CITY OF MILWAUKEE

EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSION

2019 Accomplishments *and Plans for 2020*

Update to the Mayor and Common Council

December 2019

Who We Are – Our Mission

"Promote and protect equality, equity and human rights through education, enforcement and community engagement."

Commissioners

1. Chez Ordoñez, Acting Chair
2. Sheila Ashley
3. Jennifer Bennett
4. Martha Collins
5. Nathan Guequierre
6. Reggie Jackson
7. Mayhoua Moua
8. Tony Snell

City Staff

1. Sharon Robinson, Director of Administration
2. Jessica Langill, Equal Rights Specialist
3. Ben Roovers, Assistant City Attorney

2019 Accomplishments

- Racial Equity & Inclusion
- Indigenous People's Day
- Inclusive Restrooms Planning and Policy Drafting
- Human Rights Campaign Municipality Equality Index
- CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women)
- Adaptive Bikes & Accessibility Pilot (first in the nation)
- 75th Anniversary Celebration
- Completion of Strategic Planning
- 3rd Annual Human Rights Day Celebration – December 14th, 2019

Racial Equity & Inclusion

· Worked closely with Council President, Mayor's office, DOA, DER, and Health departments to draft and advance resolution declaring racism a public health crisis (Council adopted July 2019). **Will begin this work in January 2020.**

· Encouraged City to join Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) – national network of governments working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all

· Partnering with Greater Milwaukee Complete Count Committee to spread word about 2020 Census to historically undercounted populations – the more people we count means more money and more fair elections

Indigenous People’s Day

- Supported designating second Monday of October each year as Indigenous Peoples’ Day in City of Milwaukee (Council adopted October 2019)
- In addition to Milwaukee, several communities throughout U. S. have recognized Indigenous Peoples’ Day (including Madison, Milwaukee County and Dane County)
- Hosted reception in honor of the passage of Indigenous Peoples’ Day at City Hall

Inclusive Restrooms

· ERC passed resolution to create inclusive restrooms in properties owned by the City through Inclusive Restroom Work Group (Council adopted November 2019).

· ERC working to create policy for Public Works Committee consideration and review - early 2020

Human Rights Campaign Municipality Equality Index (MEI)

- The City of Milwaukee received a score of 100 for the second year in a row
- The HRC MEI is a Nationally recognized score card that rates municipalities. on their laws, policies, and services for the LGBTQ+ people who live, work, and play there
- Milwaukee earned a 100 through banning conversion therapy in 2018, having LGBTQ+ liaisons in the Mayor’s Office and MPD, offering transgender insurance options, and City Leadership’s clear commitment to LGBTQ+ communities.

