Decision points should be analyzed as part of the comprehensive effort that your department is undertaking in addressing racial equity in programs, plans, policies, and power structures. Since departments are often tasked with cutting their budgets to reflect a reduction from their previous fiscal year's budget, a REBT should also include an analysis of how proposed reductions may or may not burden Black and Brown individuals and communities.

2. Keep the focus on the analysis of departments' improvements, reductions, and overall budget.

The REBT will focus on a racial equity analysis of decisions for new policies, programs, and plans under consideration, and the department's ongoing commitment to racial equity.

3. Use demographic data to help your department determine benefits and burdens of new decisions and overall budget.

State and federally collected demographic data resources are provided in [Appendix C](#). Departments are encouraged to

use any data they collect on their service users throughout the completion of the REBT. Data from other relevant and credible sources a department may have is also acceptable.

4. REBT technical assistance information and opportunities.

If you have questions related to the 2024 REBT, please attend one of the Open Office hours and bring the questions. All persons who may be expected to assist the department director in completing the REBT will be encouraged to participate.

- If you understand the question, but have difficulty determining how to answer a question, please contact your Budget Analyst for assistance.
- The Office of Equity should only be contacted on questions related to the racial equity components (glossary, concepts, etc..) that are unclear and cannot be addressed by your Budget Analyst. Send correspondence via email to equityoffice@milwaukeecountywi.gov.



RACIAL EQUITY BUDGET TOOL

Date Submitted:

Department:

Please note: each response field below has a 2,500-character limit.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 1: CREATE INTENTIONAL INCLUSION

1. What activities are you doing to attract and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce in your department? What are the associated costs of these activities?

OEM acknowledges the importance of diversity and is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment. While we already have a well-rounded level of diversity within our organization, we recognize the need for further improvement in the EMS community. It has become apparent that there is a significant lack of diversity within the EMS provider employee pool, both in OEM-EMS and the agencies we support. To address this issue, we have identified the need for focused efforts.

In the remaining months of 2023 and throughout 2024, OEM will actively partner with outreach organizations such as Employ Milwaukee, MATC (Milwaukee Area Technical College), and WCTC (Waukesha County Technical College) to promote and support diversity within the EMS discipline. These partnerships will allow us to engage with a wider pool of potential candidates and provide opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds to pursue careers in EMS.

By collaborating with outreach organizations, we aim to encourage and support individuals from underrepresented communities to consider careers in EMS. This initiative will involve targeted outreach efforts, informative sessions, mentorship programs, and access to resources and support networks. Through these activities, we aspire to create a more diverse and inclusive EMS provider employee pool, fostering an environment that embraces different perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds.

Ultimately, our goal is to enhance diversity within the EMS community, both within OEM-EMS and the agencies we support. We firmly believe that a diverse workforce brings valuable perspectives, cultural competency, and improved patient care. By partnering with outreach organizations, we can actively work towards building a more diverse and inclusive EMS community, ensuring that our services are equitable and representative of the communities we serve.

2. How do you use professional development and advancement opportunities to promote equity in your department's workforce? What resources are used to support these opportunities for professional development and advancement?

In the diverse work center of 911 Communications, we prioritize the professional development of our employees. We strongly encourage all employees to participate in training and obtain the APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator certification on an annual basis. This certification is a recognized national standard in the field, and OEM is proud to maintain a high percentage of certified employees. This commitment to training ensures that our team members possess the necessary skills and knowledge to provide effective and efficient emergency communication services.

Over the past year, OEM has had the privilege of promoting several individuals from within the organization, demonstrating our dedication to internal growth and development. Three Lead Dispatchers were elevated to the role of Supervisor, acknowledging their expertise and leadership abilities. Additionally, one Radio Coordinator was promoted to the position of Specialist, recognizing their contributions and advanced knowledge in their field. Furthermore, two Hourly Emergency Medical Technicians were offered full-time positions, solidifying their commitment to serving our community. Notably, our Executive Assistant was also promoted to the position of Senior Executive Assistant in another County agency. This progression within our organization highlights our commitment to providing opportunities for our personnel to excel and advance professionally, even if it means transitioning to other agencies or departments.

OEM firmly believes in nurturing the growth and potential of our team members. We are dedicated to supporting their professional development and empowering them to reach their career goals, even if it means exploring opportunities outside of our organization. By fostering a culture of advancement and providing avenues for growth, we ensure that our personnel are equipped with the skills and experience needed to thrive in their careers.

