



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

City Hall, 200 E. Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202 • [www.city.milwaukee.gov](http://www.city.milwaukee.gov)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 5, 2021

## **Milwaukee Tool deal is important to our city on multiple levels**

**Joint statement from Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa, Alderman Nik Kovac, Alderman Robert J. Bauman, Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd, Alderman Mark A. Borkowski, Alderman José G. Pérez and Alderwoman Marina Dimitrijevic**

We welcome Milwaukee Tool to our city and our downtown following the unanimous Council vote on the amended development deal.

In addition to the \$20 million financing package assisting this project, Milwaukee Tool comes to a prosperous downtown bolstered by decades of City taxpayer investment that has created a place to which corporations like this want to locate and an environment in which commercial real estate flourishes.

But also we recognize that public discussion around this project surfaced urgent, important issues concerning the sub-contracted janitors, security officers, and food service workers employed at commercial office properties like Milwaukee Tool in our downtown and throughout the city.

While our city has grown and increased its economic vitality with a great deal of public investment, particularly downtown, Milwaukee has produced too many service sector jobs that do not sustain families, support neighborhoods and communities, nor deliver a share in the prosperity. Disproportionately these jobs are filled by workers of color, contributing to our city's challenges with racial and economic inequality that are wrapped up together.

The debate of the past few weeks began an overdue conversation about how we can transform service sector work into good, family-supporting jobs. We are ready to take that conversation to the next level through policy initiatives and City action and additional public leadership by stakeholders.

-More-

We appreciate that Milwaukee Tool committed to a \$15 wage standard. That is a good start. We call on Milwaukee Tool to use responsible contractors for their janitorial, security and food service work as well, as raised in the public review process of their project.

But this conversation never centered on just one project. We call on city leaders to come together in fashioning an approach to ensure that all service work provides living wages, decent benefits, workplace rights, and employment security with responsible contractors who are part of a sectoral strategy to improve job quality and address workforce challenges.

We adopted an amendment to the Milwaukee Tool deal to build on the Community-Oriented, Responsible, and Equitable (CORE) Development Zone resolution adopted in 2019 pursuing just that. We on the Council are prepared to do our part. We recognize that Milwaukee Area Service & Hospitality Workers (MASH) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) have started this vitally necessary process. We call on Mayor Barrett and Commissioner Crump to lead and we call on developers, property owners and the business community to join as well.

We believe that stakeholders in Milwaukee, from City Hall to the service worker unions to the business community, are ready to tackle the challenges of economic and racial inequality by establishing a new order for service sector work. We call on these actors to take up this imperative urgently and with the prioritization it deserves.