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

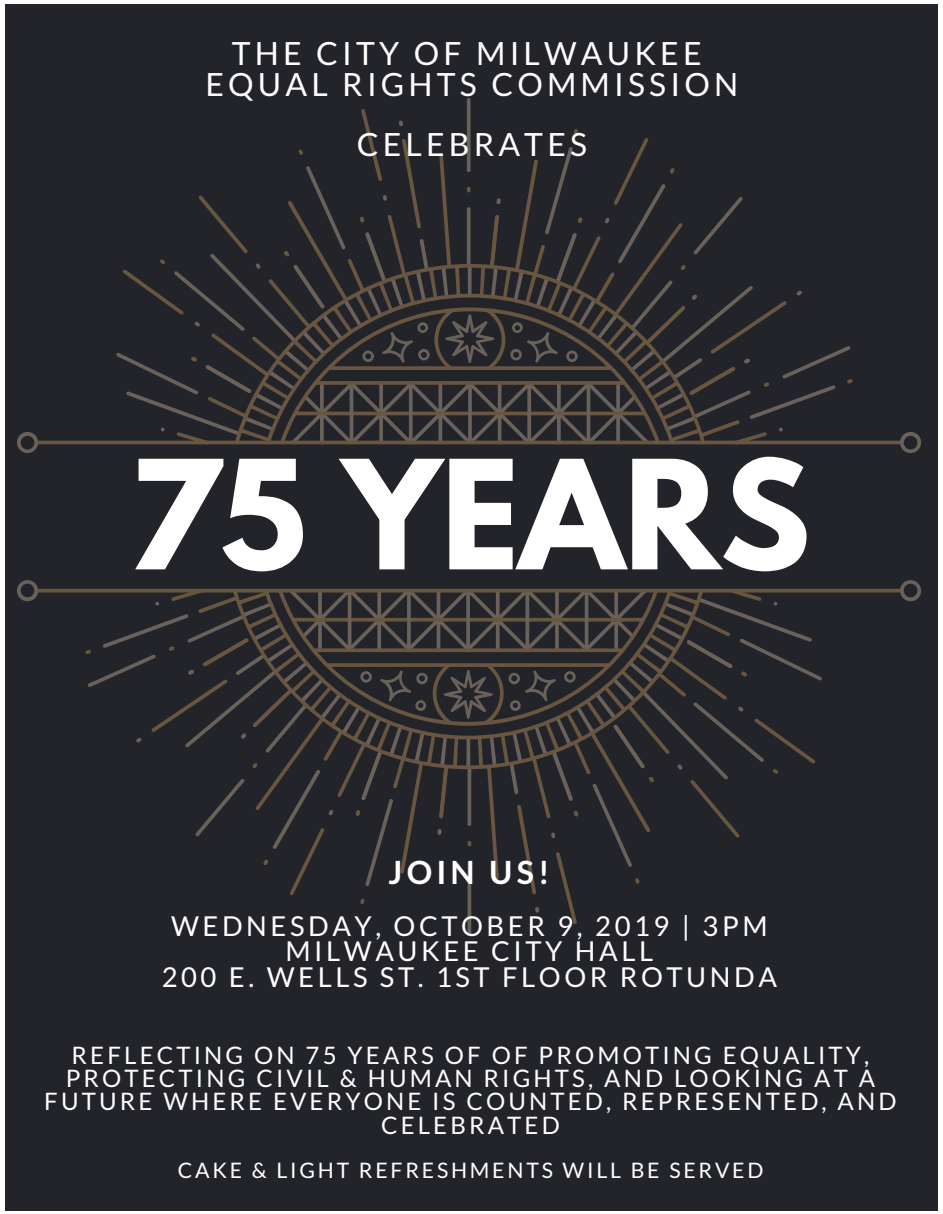
- ERC requested a comprehensive gender analysis of cities (peer and non) from Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) on which have done similar studies and passed legislation according to these studies.
- ERC then passed resolution in July affirming CEDAW, which also calls on the Common Council to officially have the City sign onto “Cities for CEDAW”.
- This is awaiting to be assigned to a Committee

Advancing Accessibility

- ERC efforts helped to influence the creation of an accessible bikes pilot within Milwaukee's bike share program – first in the nation
- DPW launched pilot program in August 2019, with evaluation phase occurring through the end of 2019
- ERC receives regular updates from DPW regarding accessible bikes and will continue to be involved in evaluation process after initial pilot program ends
- ERC will continue to partner with DPW to work toward long-term sustainable solutions for keeping adaptive bikes within the bike share system

75th Anniversary Celebration

- The Equal Rights Commission celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2019. The Commission is older than most equal rights bodies in the US, but still lacks vital infrastructure to create positive outcomes for Milwaukee.
- The anniversary was commemorated through a video that highlighted the history of the ERC, commentary from the Mayor, President Hamilton, Commissioners, and community members.



ERC Strategic Plan

- Ten-month planning process, completed in November 2019
- Facilitator: Denise Patton of BDP & Associates
- Outcomes
  - Developed a mission statement
  - Reorganized the commission’s internal structure Chapter 109 of the City Code
  - Developed strategic goals, objectives and actions to guide ERC activities over the next three years

The City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission Wants to Hear From You!