3. Our employees can be a great resource for innovation and knowing what is working well and what needs work. Have you engaged a diverse group of frontline employees to inform decisions about your proposed budget changes? If yes, how was input solicited, who was involved, and what were the results?

In each of our divisions, we foster a culture that encourages employees to actively seek out new opportunities for efficiency improvements, equity changes, and making a positive impact on the socially vulnerable populations we serve. One exemplary team in this regard is our EMS-Data group, which is dedicated to analyzing EMS data to identify trends within different population groups across the county. They closely examine how specific demographics are being affected compared to others and analyze the interventions that can be applied to make a meaningful impact.

This year, our Emergency Management team recognized the need for increased outreach to socially vulnerable population groups in our community who are disproportionately affected by various disasters such as weather events, fires, food deserts, and healthcare deficiencies. Based on this understanding, OEM will be seeking support to hire an additional EM Coordinator whose sole focus will be outreach to this segment of the community. This dedicated role will allow us to effectively address the specific needs and challenges faced by socially vulnerable populations, working towards reducing disparities and enhancing resilience.

By dedicating resources and personnel to targeted outreach efforts, OEM aims to bridge the gaps that exist in addressing the needs of socially vulnerable populations. The additional EM Coordinator will play a vital role in coordinating and implementing initiatives that promote preparedness, education, and support for these communities. This proactive approach will enable us to work towards reducing the impact of disasters and improving the overall well-being of the most vulnerable members of our community.

Through ongoing data analysis and a commitment to outreach, OEM strives to create a more equitable and resilient community. We believe that by focusing on the needs of socially vulnerable populations, we can drive meaningful change, address disparities, and build a more inclusive and resilient future for all.

4. Are you tracking contracts with minority and women-owned business? If yes, please share percentages of each. If no, why not?

OEM has encountered challenges in awarding contracts to minority and women-owned businesses, primarily due to the highly specialized nature of many of our services. While one of our main contracts is with Motorola, a multinational corporation, OEM Radio has successfully contracted with DBE grounds maintenance for the care of all relevant OASIS radio sites.

Recognizing the importance of promoting diversity and inclusivity in our contracting processes, OEM remains committed to exploring opportunities to engage with other DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) contractors. We are actively seeking suitable DBE contractors to potentially fill remaining contracts as needed, ensuring that we create a more inclusive and representative vendor pool. By actively pursuing and expanding our partnerships with DBE contractors, we aim to foster greater diversity, equity, and inclusion within the Office of Emergency Management's contracting practices.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 2: BRIDGE THE GAP

5. How and when have service users, in diverse and inclusive communities, and other key stakeholders been engaged to inform decisions about changes in funding levels for services provided in your requested budget (who was involved, what was the forum, what were the results)?

EMS actively engages with the community, service users, and key stakeholders through various means. Our continuous quality improvement program serves as an open channel for anyone in the community, health systems, fire departments, or EMS services to engage and report opportunities for improvement or commend excellent care. This program ensures that feedback and input from diverse sources are considered, leading to continuous enhancements in our services. Furthermore, EMS participates in and hosts meetings in multiple forums to foster intentional inclusion and further improve the EMS system.

The Radio Division is committed to finding efficiencies within the system while advancing technology at the lowest possible cost to the annual budget. We engage user groups on a quarterly basis through platforms such as the OASIS Governance Board, Technical Committee, and Operational Committee. These engagements provide an opportunity to update the user groups on upcoming system-level investments or improvements. The feedback received from the user groups acknowledges the diligent work of OEM Radio and highlights the significant financial benefits delivered to the system.

Emergency Management holds public meetings through the LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) to allow the public to provide feedback, particularly on EPCRA (Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act) related activities. Public meetings are also conducted during certain plan updates, particularly the Hazard Mitigation Plan updates. Additionally, Emergency Management engages

with local municipalities on a daily basis through our EM Coordinators, ensuring a constant flow of feedback and collaboration. Looking ahead to 2024, one challenge OEM will explore is the possibility of engaging past 911 callers to gather insights about their experience with the service. We recognize the sensitive and urgent nature of calling 911, which makes this undertaking complex. However, we are hopeful to learn from other centers on how they have accomplished this and implement similar features. By understanding the experiences of past callers, we aim to continuously improve our emergency response services and ensure the highest level of care and support for our community. Through these engagement efforts, OEM aims to foster transparency, inclusion, and responsiveness to the needs and feedback of the community and stakeholders. By actively seeking input and leveraging various platforms, we strive to deliver the best possible services and make data-driven improvements in our operations.

