

Community and Economic Development Strategies for a Prosperous Milwaukee

Community Framework for Action



Presented to
Mayor Tom Barrett
April 2007

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Message from Mayor Tom Barrett

On December 6-7, 2006, I convened the 2006 Community and Economic Development Leadership Summit and am pleased to report that the event was a tremendous success. More than 700 participants – representing a wide variety of sectors, including government, business, education and community-based organizations – came together to share ideas on how to build on efforts already underway to increase economic prosperity in Milwaukee and throughout southeastern Wisconsin.

The event was also a catalyst for creating new stakeholders from outside our region and state. Nationally known keynote speakers, including Henry Cisneros (Chairman of CityView) and Paul Grogan (President and CEO of the Boston Foundation), and other prominent experts joined me in highlighting Milwaukee's promise.

Clearly, people are paying attention to the renaissance that is occurring here, and we should be proud of our many accomplishments. However, we must work harder and on a more unified front to expand economic growth and opportunity in every neighborhood throughout the city. Toward this end, I formed the Anti-Poverty Action Team in January 2006 led by Deborah Blanks (CEO of the Social Development Commission), Hugo Cardona (Executive Director of LaCausa, Inc.), and David Riemer (Project Director of the Wisconsin Health Project) to identify actions we can take to overcome obstacles to progress.

My Administration Director, Sharon Robinson, and Policy Planning Coordinator, Rhonda Kelsey, have spent the past several weeks analyzing the input of the participants from the Community and Economic Development Leadership Summit and the Anti-Poverty Action Team Forums, and preparing this report. While progress will be made in other ways, this report highlights specific strategies that will help frame the work of my Administration, in partnership with others, to strengthen the socio-economic standing of all segments of the Milwaukee community.

I took office in 2004 with a vision for a Milwaukee of opportunity – a stronger Milwaukee that we can build together. I remain excited about our prospects and am optimistic that we will continue Milwaukee's ascent among the great cities in the nation.

You should have high expectations of city government, and we should all have high expectations of each other. The key to our future as a city clearly lies in our ability to harness the power of partnerships. As partners, we can move forward with a common vision and actions to show ourselves, our nation, and our world that there is no end to what we can accomplish together in Milwaukee.

Sincerely,



Tom Barrett
Mayor



Executive Summary

The strategies for community and economic development outlined in this report represent the combined working sessions of the Community and Economic Development Leadership Summit, the work of the Anti-Poverty Action Team, and participants of the Anti-Poverty Action Team Forums convened by Mayor Tom Barrett in 2006.

Following are six core objectives identified by the participants to increase economic prosperity throughout the City of Milwaukee. They are:

OBJECTIVE 1: Promote, Attract, and Expand Business

OBJECTIVE 2: Increase Minority Entrepreneurship

OBJECTIVE 3: Promote Affordable Housing

OBJECTIVE 4: Build Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE 5: Provide a Quality Education and Healthy Environment for Our Children

OBJECTIVE 6: Prepare a Current and Future Workforce, and Connect Citizens to Family-Supporting Jobs

This report presents a broad spectrum of ideas and community perspectives that will inform the creation of the City of Milwaukee's economic development plan. Now under development, the plan will focus on strategies to build on Milwaukee's assets in order to foster economic growth and opportunity.

Background

Anti-Poverty Action Team

Mayor Barrett has made addressing the issue of poverty in the City of Milwaukee a top priority. Recent statistics released by the U.S. Census Bureau in the fall of 2004 indicate that the City of Milwaukee has the 7th highest poverty rate (26 percent), in comparison to 70 other cities across the nation. In January 2006 Mayor Barrett convened several community leaders from various sectors (education, corporate, labor, community, and government). This team met from January 2006 through February 2007 and was charged with the following task:

- Determine the magnitude and causes of poverty in Milwaukee.
- Review current and past policy recommendations designed to alleviate poverty in three key public policy issue areas: **Jobs/Workforce Development, Education, and Public Safety.**
- Provide a forum for different sectors of the community to explore practical ways to help the low-income population and improve their socio-economic status.
- Develop recommendations to provide solutions to ending poverty.