Contact Us For:

ERC
CITY OF MILWAUKEE
EQUAL RIGHTS
COMMISSION

- Referrals
- Landlord & Business Resources
- City Protections Information
- Diversity & Inclusion Trainings
- Community Partnerships

414-286-5532

jlangi@milwaukee.gov

ADA Coordinator:
Becky Rabatin
414-286-3475

Education, Employment & Public Accommodation

www.city.milwaukee.gov/ERC

ERC
CITY OF MILWAUKEE
EQUAL RIGHTS
COMMISSION

NEW MISSION STATEMENT:

Promote and protect equality, equity and human rights through education, enforcement and community engagement

GOALS:

- Provide a comprehensive complaint and adjudication process for individuals who have experience discrimination
- Create internal accountability metrics to evaluate City departments' equity performance
- City Residents, internal and external stakeholders know ERC, what we do and how to access contact, resources and services
- City departments know ERC, what we do and collaborate with ERC to align their practices with chapter 109
- The ERC has an education toolkit, with information and presentations, that is accessed and used by residents, partners, businesses, internal city departments, aldermen, stakeholders and other public
- Equal Rights Commission, by 2020, is operating as a structured body driven by its mission and guided by the Chapter 109 charter to provide oversight and guidance of the Equal Rights Commission's work and practices

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

- COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT
- COMMUNICATIONS
- ENFORCEMENT & EDUCATION
- GOVERNANCE

Strategic Plan Outcomes

Key Initiative for 2019-2020

Reorganize the commission structure for effectiveness

- **Increase to 11 members** with support of mayor and common council
- **Establish four committees:** Governance, Communications, Outreach & Education, Enforcement
- 2 committees may include community members (Communications, Outreach & Education)
- New meeting structure: Full Equal Rights Commission meets every other month, moving toward quarterly meetings in 2021; committees meet during remaining months

Strategic Plan Outcomes

Key Initiative for 2019-2020

- Redeveloped a clear & consistent process to fairly investigate and adjudicate discrimination complaints
- Updated complaint policies and procedures manual
- Updated a complaint intake form
- Begin to work with community partners to alert Milwaukeeans about the discrimination complaint policy

Strategic Plan Outcomes

Key Initiative for 2019-2020

Collaborate with city departments to ensure compliance with Milwaukee's equal rights laws

- Review best practices in institutionalizing equity in city governance
- Work with city departments to develop equity metrics specific to department needs
- Develop pilot equity monitoring program with one city department

