

## Forces of Change Summary

The forces of change (FOC) assessment was facilitated with the MKE Elevate Core Planning Group and Health Strategy team in July 2022. This assessment identifies a variety of factors and their associated opportunities and threats that affect our local public health system. To conduct the FOC, there are four questions, including:

1. What has occurred
2. What may occur
3. Are there any trends
4. What forces are occurring locally

The seven primary themes that emerged included:

**Racism as a Public Health Crisis.** In 2018, the Wisconsin Public Health Association passed a resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis, which encouraged Milwaukee to take action. In July 2020, the Milwaukee Health Department created the first Anti-Racism strategic plan, which dismantles historical systems rooted in inequities pertaining to policies, practices, and culture that have ripple effects on an organization's environment. This strategic plan is one of the preliminary steps forward in advancing the health of Milwaukee that possesses strong values of diversity and inclusion

### Opportunities:

- In July 2022, MHD adopted a new five-year implementation cycle for an anti-racist and equity driven strategic plan.

### Threats:

- Systemic racism impact on other community sectors and future generations of the world, which further complicates disparities in health outcomes.

**Infectious Disease.** On March, 12, 2020, Governor Tony Evers declared COVID-19 a public health emergency, which still has ripple effects on social determinants of health as disparities in cost of living, inflation, food access, employment, health care, broadband internet services, education disruptions, and more have affected the lives of billions of people. More community members are feeling the lasting effects of social disconnection while being adaptive to various virtual modalities for learning, working, and staying connected to their loved ones. The spread of communicable diseases such as COVID-19 and newly reported Monkeypox cases will continue to challenge and test many local public health systems for future emergency preparedness responses, which serves as a capacity building opportunity for workforces to be well-equipped with the resources and federal funding necessary to mitigate infectious diseases that can devastate communities.

### Opportunities:

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### Threats:

- COVID-19 still has ripple effects on social determinants of health as disparities in cost of living, inflation, food access, employment, health care, broadband internet services, education disruptions, and more have affected the lives of billions of people.

**Economic Security.** The downward trend of City of Milwaukee budget cuts each fiscal year has long-term economic security implications for public health's involvement in various sector partners across the community, which often results in fewer resources for vulnerable community members. City of Milwaukee residents experience the effects of budget cuts as the cost of living, food, and transportation are financial barriers that impact health outcomes. Finding sustainable funding sources and maximizing the potential of federal funding from ARPA and CDC Disparities grant will help the City of Milwaukee improve the environment and infrastructure to ensure all residents an equitable opportunity to live, work, and play free from the burden of disease or injury.

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- Finding sustainable funding sources and maximizing the potential of federal funding from ARPA and CDC Disparities grant will help the City of Milwaukee improve the environment and infrastructure to ensure all residents an equitable opportunity to live, work, and play free from the burden of disease or injury.

**Threats:**

- The downward trend of City of Milwaukee budget cuts each fiscal year has long-term economic security implications for public health's involvement in various sector partners across the community, which often results in fewer resources for vulnerable community members.

**Labor Shortage and Inflation.** The growing trend of labor shortage in Milwaukee poses unprecedented limits on the amount of work the City of Milwaukee can accomplish, which results in increased labor costs and higher inflation that affects all Milwaukeeans. With the everchanging dynamics of the workforce, this gives employees an opportunity to advocate for improved wages and benefits to ensure that employers can build capacity and provide the necessary goods, services, and resources to City of Milwaukee residents.

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**Threats:**

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**Local Government and Leadership Changes.** After Bevan Baker's resignation in 2018, the Milwaukee Health Department has experienced a series of core leadership changes that resulted in short-term tenure in the Health Commissioner position. Most recently, Kirsten Johnson was appointed the Health Commissioner of the Milwaukee Health Department by former mayor, Tom Barrett. On April 5, 2022, former Common Council president, Cavalier Johnson, was elected the first African-American mayor of Milwaukee. With former mayor Tom Barrett appointed to the ambassadorship of Luxembourg, this creates an opportunity for Johnson to share his priorities such as combating reckless driving and creating safer streets throughout the City of Milwaukee. If City of Milwaukee residents are not satisfied with the work that is being done in effort to improve the community, political polarization will continue to affect public health authority and protections. Johnson must continue to fill vacancies of various boards and commissions that will help address different community needs and priorities.

**Opportunities:**

- On April 5, 2022, former Common Council president, Cavalier Johnson, was elected the first African-American mayor of Milwaukee, which gives Johnson a chance to share his priorities such as combating reckless driving and creating safer streets throughout the City of Milwaukee.
- Johnson must continue to fill vacancies of various boards and commissions that will help address different community needs and priorities.

**Threats:**

- If City of Milwaukee residents are not satisfied with the work that is being done in effort to improve the community, political polarization will continue to affect public health authority and protections.