Given the complexities of the issue of poverty, the Mayor hosted an Anti-Poverty Forum on June 29, 2006, calling on local leaders and national experts who have knowledge and expertise in developing solutions to end

poverty. The members of the Mayor's Anti-Poverty Action Team and the community at large were exposed to the expertise and knowledge of Professor Mark Robert Rank, nationally renowned anti-poverty expert and author of *One Nation Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All*. Several other respected leaders also provided their knowledge and expertise, including: Dr. Walter Farrell of the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill; Dr. Beverly Cross of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; and Tim Sheehy, President of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Association of Commerce (MMAC) to name a few.

Mayor Barrett also hosted several anti-poverty community engagement hearings throughout the city during the summer of 2006. The purpose of these hearings was to receive community input from a diverse group of constituencies regarding solutions to address poverty.

In addition to obtaining input through the community engagement hearings, participants of the Social Development Commission's (the largest anti-poverty organization in the City of Milwaukee) December 2006 Community Dialogue Event on Youth were surveyed and asked to respond and react to the first draft of recommendations that were developed by the Mayor's Anti-Poverty Action Team. The Community Dialogue Event on Youth was held to focus on issues of youth training, education, and employment.

Lastly, participants at the June 29th forum and the July 19th and 20th community engagement hearings were asked to provide feedback on the action team's recommendations to ensure that broad community input and involvement were received throughout the process.

During the remainder of the year, members of the Anti-Poverty Action Team thoroughly reviewed the community's input, beginning with a list of more than 30 recommendations that were compiled to address the issue of poverty in the City of Milwaukee. These recommendations were narrowed down to 16, with the hopes of identifying a set of recommendations that could be addressed from a feasibility and practicality standpoint.

2006 Community and Economic Development Leadership Summit

The 2006 Community and Economic Development (CED) Leadership Summit was held December 6 and 7, 2006. This summit was held to expose a diverse group of participants to new and different approaches to community and economic development, highlight best practices, and promote discussion and input into developing an appropriate strategy for Milwaukee.

Each day of the summit began with a plenary session featuring a nationally-known and credentialed practitioner who showcased successful approaches.

On the first day of the summit, the topical focus was Housing and Neighborhoods. Henry Cisneros, Chairman of CityView and a former Secretary of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Clinton Administration, delivered the keynote address. Following his speech, a panel consisting of individuals with national housing development expertise offered their insights regarding a multi-faceted approach to housing issues. During afternoon breakout sessions, participants attended one of three action-oriented workshops. Day one topics were:

- + New Partnerships for Housing Development
- + Special Needs Housing: Where Do We Go From Here?
- + Building Sustainable Neighborhoods

During day two of the summit, the topical focus was Business and Workforce Development. Paul Grogan, President and CEO of the Boston Foundation, was the keynote speaker. His remarks focused on “Comeback Cities,” with a special emphasis on useful practices for Milwaukee. The subsequent panel discussion further explored business and workforce development. During afternoon breakout sessions, participants attended one of the following three action-oriented workshops:

- Fostering Small Business Growth and Entrepreneurship
- Addressing Workforce Challenges
- Doing Business With The Job Corps

During the afternoon workshops, moderators facilitated small discussions related to the morning sessions. After brief presentations by panelists, followed by a question and answer period, attendees worked in small groups to set goals and develop strategies to move Milwaukee forward. The small groups presented to the larger workshop group and the strategies were refined for presentation at the closing plenary session.

All workshop groups reported to the closing plenary session, at which time the moderators presented their plans to Mayor Barrett.

Conclusion

These two initiatives help to lay the groundwork for new approaches to community and economic development for the City of Milwaukee. Among the most significant change is recognition that Milwaukee and all of southeastern Wisconsin operates within the context of a global economy. We must adopt a regional approach if we are to build a strong urban economy.

