



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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Major Milwaukee employers join forces to boost diversity in hiring, buying decisions

**Statement from Alderman Khalif J. Rainey and Alderman Cavalier Johnson
August 10, 2021**

Exciting news for opportunities in Milwaukee's most disadvantaged neighborhoods comes as the Milwaukee Anchor Collaborative (MAC), which includes major healthcare and educational institutions, has pledged to hire more people of color and spend more with minority-owned businesses in the most challenged neighborhoods of Milwaukee.

The collaborative will focus on hiring residents, and purchasing from businesses, in eight Milwaukee ZIP codes: 53204, 53205, 53206, 53208, 53210, 53212, 53216, and 53233.

The collaborative launches with seven institutions: Advocate Aurora Health, Ascension Wisconsin, Children's Wisconsin, Froedtert Health, the Medical College of Wisconsin, Marquette University, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Anchor collaborations have proven to be successful in many cities across the nation, and we applaud the member institutions in the MAC who are committing to using their collective economic power to employ residents, and purchase from businesses, in disinvested neighborhoods.

We have recently discussed this type of initiative in Common Council committee meetings and understand that anchor collaborative initiatives across the country are making significant positive impacts in many communities.

Additionally, we are in support of legislation (proposed by Alderman Rainey and being drafted now) to create a "Co-Op" grant program to revitalize, create jobs for, and build community wealth in historically disadvantaged neighborhoods. Using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, it will provide funding for the Department of City Development to research, develop and create an entity to serve as a place-based incubator for worker-owned cooperatives.

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The Co-Op initiative would bring together public and private resources to support the success of business cooperatives by promoting the purchase of local goods and services, encouraging the hiring of residents from disadvantaged neighborhoods, providing financial support for cooperative members and including residents in plans to improve their neighborhoods.

The initiative would be implemented in phases, and in Phase I, the Department of City Development would research business opportunities and develop a model for the incubator, and additional phases would be determined based on the department's findings.

We look forward to further discussion of the Co-Op initiative and are confident in The Milwaukee Anchor Collaborative's ability to uplift struggling neighborhoods and are looking forward to seeing the positive results it brings to people and businesses across Milwaukee.