6. Describe ways in which racial and economic data were used to prioritize resource distribution. (Data can include sources found in the resources section of this tool, department collected data, or any other relevant data from other sources.)

The Emergency Management Division has developed a Damage Assessment dashboard that plays a crucial role in distributing resources and services throughout Milwaukee County based on Social Vulnerability Index (SVI). This live-streaming dashboard captures real-time data collected in the field after a disaster, allowing OEM to overlay SVI and other indicator layers. This aids in prioritizing resources and services to the communities that are most vulnerable, rather than solely focusing on those with the highest damage. Additionally, the dashboard helps identify communities that would benefit from targeted outreach and planning efforts. This proactive approach ensures that resources are allocated where they are most needed and promotes equity in resource distribution.

In the EMS division, a significant project is underway to consolidate all EMS agencies in the county onto a single electronic patient care record platform. Previously, data sharing existed, but each agency had its own instance of the program, leading to inconsistencies in definitions and nomenclature, resulting in what is referred to as 'dirty data.' This unstandardized data is challenging to work with and may lead to overlooking specific patient populations. The new system will provide a standardized and comprehensive view from dispatch to discharge, incorporating data from dispatch centers and hospital outcomes. With this enhanced understanding and access to additional indices such as the social vulnerability index, EMS will be better equipped to prioritize and allocate services and resources to specific populations that require additional support. An example of this is the evaluating vulnerability and equity (EVE) model developed within the EMS division. Originally designed for COVID-19 vaccination distribution, this model has a broad purpose and will be repurposed for other efforts such as allocating automated external defibrillators. The EVE model's success in changing policy at the state level has gained national recognition, and it has been published in the American Journal of Public Health.

In the Radio and 911 divisions, utmost care is taken to ensure the delivery of equitable, efficient, and cost-effective solutions for system users and callers throughout Milwaukee County. These countywide products prioritize equality and fairness in providing essential services, including emergency communication and response. The aim is to serve all community members with the highest level of service, regardless of their location or circumstances.

Through these initiatives and divisions, OEM demonstrates its commitment to promoting equity, efficiency, and quality in its services. The integration of technology, data-driven approaches, and comprehensive system coordination allows OEM to make informed decisions and allocate resources effectively to meet the needs of the community.

7. How does your budget reflect efforts to work across departments to break down silos to maximize access to and quality of services offered? How does this help us achieve the vision of achieving equity and health?

All divisions within OEM share a common goal of “helping people in extraordinary times” by providing rapid response and offering assistance in situations that go beyond the norm. Given the emergency nature of these divisions, there is inherent overlap and interdependence among them, requiring close interaction and anticipation of shared needs and resources. Collaboration and coordination among the divisions are essential to ensure efficient operations and effective response.

OEM divisions regularly collaborate with other County departments to align projects and associated costs, minimizing the impact on County taxpayers. This cooperative approach allows for streamlined processes and resource utilization. In the EMS Division, for example, additional features have been acquired for the countywide EMS patient care report system. These enhancements enable the sharing of health data with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and various components of the local healthcare systems. This integration facilitates seamless information exchange and improved coordination of patient care.

In the 911 Communications Division, dispatchers are undergoing training in Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) to enhance their ability to assess and triage incoming medical calls. This training ensures that the appropriate resources are dispatched promptly, optimizing the response to medical emergencies. By equipping dispatchers with EMD skills, the division strengthens its ability to provide critical guidance during emergency situations.

Looking ahead to 2024, the Emergency Management Division is investing in a virtual meeting platform that will

enhance connectivity for all stakeholders during disasters within the county. This platform will enable effective communication and collaboration, even in challenging circumstances. The enhanced connectivity will facilitate coordination among different agencies and organizations involved in emergency response efforts, ensuring a unified and efficient approach.

Through these initiatives and investments, OEM is committed to leveraging technology, training, and collaboration to enhance its ability to respond to emergencies effectively. The divisions work together to ensure a coordinated response and maximize the utilization of resources. By anticipating needs, sharing information, and fostering connectivity, OEM strives to provide the highest level of service and support to the community in times of crisis.

