



A Seat at the Table: Ensuring Equitable Access to Early Childhood Education in Milwaukee

Milwaukee ECE Needs Assessment
ESRI Midwest conference Presentation
March 18, 2022



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Project Background

Project Goals

To inform the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's investment strategy, to create equitable access to high-quality, affordable ECE services throughout the city, IFF conducted an ECE needs assessment for the City of Milwaukee with a focus on:

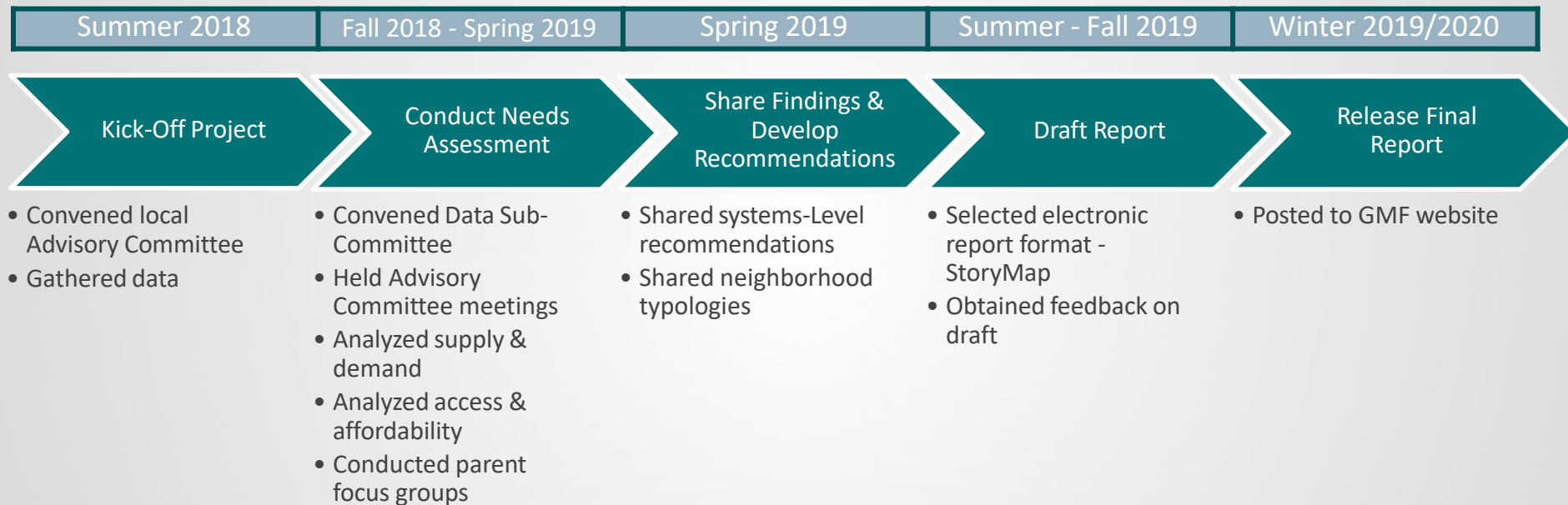
Access to ECE

Quality of ECE

**Affordability
of Care**

**Access for
Children of
Color**

Project Approach



Community Inputs

This action-oriented analysis blends quantitative and qualitative techniques to inform the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's strategic investments to create equitable access to high-quality, affordable ECE services throughout the city

- Providers interviews
- Parents outreach
- Translators to talk with communities with limited English
- Advisory committees with community stakeholders from early stages to the finish, including the recommendations.

Equity Context

One of most
racially segregated
cities in U.S.