**Violence.** On May 13, 2022, a mass shooting that injured 21 people occurred in the Deer District after Game 6 of the Eastern Conference Semifinals between the Milwaukee Bucks and Boston Celtics. According to the medical examiner's website as of May 2022, there are 81 homicide victims in Milwaukee County. This gives our city a chance to work with interdisciplinary sectors such as law enforcement, the Office of Violence Prevention, and other community leaders to come together to strategize gun restrictions to combat local acts of violence that devastate our community. Milwaukee County accounted for nearly two-thirds of all homicides in Wisconsin during 2021. With violence plaguing our community, residents fear the safety of their friends and family, which have serious implications on poor mental health outcomes, increases exposure to adverse childhood experiences, and increases trauma. With other gun violence acts

occurring throughout the United States this summer at community gatherings and schools, gun violence is a major concern that society is pressed with solving to ensure the safety of future generations.

**Opportunities:**

- Incidents of violence gives our city a chance to work with interdisciplinary sectors such as law enforcement, the Office of Violence Prevention, and other community leaders to come together to strategize gun restrictions and other interventions to combat local acts of violent behavior that devastate our community.

**Threats:**

- With violence plaguing our community, residents fear the safety of their friends and family, which have serious implications on poor mental health outcomes, increases exposure to adverse childhood experiences, and increases trauma.
- With other gun violence acts occurring throughout the United States this summer at community gatherings and schools, gun violence is a major concern that society is pressed with solving to ensure the safety of future generations.

**Reproductive Health Care Access.** On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the Supreme Court overruled Roe v. Wade, which determined that ultimately the right to abortion services is left entirely up to each state to establish laws that protect or restrict abortion. This severely limits women's rights as abortion disproportionately affects individuals that have limited access to transportation and BIPOC communities, which further complicates health disparities and inequities within the City of Milwaukee. Reproductive health care access will remain a vital topic on the agenda for upcoming elections in the fall

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- Reproductive health care access will remain a vital topic on the agenda for upcoming elections in the fall.

**Threats:**

- This severely limits women's rights as abortion disproportionately affects individuals that have limited access to transportation and BIPOC communities, which further complicates health disparities and inequities within the City of Milwaukee.

Forces (trend, event, factor)	Threat Posed	Opportunity Created
Racism as a Public Health Crisis	Systemic racism impact on other community sectors and future generations of the world, which further complicates disparities and health outcomes.	In July 2022, MHD adopted a new five-year implementation cycle for an anti-racist and equity driven strategic plan.
Infectious Disease	COVID-19 still has ripple effects on social determinants of health as disparities in cost of living, inflation, food access, employment, health care, broadband internet services, education disruptions, and more have affected the lives of billions of people.	The spread of communicable diseases such as COVID-19 and newly reported Monkeypox cases will continue to challenge and test many local public health systems for future emergency preparedness responses, which ensures workforces will be well-equipped with the resources and federal funding necessary to mitigate infectious diseases that devastate communities.
Economic Security	The downward trend of City of Milwaukee budget cuts each fiscal year has long-term economic security implications for public health's involvement in various sector partners across the community, which often results in fewer resources for vulnerable community members.	Finding sustainable funding sources and maximizing the potential of federal funding from ARPA and CDC Disparities grant will help the City of Milwaukee improve the environment and infrastructure to ensure all residents have an equitable opportunity to live, work, and play free from the burden of disease or injury.
Labor Shortage and Inflation	The growing trend of labor shortage poses unprecedented limits on the amount of work the City of Milwaukee can accomplish, which results in increased labor costs and higher inflation that affects all Milwaukeeans.	With the everchanging dynamics of the workforce, employees can advocate for improved wages and benefits to ensure that employers can provide equitably distributed goods, services, and resources to working-class City of Milwaukee residents.
Local Government and Leadership Changes	If City of Milwaukee residents are not satisfied with the work that is being done in effort to improve the community, political polarization will continue to affect public health authority and protections.	On April 5, 2022, former Common Council president, Cavalier Johnson, was elected the first African-American mayor of Milwaukee, which gives Johnson a chance to share his priorities such as combating reckless driving and creating safer streets throughout the City of Milwaukee.
Violence	With violence plaguing our community, residents fear the safety of their friends and family, which have serious implications on poor mental health outcomes, increases exposure to adverse childhood experiences, and increases trauma.	Incidents of violence gives our city a chance to work with interdisciplinary sectors such as law enforcement, the Office of Violence Prevention, and other community leaders to come together to strategize gun restrictions and other interventions to combat local acts of violent behavior that devastate our community.
Reproductive Health Care Access	Dobbs decision further complicates health disparities and inequities within the City of Milwaukee.	Reproductive health care access will remain a vital topic on the agenda for upcoming elections in the fall.