8. What are the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences to disadvantaged communities of your proposed budget changes?

The proposed budget changes within OEM are expected to bring several benefits to disadvantaged communities while also acknowledging the potential for unintended consequences. Extensive analysis and consideration have been undertaken to determine these expected benefits and potential unintended consequences.

One of the expected benefits is the creation of a Community Outreach Coordinator position within the Emergency Management Division. This dedicated role aims to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance resilience in underserved communities throughout Milwaukee County. By prioritizing historically marginalized populations, this position ensures that equity and inclusion are fundamental aspects of emergency management. The benefits include expanded access to preparedness education, improved coordination with community partners, and enhanced expertise in equity and inclusion to improve emergency response plans.

Another expected benefit is the consolidation of all EMS agencies onto a single electronic patient care record platform. This initiative addresses the issue of "dirty data" resulting from inconsistent definitions and nomenclature. The standardized system will provide a comprehensive view of patient care, incorporating data from dispatch centers, hospital outcomes, and other indices such as the social vulnerability index. This enhanced understanding will enable better prioritization and allocation of services and resources to specific populations that may require additional support.

Regarding potential unintended consequences, OEM has carefully considered the impact of budget changes on current employees and the strain it may place on staffing and overtime within the 911 Communications Division. The unfunded positions and vacancies have created challenges in maintaining service levels. The unintended consequence is increased stress and reduced efficiency within the center. To mitigate this, OEM requests supplemental funding to fully fund Dispatcher positions and create an additional Lead Dispatcher position. This will alleviate the burden on current staff, improve scheduling, and enhance overall service by reducing call-answer times and distributing the workload more effectively.

a. What analysis did you do to determine the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences?

The analysis conducted to determine the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences involved careful consideration of the specific goals and objectives of each budget change. Collaborative discussions, data analysis, and feedback from stakeholders and community partners were key components of this analysis. By involving diverse perspectives and considering the potential impacts on disadvantaged communities, the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences were identified and evaluated.

b. What will your department do to mitigate unintended consequences resulting from your proposed budget changes?

To mitigate any unintended consequences resulting from the proposed budget changes, OEM will implement several strategies. Firstly, ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to assess the impact of the changes and identify any unanticipated effects. Feedback from staff, stakeholders, and community members will be actively sought and incorporated into decision-making processes. Adjustments will be made as needed to address any unintended consequences that may arise. Additionally, continuous engagement and collaboration with community partners and stakeholders will ensure that the proposed changes remain aligned with the needs and priorities of disadvantaged communities. Regular communication and transparent reporting will help to foster trust and accountability.

OEM is committed to learning from the implementation of budget changes, gathering feedback, and taking proactive steps to address any unintended consequences. By maintaining a flexible and responsive approach, OEM aims to mitigate any negative impacts and maximize the benefits for disadvantaged communities.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 3: INVEST IN EQUITY

9. If your department were to receive some additional funding for addressing racial equity, what specific strategic plan priority would you address, what would be the project/activity and intended outcome, and how much would it cost?

Emergency Management, recognizing the importance of bridging gaps in emergency and disaster preparedness, aims to allocate additional funding to address vulnerabilities and enhance resilience throughout Milwaukee County. To achieve this, OEM proposes the creation of a dedicated Community Outreach Coordinator position, focused on reducing vulnerabilities and promoting equity and inclusion within emergency response plans. This role would expand access to preparedness education, foster coordination with community partners, and provide expertise in equity and inclusion to improve emergency response efforts. By prioritizing historically underserved populations, this position ensures that equity is embedded as a fundamental aspect of emergency management. The estimated cost for this position is approximately \$85,000 per year.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the County Executive established the Chief Health Policy Adviser position within OEM to enhance decision-making concerning community health. However, during the budget process, OEM had to reevaluate the funding for this position in comparison to other critical needs. While recognizing the important role this position plays in advocating for community health, OEM has made the difficult decision to reallocate funding towards more direct services to citizens, such as Dispatcher positions. If granted additional funding, OEM would be able to continue the Chief Health Policy Adviser position for 2024, ensuring ongoing guidance and expertise in promoting community health.

