

Airport Racial Equity Budget Tool Response

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?

The airport primarily utilizes the County's Human Resources Recruitment Division to attract new candidates to the airport. These services are provided through the general services cross-charge without a detailed explanation of specific costs associated with these services.

The airport partners with other MCDOT divisions such as Highway for job fairs that attract similar positions. The airport has also been a paid participant of various festivals such as Pridefest and Fiesta Mexicana to promote the airport and provide general information about employment opportunities.

For positions that require specific job skills, or those that require more industry specific skills, the airport provides job postings in industry-specific trade organizations that target a wider audience of potential candidates.

The airport invests roughly \$127,000 annually in training and professional development for 236 staff members. The airport's training and development initiatives are aligned with industry trade organizations and regulatory requirements outlined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

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?

The airport actively invests in its employees through a variety of different learning and development channels. The airport uses existing resources provided by Milwaukee County's Learning and Development curriculum and industry-based resources specific to the aviation industry. In addition, the airport has also sought specific needs-based development of training courses in conjunction with the County's HR Learning and Development division and corporation council.

Investing in our staff gives them the necessary tools for future promotional opportunities. In recent years, the airport has promoted more individuals at all levels from within the organization than from outside providing the success of the airport's training investment in its employees. Airport internal candidates filled 63% of available positions.

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?

Managers meet regularly with staff in areas like Maintenance, Operations, Security and Fire. These discussions include operational work needs and potential safety improvements. Based on feedback from staff, budget items are identified to make these necessary improvements. Other forms of feedback are utilized such as seeking input from the MyMKE employee newsletter to direct one-on-one communication with managers.

Employee engagement has led to areas of investment in training, equipment, and forward-looking use applications for AI.

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

The airport does not track minority and women-owned businesses directly. The reason for this is that it is centrally collected through the county's Office of Economic Inclusion (OEI). As a federally regulated division, the airport is subject to federal DBE reporting requirements for race-based and race neutral participation of contracted services and concessions programming. This standardized reporting meets the federal government's reporting requirements for the goals established by the OEI office.

Currently, the FAA approved DBE goal is 19.3% with 7.7% being race neutral and 11.6% race-conscious. By sector, the goal for construction is 20.6% and 6.6% for professional services. In addition, the airport's concessions-based DBE goal is 12% participation for non-rental car, and 3% for rental car.

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)?

The airport's funding structure is unique to the rest of the county. By federal law, the airport is a self-sufficient operation that neither takes tax levy, nor provides revenues back to the county. Therefore, the stakeholder engagement that is conducted, by contract, is with the airlines as they are the funding partners of the airport.

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

As stated above, the airport is unique in funding and resource allocation. Resources are not distributed into the community like many other county programs. By federal law, resources are collected at the airport and are to be used at the airport, therefore, resource distribution is central to the needs of the airport itself.

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?

While the airport's funding structure is unique and requires careful attention to make sure it is not overfunding another county program, the airport has been successful in working with other county departments. The airport's law enforcement program is supported by the airport division of the Sheriff's Office with a cross-charge of nearly \$9 million dollars. The airport works with OEI for required reporting and DBE goal development. DAS-A&E provides engineering services for planned capital budget work, and other divisions internally cross-charge for their activities.

Beyond the budgeted activities, the airport has been creative in working with the Office of Persons with Disabilities on internally facility navigation aids, Transit on fare vending equipment and route information in the airport, Parks with the inclusion of information about parks and activities throughout the county, and DHHS Housing division through its change collection pre and post security. All of these efforts remain in place as examples of working with other county departments, showcasing their services.

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

- a. **What analysis did you do to determine the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences?**
- b. **What will your department do to mitigate unintended consequences resulting from your proposed budget changes?**

The airport's budget is structured to maintain the assets necessary for the use and promotion of air service to the community at-large. The airport is the connection point for individuals who wish to travel by air and the airline who provides the service. Air service is a choice form of transportation. Airfares are determined by market forces outside the airport's control. Therefore, use of the airport varies by based on individual choice.

The airport is an infrastructure intensive environment, therefore many of the costs associated with maintaining assets like the airfield and terminal remain consistent from year to year. Whatever work the airport does not perform itself it contracts with service providers. This level of activity also remains fairly consistent from year to year and creates the best likely avenue for participation by individuals or businesses from disadvantaged communities.

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

Milwaukee's airport wage rates have fallen well behind other peer airports and certain local market labor rates. Recruitment has been a major challenge in nearly every job category. A comprehensive wage review is imperative if Milwaukee wishes to have a viable airport in the future. Far too often we see people leave the airport who were happy with their job, but either could not pass up higher pay jobs elsewhere or keep up with inflation. The airport can financially support an initiative to review salary and wages based on industry peer review. This report should then ultimately be used to update pay rates to invest in our people, attract new talent, grow our knowledge base, and reduce turnover.

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

The airport actively works to promote an inclusive environment for the entire community. The airport has diversified its advertising campaigns and promotes diversity using graphics and pictures to demonstrate that the airport is used all members of the community. We have also included aspects of diverse communities in our concessions program such as naming retail outlets after Milwaukee neighborhoods like Bronzeville Crossing. We support programs like the ACE program to provide exposure to under privileged youth to aviation careers. We support Goodwill's Project Search program

that provide job training for individuals with disabilities. The airport was the first airport in the Midwest to institute the Aira program for visually impaired individuals helping them navigate the airport and allowing them to take full advantage of its resources and offerings. In 2026, we expanded the Aira program to include services for the hearing impaired. The airport continues to make facility improvements based on recommendations from an FAA ADA audit. The airport has gone above and beyond what is required in some cases and has been referenced as an example for other airports. The airport has installed adult accessible changing facilities in each concourse as well as the terminal of the airport, unique to most airports and exceeding the ADA minimum standard. This has now been adopted as an additional grant assurance meaning if airports do not provide this level of service, they may lose grant funding. We have been and remain ahead of this curve. We have also recently included pet relief stations in each concourse for those who need the use of service animals.

Staff members have worked with members of diverse communities individually to help them advance their career goals in aviation. The airport has developed its wayfinding materials in other languages and has bi-lingual interpretation to support non-English speaking travelers. The airport has trained its staff in human trafficking awareness. We have also adopted the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program to assist those who self-identify the need for more care and attention navigating the facility.