Late this spring, the Milwaukee 7 (which comprises public and private representatives from the southeastern Wisconsin region committed to achieving regional economic development goals) will unveil a Regional Economic Positioning Strategy. Mayor Barrett is a co-chair of the Milwaukee 7 (M7).

In summer 2007, after the Milwaukee 7 strategy is released, the Barrett Administration will unveil an Economic Vision and Strategy Framework that will communicate Milwaukee’s own economic vision within the context of the Milwaukee 7 and define key areas of focus for the City.

The Milwaukee plan will clearly identify and articulate the City’s role in community and economic development by:

- Communicating the City’s overarching economic vision.
- Identifying the City’s role within the context of the Milwaukee 7 Regional Economic Positioning Strategy.
- Identifying how the City can align its resources and strengths to implement the goals and strategies of the M7 plan.
- Focusing on bringing jobs to central city neighborhoods.
- Meeting the requirements of the community and economic development element of the State’s comprehensive planning legislation.
- Identifying economic development priorities, catalytic projects, actionable strategies, and implementation roles.

- ♦ Defining key incentives to build a strong economic climate.
- ♦ Identifying City economic development priorities, incentives, and financial tools such as Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) incentives, public-private partnerships, etc.

Community input, such as that represented in this document, will be critical as we proceed to the final phase of economic plan development. The creation of a compelling and action-oriented plan for the City will involve the solicitation of perspectives from all parts of our community.

The Barrett Administration undertakes this effort with great hope and optimism.



Community and Economic Development Strategies for a Prosperous Milwaukee

The objectives, strategies, and outcomes below represent a compilation of the dialogues held during the Community and Economic Leadership Summit and Anti-Poverty Action Team Forums convened by Mayor Tom Barrett in 2006.

OBJECTIVE 1: PROMOTE, ATTRACT, AND EXPAND BUSINESS

The economic development of a City hinges on its ability to attract and expand business. This, in turn, stimulates the local economy and serves as a catalyst for creating jobs and growing a stable and gainfully employed workforce.

Strategies

A) Reduce costs and barriers to doing business in Milwaukee.

- ✦ Expand efforts to provide business services on-line (such as e-permitting).
- ✦ Partner with the business community to assess current zoning and permit systems and implement needed adjustments.
- ✦ Maintain and expand access to office and industrial space.
- ✦ Continue to create a clean, safe, and welcoming environment.
- ✦ Develop a listing of available city-owned land and buildings, and make this information easy to find on our website.

B) Improve knowledge and access to City regulations, programs, and assistance.

- ✦ Continue to promote the City's Business Toolbox to make businesses aware of federal, state, and local resources to help sustain and grow companies.
- ✦ Sustain advances in the Business Improvement District (BID) and Main Street Programs.

C) Focus business attraction efforts around industry clusters where the region has a demonstrated or emerging competitive advantage (i.e., place special emphasis on knowledge-based organizations and businesses, including education, health care, life sciences, technology and telecommunications, and professional services).

- ✦ Work with targeted cluster industries to attract similar businesses.
- ✦ Recruit conferences and events to bring businesses to Milwaukee in targeted cluster industries.
- ✦ Work with the Milwaukee 7 and the business community to develop a comprehensive promotional campaign that markets Milwaukee to businesses.

D) Broaden efforts to attract and retain the brightest students and young professionals.

- ✦ Work with knowledge-based organizations and higher education institutions to elevate recruitment programs and offer greater incentives to attract students and young professionals.
- ✦ Strengthen business and professional networks in targeted cluster fields.
- ✦ Partner with local organizations such as Young Professionals of Milwaukee (renamed FUEL Milwaukee) and Milwaukee Urban League Young Professionals to promote and increase the awareness and importance of attracting a young and talented workforce.