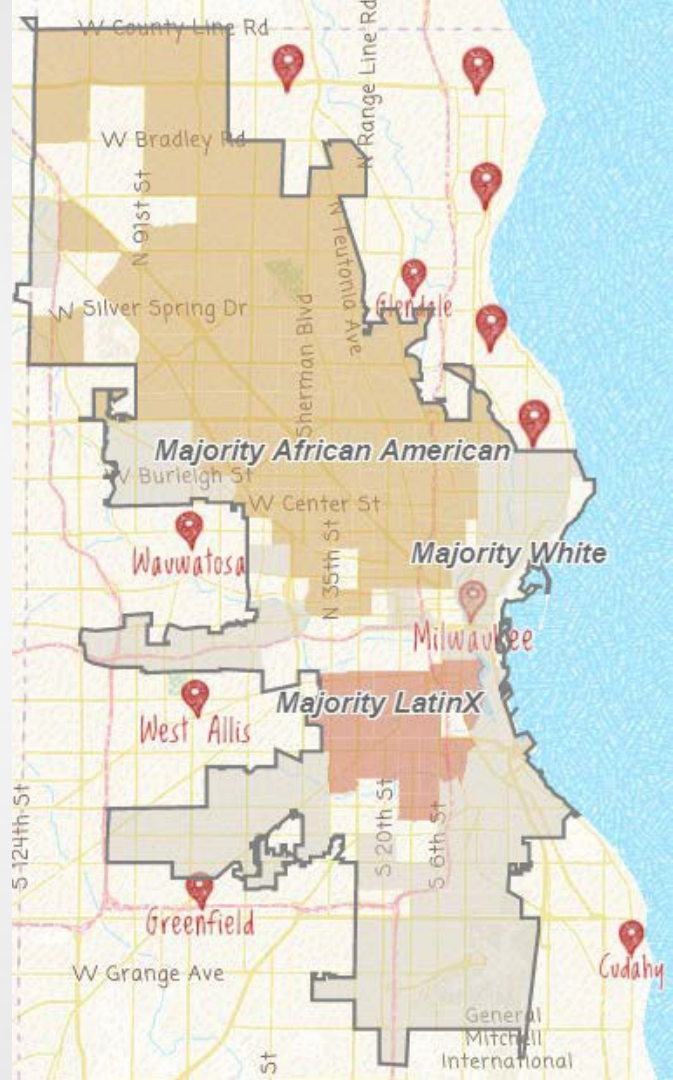
Unequal access to good
schools, housing & jobs
for Black and LatinX
residents

Equitable access to high-quality ECE critical to
promote opportunity for all Milwaukee children

Barriers to ECE
access exist at
community-level



Need for the
community-specific
solutions within larger
systems-level work



Data

Demand: All children age 5 and under (and not enrolled in Kindergarten) who live in the City of Milwaukee

Supply: The number of ECE slots at licensed or certified providers in Milwaukee County

Household Characteristics: Demographic information on families with children age 0-5

- Esri Demographics
- Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- U.S. Census
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Head Start.

Methodology

Supply & Demand

IFF looked at supply and demand to understand gaps in ECE access city-wide

- Demand: Number of children ages 0 – 5 living in the City of Milwaukee
- Supply: Capacity of licensed and certified center and home-based providers throughout Milwaukee County as well as schools in the City of Milwaukee

Service Gap =
Supply – Demand
available ECE slots

Service Level =
Supply / Demand
% children with access to ECE slots

Based on local feedback, IFF utilized a new approach to geographically analyze access...

Methodology

Access Index (1 of 2)

IFF applied the **Gravity Model**, which uses the **distance to and capacity of a provider to calculate ECE access** for a community (at the census tract level)

High Access

ECE providers offer more slots
or located closer to home

Limited Access

ECE providers offer fewer slots
or located farther from home

Developed **Access Indicators and Index**, which looks at whether a community gets its fair share of supply based on its demand

Methodology

Access Index (2 of 2)

Developed a composite Access Index based on 6 Access Indicators

- Access to 0 to 5 capacity
- Access to providers with a 3 to 5 Star rating in YoungStar
- Access to providers who accept Wisconsin Shares
- Access to Early Head Start and Head Start
- Access to 4K
- Access to providers offering care beyond traditional hours



ECE Access Index Key Benefits

Indicates if a family in community (at the census tract level) has fair access to early childhood education services based on their needs.