In 2023, OEM utilized additional funding to address a long-standing pay disparity within the 911 Communications Division, bringing the pay to a competitive level in the market. However, due to tax levy restrictions, OEM faces challenges in fully funding positions in 2024. This has resulted in several authorized positions being listed as "unfunded." The combination of vacancies and unfunded positions places a heavy burden on current employees, leading to increased overtime and strain within the center. In order to address these issues and improve service to citizens, OEM requests supplemental funding to fully fund all Dispatcher positions and create an additional Lead Dispatcher position for center supervision. A fully funded and staffed center would allow for more appropriate scheduling, reduce stress on current staff, and enhance overall service by reducing call-answer times and distributing the workload more effectively.

By allocating additional funding to these critical areas, OEM aims to strengthen emergency management capabilities, enhance community outreach, address disparities, and improve overall service delivery. These investments will contribute to a more resilient and equitable response to emergencies and ensure that the needs of underserved populations are appropriately addressed.

10. What is your department doing to dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities, including meeting multilingual needs and other communication or accessibility barriers?

Several public-facing services within OEM have implemented multilingual platforms to ensure effective communication and accessibility. In the 911 Communications Division, native speakers of various languages are part of the center staff, enabling them to provide support in different languages when language barriers arise. Additionally, contracted services are utilized to offer additional language support as needed. This service is not only available to OEM staff within the dispatch center but also extends to Sheriff's Office personnel when language barriers occur in the field. By incorporating multilingual capabilities, OEM strives to overcome language barriers and facilitate efficient emergency response and communication.

In the EMS Division, efforts are underway to enhance the accessibility of data dashboards by incorporating multiple language options. As data dashboards are released, steps are being taken to ensure that they can be consumed by English, Spanish, and Hmong-speaking groups. This expansion of language options aims to enable a broader audience to access and understand the data, promoting inclusivity and effective communication of important information.

By incorporating multilingual platforms and options, OEM is committed to removing language barriers and ensuring that services and information are accessible to diverse communities. These efforts demonstrate a commitment to providing equitable and inclusive services, regardless of language or cultural background.



Appendices

Appendix A:
Glossary

Appendix B:
Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix C:
Resources by Strategic Focus Area

Appendix D:
Public Participation Model

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Communities of color: In the context of the Milwaukee County Racial Equity Budget Tool, the term communities of color is interchangeable with Black and Brown communities and inclusive of all non-white populations of color.

Disadvantaged communities: A collective term for referencing communities that have historically experienced inequities where they learn, live, and work that were/are not optimal due to disenfranchisement, disinvestment, marginalization, racism, and other systems of oppression.

Diversity: Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term “diversity” is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

Diverse group: As it relates to question 5, an intentional effort to include individuals from different racial, ethnic, gender, and social backgrounds proportionate to the diversity of the department.

Economic data: Numerical data collected based on service delivery criteria determined by departments.

Equity: The just, fair, and impartial treatment, acceptance, or behavior of people without favoritism or discrimination. Equity means righting wrongs, doing what’s right, and giving people what they need to thrive, which is different from equality, which means everyone gets the same thing regardless of circumstance or need.

Frontline employees: A grouping of Milwaukee

County employees that serves as the initial point of contact for service users or a range of employees from all levels of the workforce with emphasis on the inclusion of direct service rendering staff.

Inclusion: Assurance that the culture, values, and opinions of individuals and groups are represented in the decision-making processes.

Inclusive workforce: A workplace environment that recognizes the contributions of all employees, while valuing their social status, race, gender, or other demographic classifications.

Key stakeholders: Both internal and external individuals, agencies, or organizations who participate in the planning, development, implementation and decision-making process of an activity, process, or service delivery. (AMOP: Key stakeholders are service users, the workforce, partners, governing boards, donors, suppliers, taxpayers, regulatory bodies, policy makers, funders, and local and professional communities.)

Multilingual needs: The ability of Milwaukee County departments to address linguistic needs for all service users through staffing, documentation, and other communication platforms.

Professional advancement: Opportunities for staff to build their capacity and ascend or pursue lateral movement to further advance their career trajectory.

Racial data: Demographic data collected by Milwaukee County departments that identifies the race/ethnicity of service recipients.

Racial equity: The just and fair inclusion of all people in society, regardless of their race/ethnicity, with unfettered ability to participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Racial equity is achieved when race no longer determines one's health and socioeconomic outcomes and when everyone has what they need to thrive and decide

what's best for themselves, their families, and their communities, no matter where they live.

Service user: Current or potential user of Milwaukee County services.