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OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASE MINORITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Numerous research studies have concluded that a healthy minority business community stimulates local and national economies. The by-products of a healthy minority business community produce a variety of economic and social benefits, including minority employment, economic integration with the majority economy and community, community economic development, and role models for minority youth and minority entrepreneurs.

Strategies

A) Expand access to government and corporate contracting opportunities.

- ✦ Complete study of the City's Emerging Business Enterprise Program and adopt needed reforms to increase minority participation rates.
- ✦ Create a "one stop" shopping process with city government for notification of bid/contract opportunities and educate minority firms about this initiative.
- ✦ Consolidate city, county, and state programs where opportunities exist.
- ✦ Continue the efforts of the Mayor's Job Corps Advisory Group to connect local businesses to opportunities at the new Job Corps site.
- ✦ Strengthen the Business Council's Minority Supplier Module, and increase corporate participation.
- ✦ Host a forum between franchises, potential funders and entrepreneurs.

B) Expand access to capital and enhance business support for minority firms.

- ✦ Create more business incubators in targeted neighborhoods.
- ✦ Create a clearinghouse with the state, county and Urban Entrepreneurship Partnership (UEP) to disseminate information to minority firms on how to write business plans, find mentors, approach lenders and acquire certifications.
- ✦ Partner with higher education and the corporate sector to provide mentor teams to work one-on-one with minority firms. Develop an industry-specific mentor list accessible to minority firms.
- ✦ Create a Bankers' Task Force to develop new micro-credit and revolving loan programs that will increase access to financial resources for minority firms.
- ✦ Encourage patronage of minority-owned firms and businesses.
- ✦ Expose 10-18 year-olds to entrepreneurship educational programs and successful entrepreneurs (e.g., stress financial literacy in the school curriculum).



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OBJECTIVE 3: PROMOTE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is essential to building a strong community. The link between housing and work is clear: You need a decent place to live to maintain a steady job, and you need a steady job to maintain a decent place to live. Housing is as much a part of the employment picture as child care, transportation, and health insurance.

Strategies

A) Increase the supply and availability of affordable housing (owned, rental, and special needs units).

- ✦ Secure additional funding for creating and preserving affordable housing.
- ✦ Implement and expand the City of Milwaukee Housing Trust Fund.
- ✦ Establish and maintain a registry of adaptable and accessible housing units, and offer incentives to owners to convert these units into affordable housing units.
- ✦ Encourage housing developers to designate a percentage of new housing development units for affordable housing.
- ✦ Promote increased monitoring mechanisms of housing activities to include lending, sales and rental practices.
- ✦ Promote financial literacy, wealth creation, and asset building (that encourage citizens to save money for down payments on homes).
- ✦ Launch an Employer-Assisted Housing (EAH) initiative to increase public and private participation in EAH programs.
- ✦ Increase the number of minority-owned housing developers, builders, and property managers.
- ✦ Build capacity among housing developers (profit and non-profit).
- ✦ Streamline the process for city zoning and planning approval for new and rehabbed properties.

B) Strengthen local and regional support for affordable housing (with emphasis on individuals with disabilities, the chronically mentally ill, etc.).

- ✦ Better educate citizens on housing programs and assistance.
- ✦ Launch a public awareness campaign led by city, county, and state officials and the media to build support for affordable housing.
- ✦ Establish a regional coalition to implement a coordinated affordable housing strategy.



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OBJECTIVE 4: BUILD SAFE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

Strong partnerships between local residents, faith-based institutions, community-based organizations, and law enforcement are essential to building and sustaining safe and healthy neighborhoods.

Strategies

- A) **Build effective community leadership to address quality-of-life issues in neighborhoods.**
 - ✦ Build effective networks among neighborhood residents.
 - ✦ Enhance planning at the neighborhood level to achieve strategic goals and objectives.
 - ✦ Replicate successful practices from other neighborhoods.
- B) **Enhance neighborhood health and safety to promote sustainability and resilience.**
 - ✦ Continue advances in neighborhood economic development.
 - ✦ Sustain advances in the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP).
 - ✦ Engage the faith community, community-based organizations, and law enforcement to increase community trust, improve race relations and reduce crime.
- C) **Bridge the Digital Divide – Transform neighborhoods through technology.**
 - ✦ Create a universal, affordable wireless network to provide access to the Internet through high-speed broadband connectivity in every neighborhood throughout the City.
 - ✦ Launch a collaborative Digital Inclusion Program designed for low-income citizens (to connect them to the Internet and content that will improve their quality of life).