- Access Index does not constrain household choice as it factors in access to all providers, not just those within imposed artificial boundaries
- Each census tract has an Access Index, which allows for comparisons at a small geography level
- Household socio-economic information such as race and income can be analyzed at the Census Tract level to gain deeper understanding of factors impacting household ECE considerations
- Allows for the creation of multiple Access Indicators, such as subsidy program type (i.e. Head Start, Early Head start, State Subsidy Programs), facility type (i.e. home vs. center-based providers), age groups served (0-2 vs. 3-5) and segments demand for these various programs and ages.
- The Early Childhood Education Index is a composite score based on the various Access Indicators. It provides an overall measure of fairness of access to ECE for families.
- Examining Access Indicators along with household socio-economic information allows us to more deeply examine equity of access in the ECE system





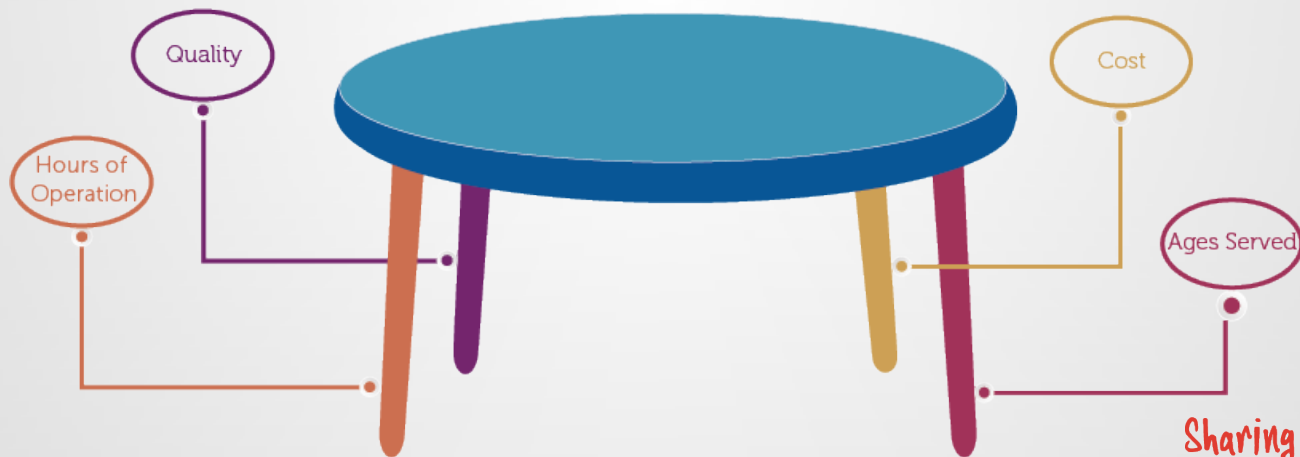
ECE System

ECE System

A Seat at the Table Introduction

We considered Milwaukee's ECE system as a table, where the community can come together to lay the groundwork for their children's future

- Must be room for everyone at the table
- Table needs to be supported by four strong legs
- Every family needs a chair to sit at the table (and access the ECE system)
- Families need a chair that meets their specific needs



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Challenges & Recommendations

Challenges & Recommendations

Introduction

Proposed both systems-level and community-specific solutions to increase ECE access for all Milwaukee families

Systems-Level Recommendations

Based on findings that impact city-wide ECE system

- Limited quality access
- High ECE costs
- Limited ECE outside of traditional days/times
- Few infant and toddler slots



Community-Specific Strategies

- Highlight neighborhood-level issues based on unique characteristics of community
- Guide neighborhood-level investment strategies for GMF