Strategic Plan Outcomes

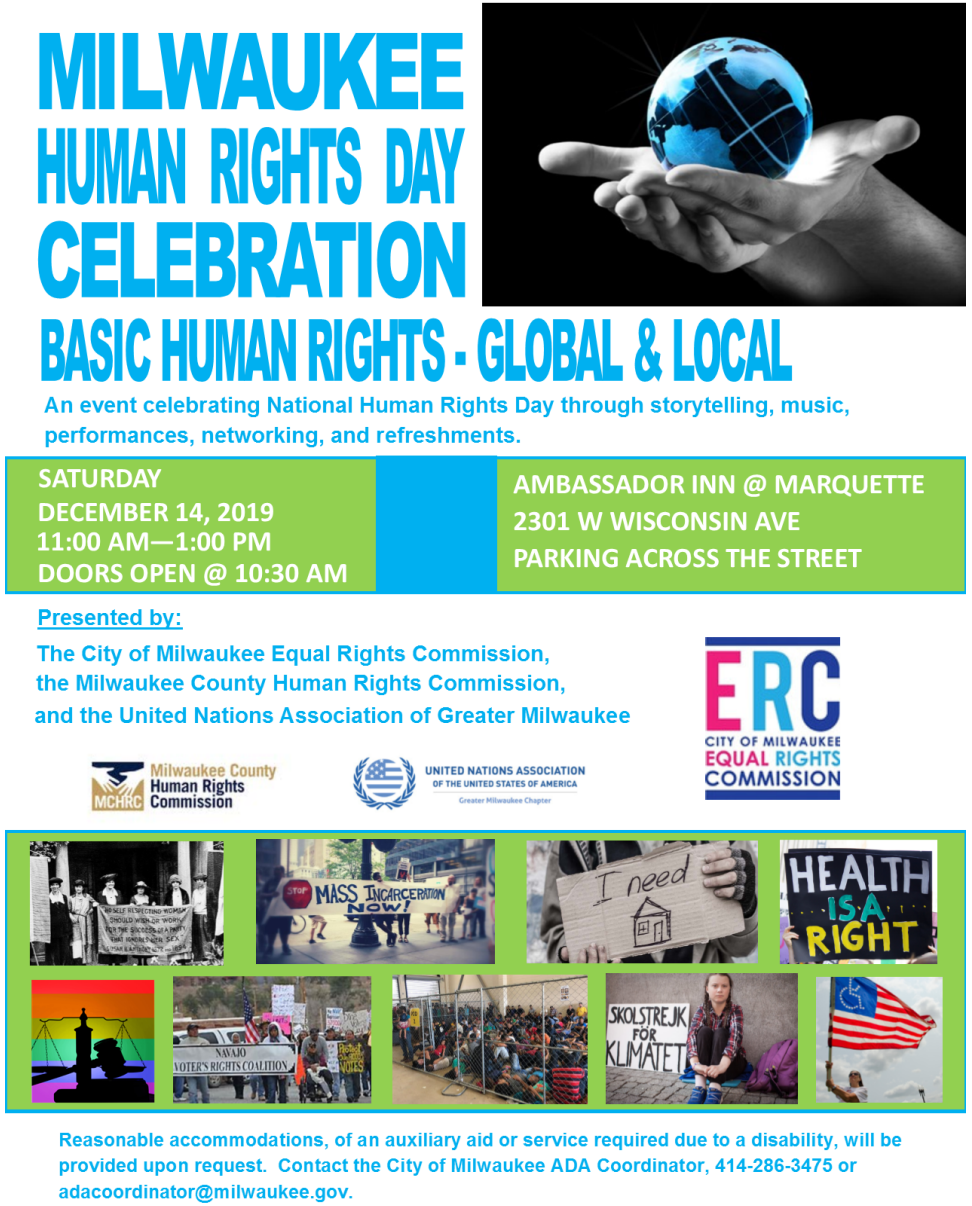
Key Initiative for 2019-2020

Provide consistent information and resources to help Milwaukeeans combat discrimination together

- Develop consistent messaging for various audiences describing who the ERC is and what the ERC does
- Develop communications tools, including rapid response policy, commission spokesperson and media contact list
- Schedule a series of community listening sessions to hear what is on Milwaukee's mind

3rd Annual Human Rights Day Celebration

- Event will take place on Saturday, December 14th at the Ambassador Inn
- This year's theme: Celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – "Basic Human Rights: Global & Local"
- Equal Rights Commission will be presenting Equality Awards and coordinated for Rose Daitsman to be recognized through Proclamations from the Mayor's Office and Common Council
- Activities will include community story telling, cultural performances, resource tables, music, food, etc.



What’s Ahead in 2020

· Educating public/broader community about ERC’s mission and work

· Raising visibility of ERC at community events

· Onboarding new/additional ERC members to fill gaps

· Onboarding new partners (individuals and organizations) to expand the ERC’s reach and impact

· Creating and implementing new strategies consistent with the goals established in the ERC Strategic Plan

- Begin by the first quarter (January – March) to have complaint intake ability.

- Increasing equal rights protections

How can the Common Council assist in promoting the new ERC Mission?

- Approve the requested ordinance change to increase the ERC size from 9 to 11 members
- Work with ERC and DOA on building more infrastructure in order to continue this work
- Promote and include the ERC in areas that may be related to equality, equity, and human rights.

“What did you do today that was good?”
-Vel Phillips

ERC
CITY OF MILWAUKEE
EQUAL RIGHTS
COMMISSION