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OBJECTIVE 5: PROVIDE A QUALITY EDUCATION & HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CHILDREN

Education is the starting point for reducing a number of negative trends in the community (low educational attainment, high percentage of high school dropouts, and high teenage pregnancy rates, e.g.). Unless today's children and tomorrow's adults receive a sound, basic education, their odds of getting out of poverty are slim.

Strategies

A) Improve the education system.

- ✦ Adopt education reforms designed to help students achieve higher educational standards.
- ✦ Increase emphasis on the importance and delivery of early childhood education.
- ✦ Encourage mentoring, tutoring, and cultural enrichment with an assured opportunity for a technical or college education.
- ✦ Encourage cultural competency training of all teachers.
- ✦ As part of the overall school accountability, expect and encourage schools to increase the role of parents in their children's education.
- ✦ Replicate successful programs from other schools.
- ✦ Improve intervention efforts for youth who are behind.
- ✦ Stop the practice of passing youth along to the next grade if they are not ready.
- ✦ Improve career planning efforts in the middle and high schools.
- ✦ Stress financial literacy in the school curriculum.

B) Elevate efforts to abate lead particles that can cause severe and permanent injury, preventing children from growing into productive workers.

- ✦ Secure additional funding for lead reduction/elimination programs.
- ✦ Fully enforce laws and strengthen lead detection and treatment programs.

C) Reduce the teenage pregnancy rate.

- ✦ Maintain and expand successful teen pregnancy reduction programs.
- ✦ Involve positive role models, community members, peers and adults in working to instill hope in our youth and help them to make healthy choices for their future, a major deterrent to teenage pregnancy.
- ✦ Support active participation of young men and male adults in teen pregnancy prevention and parenting efforts through the Mayor's Fatherhood Initiative and other parental involvement programs.



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OBJECTIVE 6: PREPARE A CURRENT AND FUTURE WORKFORCE, AND CONNECT CITIZENS TO FAMILY SUPPORTING JOBS

The supply and pay of jobs must be dramatically improved to enhance the socio-economic status of the central city, the quality of the workforce, and the fairness and efficiency of the labor exchange.

Strategies

A) Prepare the next generation for work.

- ✦ Create middle school and high school programs that emphasize non-traditional careers, such as skills trades and technology.
- ✦ Secure additional funding for job programs for youth (summer and year-round).

B) Establish centralized, better coordinated systems for workforce development.

- ✦ Create Mayor's Office of Workforce Development to align local, state, and federal job training dollars to meet the needs of workers and employers. Dollars should be targeted in support of high-growth industries and where skills shortages exist.
- ✦ Establish a Mayor's Advisory Group comprised of business and other leaders to develop an overall strategic direction for workforce development.
- ✦ Establish a "One Stop Shop" that provides training for ex-offenders.
- ✦ Increase communication and understanding between employers and workforce organizations.
- ✦ Publicize success stories of ex-offenders who have been gainfully employed.

C) Utilize government resources and government-subsidized projects to create job training and employment opportunities.

- ✦ Incorporate creative job training efforts in all private investments assisted by Tax Incremental Financing (TIFs).
- ✦ Strengthen the City's Residential Preference Program and adopt prevailing wage requirements to create more and better job opportunities for City residents.
- ✦ Expand BadgerCare to cover all low-income persons (whether they live with dependent children or not).
- ✦ Increase and expand use of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
- ✦ Expand access to affordable child care.

D) Improve access to transportation.