Challenges & Recommendations

Systems-Level

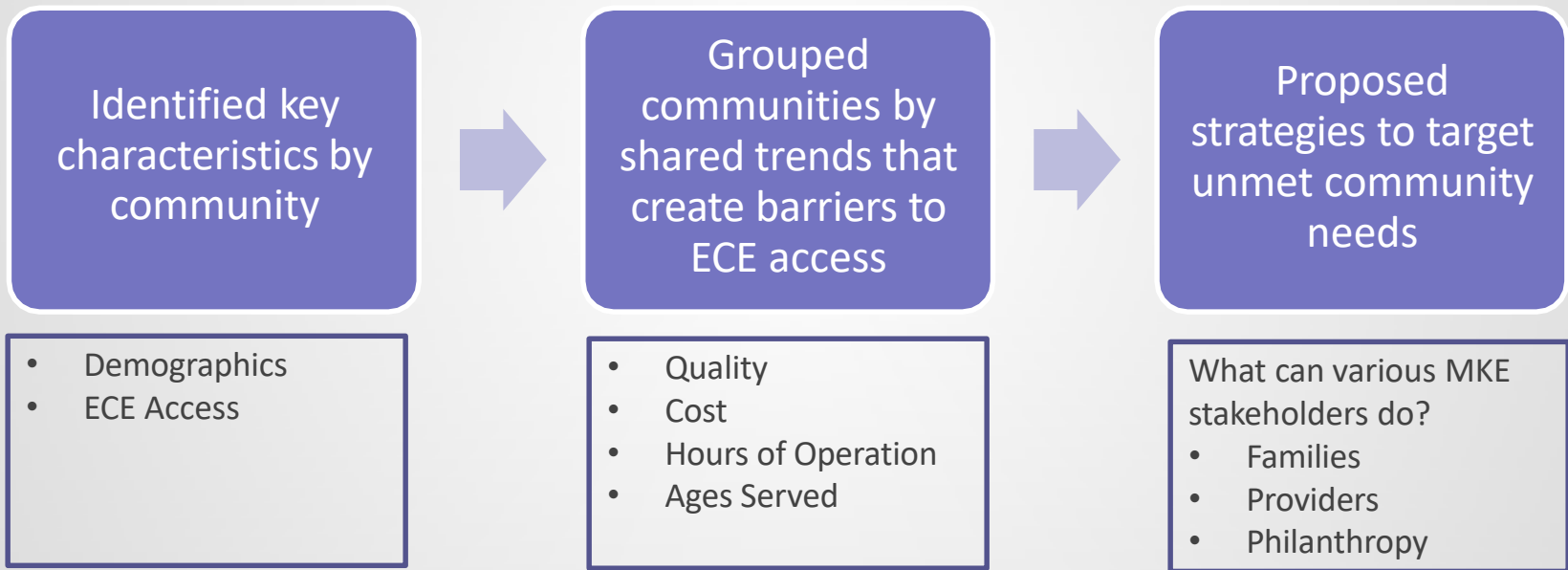
Proposed systems-level recommendations take a multi-pronged approach to strengthen the broader ECE system in Milwaukee



Challenges & Recommendations

Community-Specific

Community specific challenges must also be addressed within the context of the higher level challenges that permeate the broader ECE system



ThriveOn Collaboration

- Community-based project, located in the Historic King Drive district at the nexus of three vital north side neighborhoods – Halyard Park, Harambee and Brewers Hill.
- These neighborhoods were identified based on the analysis as low access to ECE communities
- The [Greater Milwaukee Foundation](#) (GMF), the [Medical College of Wisconsin](#) (MCW) and the [Royal Capital Group](#) Collaborated in redevelopment of unused property in Halyard Park, the collaborators will support five priority areas:
 - Housing
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Health & Wellness
 - Social Cohesion
 - Economic Opportunity

[ThriveON](#)
[Collaboration](#)



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Milwaukee StoryMap Report

Hosted by GMF



Link: <https://www.greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/early-childhood-education/index.html>

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Thank you!

Tara Townsend, Vice President of Research and Evaluation

Cindy Copp, Senior GIS Analyst, ccopp@iff.org

Brittain Ayres, Research and Evaluation Manager

Lisa Doi, Research and Evaluation Manager

Rachel Gordon, Research and Evaluation Manager

Gina Martinez, Research and Evaluation Manager

David Mieksztyn, GIS Analyst

Azim Elbashir, GIS Analyst, aelbashir@iff.org



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