Unintended consequences: Outcomes of a purposeful action that are not intended or foreseen.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PURPOSE

1) What is the purpose of using this tool?

The Racial Equity Budget Tool (REBT) has many intended purposes:

- It is about making an intentional connection between the strategic plan and our budget. We cannot sufficiently change our institution if we do not think critically about how and what we are spending money on.
- Whether we are making investments or disinvestments, we must do so with racial equity as the key guiding principle to those important decisions.
- It is meant to spur conversation on topics related to the strategic focus areas among department leaders and employees so we are all challenging ourselves to think critically about our efforts to advance the vision.
- This tool is an opportunity to baseline departmental efforts to make informed enterprise-wide decisions.

These are only some of the many answers to why we are using a tool to assess budget decisions.

2) What other jurisdictions have used a racial equity budget tool? Where did the budget tool questions come from?

Milwaukee County's REBT builds on the success of other jurisdictions in implementing a budget tool. Jurisdictions Milwaukee County looked to for guidance include the City of Seattle, the City of Portland (Ore.), King County (Wash.), and the City of San Antonio. Resources from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) were also used. The questions are largely framed around Milwaukee County's strategic plan.

3) How does this tool work when departments must make budget cuts year over year? What is the point of doing this when departments don't have a lot of latitude about what disinvestments to make?

Milwaukee County's structural deficit and budget challenges are no secret. However, Milwaukee County still has an annual budget of over \$1 billion. Whether the County is

making disinvestments or investments, those decisions must be made with racial equity at the forefront of decision-makers' minds. Departments should think critically about their current assumptions and spending versus shifting investments to address root-causes of inequities.

COMPLETING THE TOOL

4) Are there right answers to the questions?

Responses to this tool will inform our future action to see where Milwaukee County can improve on the path to health and racial equity. There are no right answers to the questions, and each department is starting in a different place, serves different people with different needs, and faces a different set of barriers and opportunities. While there are no right answers, the information provided in the tool will be used for decision making throughout the budget process and will be available to the public. Therefore, answers should be robust, defensible, and easy to understand. Your department's answer may look very different than another department's answer and that is okay as long as the answers address the question.

5) What if there are inequities to other groups other than racial groups? Should we be talking about those inequities in our analysis?

Yes! Milwaukee County is race forward, but not race exclusive. If there are other inequities identified in your analysis, please include them.

6) Does every department complete one tool, or is it one tool for each division?

Please submit one tool per department. Responses can be

broken down at the division level within your department's tool, as appropriate. All questions should be completed.

7) Who is responsible for filling out the budget tool?

The department head is ultimately responsible for the content in the REBT. It is up to department leadership to determine who in their department is most appropriate to be involved in completing questions in the tool, which will differ from department to department. Likely people to include are department leaders, fiscal staff, administrative staff, and Racial Equity Ambassadors.

APPENDIX B FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

[GO TO QUESTIONS \(REBT FORM\)](#)

8) Is this tool supposed to imply that we should be taking actions on each of these items? Are the questions meant to be directives to departments?

A budget is a reflection of priorities. Ultimately, Milwaukee County’s budget should reflect our values and advance our vision and strategic plan. However, we acknowledge our organization is on a journey to continuously improve our efforts toward health and racial equity. The REBT is meant to spur conversations among department leaders and staff about what they are and are not able to do in a given budget year to advance the vision. To that end, the tool is not an absolute directive to departments. We fully expect that some departments’ answers to some of the questions will be that they are not doing anything this year with an explanation about why that is the case. Looking ahead to future years, departments will be expected to show how their budgets help Milwaukee County make progress toward its vision.

9) How do I use this when my work is statutorily required?

What services Milwaukee County provides is often statutorily required. However, how we do our work usually is not a directive. This tool is meant to challenge us all to think about how to do the enormous part of our work that is within our discretion and control.

10) Is there a standard approach all departments are expected to take to answer the questions?

No. Answer the questions based on the approach your department currently takes on these items.

11) What type of analysis is expected for each of the questions?

It depends on what your department is

currently doing in each area. Please use the diverse expertise and experiences of staff in your department to determine the most appropriate way for your department to answer the questions.

12) What part of the budget is this tool being applied to?

The REBT will focus on an equity analysis of decisions for new policies, programs, and plans under consideration, and the department’s ongoing commitment to equity. Your department is asked to identify what considerations are considered in the overall budget to maximize equitable outcomes.

USING THE DATA

13) Who will receive the data departments provide in the REBT? Who will be expected to answer questions about the information provided?

Responses to the REBT will be publicly available and will be presented to the County Board. If any decision-makers (e.g., County Executive, County Board Supervisors, department directors) have questions about the information provided in the REBT, the department should be prepared to answer them. We are all partners in Milwaukee County’s strategic planning effort to achieve racial equity, and the budget tool is in-part meant to inform and focus conversations around strategic priorities, understanding that not all questions have known answers or solutions.

14) What if someone questions the analysis, conclusions, or recommendations made in the budget tool?

Like all research and analysis, there will be questions and critiques and we should embrace these important conversations. The work presented in the budget tool should be defensible, but most of these

questions do not have a clear right or wrong answer. If someone finds something wrong in the analysis, then we need to fix it. However, if it is a question about the interpretation and meaning of the analysis, then we can make space for different perspectives to find the best path forward with the information we have available.

14) Will the budget tool submissions be scored?

No, the REBT submissions will not be scored. However, they will be made available to the public and reviewed by the County Executive's office, the Office of Equity, the Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget and the County Board.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(CONTINUED)

LOGISTICS

16) When will the budget tool be due?

The REBT is due on July 15 — the same due date as the requested budget.

17) Where do I go if I have questions?

If you understand the question, but have difficulty determining how to answer a question, please first try to problem solve within your department by looping in additional experts (e.g., Racial Equity Ambassadors, people leaders, frontline staff).

If you need assistance understanding what the question is asking, contact your Budget Analyst for assistance.

The Office of Equity should only be contacted on questions related to racial equity components (glossary, concepts, etc.) that are unclear and cannot be addressed by your budget analyst. Send correspondence via email to equityoffice@milwaukeecountywi.gov.

RESOURCES BY STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 1: **Create Intentional Inclusion**

- [2020 Milwaukee County Workforce Audit](#)

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 2: **Bridge the Gap**

- [American Community Survey](#) (from US Census Bureau – descriptions below from US Census Bureau)
 - [Data Profiles](#) have the most frequently requested social, economic, housing, and demographic data. Each of these four subject areas is a separate data profile. The data profiles summarize the data for a single geographic area, both numbers and percent, to cover the most basic data on all topics. (Can compare state/County/Municipal data. With some effort, can get zip code level data.)
 - [Narrative Profiles](#) are short, analytic reports derived from the ACS 5-year estimates. Each Narrative Profile covers 15 different topic areas and provides text and bar charts to display highlights of selected social, economic, housing, and demographic estimates for a selected geographic area. (Easy to get zip code level data)
- [Personal Income Data](#) (Bureau of Economic Analysis) Per Capita Personal Income by State/County, 2016 – 2018 for the entire nation.
- Per Capita Income by County
- [Public School Enrollment](#) (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)
- [Private School Enrollment](#) (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)
- [State of Wisconsin WBE/MBE/DVE](#) This provides a list of all Woman/Minority/Disabled Vets Business Enterprise information. You can search by business name, by product/service, and by location.
- [Milwaukee County Diversity and Compliance Website \(B2GNow\)](#) Links to certified lists for the State of Wisconsin ACDBE/ DBE/SBE Directory and the Milwaukee County approved DBE/SBE vendors (training available on using system).

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 3: **Invest in Equity**

- [Public Participation Model](#)


Additional County Resources

- [Strategic Plan \(Objectives\)](#)
- [Health and Equity Framework](#)

APPENDIX D

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MODEL



	INFORM 	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER/LEAD
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	<p>To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions</p>	<p>To obtain public analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p>	<p>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</p>	<p>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</p>	<p>To place final decision making in the hands of the public.</p>
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	<p>We will keep you informed</p>	<p>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p>	<p>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public influenced the decision.</p>	<p>We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</p>	<p>We will implement what you decide.</p>

ON THE COVER



“WELCOME TO THE PEOPLE’S HOUSE”

Artist: Tia Richardson

Commissioned in 2020. Used with permission of the artist.



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
HEALTH &
RACIAL
EQUITY

ONE COUNTY
ONE VISION

By achieving racial equity,
Milwaukee is the **healthiest**
county in Wisconsin.

[county.milwaukee.gov/vision](https://www.county.milwaukee.gov/vision)