- ✦ Secure additional funding to help citizens overcome driver's license issues that are barriers to employment.
- ✦ Expand programs to help low-income job seekers purchase cars.
- ✦ Change state and federal policies to dedicate more resources to mass transportation thereby connecting citizens to jobs in outlying communities.



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Next Steps

A more comprehensive economic plan for the City of Milwaukee is forthcoming later in 2007. The Barrett Administration will use some of the ideas captured in this document to help frame its actions in the area of community and economic development, this year and in the coming years. It is our intention that the ideas within this document be considered for inclusion in the City's economic plan. Following adoption of the plan, action teams will be formed and led by City officials who will work to implement the strategies of the plan, and to align existing programs and strategies, while tracking results at future follow up summits.

The Barrett Administration will continue its efforts to build on the momentum of the Anti-Poverty Action Team, Anti-Poverty Forums, and the December 2006 Community and Economic Development Summit. By working with our local and regional partners, we are confident that our efforts will spur socio-economic development and progress that benefits all the residents of our community.

Moreover, on July 12, 2007, the Mayor's office, in collaboration with the Urban Economic Development Association (UEDA), will convene at the Italian Community Center for an all day event. The focus of this meeting will be centered on implementing the City's economic plan and key recommendations contained in this report.

For further information regarding the "Strategies for a Prosperous Milwaukee" report or to learn how you can get involved, please contact Sharon Robinson at 414.286.3828 or Rhonda Kelsey at 414.286.8595.



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Community and Economic Development Leadership Summit and Anti-Poverty Team Forum Featured Speakers

Steve Adams (Riverworks Development Corporation), Sheila Ashley (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), Bevan Baker (City of Milwaukee - Health Department), Ken Barbeau (City of Milwaukee), Wendy Baumann (Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation), Robert Berlan (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), Earl Buford (Big Step), Dr. John Sibley Butler (University of Texas-Austin), Dr. Henry Cisneros (CityView), Dr. Darnell Cole (Milwaukee Area Technical College), Dr. Beverly Cross (University of Wisconsin Milwaukee), Samantha DeKoven (Chicago Metropolitan Planning Council), Ricardo Diaz (United Community Center), Dale Dulberger (Milwaukee Area Technical College), Conrad Egan (National Housing Conference), Dr. Mark Eppli (Marquette University), Anthony Evans (Ancon Group), Dr. Walter Farrell (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill), Andrew Geer (Heartland Housing), Tony Gibson (Johnson Park Neighborhood Organization), Paul Grogan (Boston Foundation), Stephanie Harling (Havenswood Economic Development Corporation), Margaret Henningsen (Legacy Bank), Cindy Holler (Mercy Housing Lakefront), Ralph Hollman (Urban League), Kevin Jackson (Chicago Rehab Network), Tony Kearney (Howard Fuller Foundation), Vivian King (Roundy's Supermarkets), Chris Laurent (Gorman and Company), Antonio Lugo III (U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency-Chicago Office), Chris Martin (City of Milwaukee), Patricia Morris (Ancon Group), Eric Ness (Small Business Administration), Cory Nettles (Quarles and Brady), Eric Parker (Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership), Dru Pasley (Fannie Mae), Tony Perez (Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee), Bill Perkins (Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development), Maria Prioletta (City of Milwaukee), Dr. Mark Robert Rank (Washington University-St. Louis), Antonio Riley (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority), Jesus Saavedra (SDC Community Representative), Duane Schultz (Milwaukee Area Technical College), Tim Sheehy (Milwaukee Metropolitan Association of Commerce), Dee Sims (Legacy Bank), Linda Sowell (Gilbane Company), Don Sykes (City of Milwaukee), Dr. William Testa (Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago), Mike Veith (City of Milwaukee), Perry Vietti (Interfaith Housing Development Corporation), Pat Walsh (Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation), Dr. Sammis White (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Dave Wilson (Private Industry Council).



Community and Economic Development Leadership Summit Executive Planning Team

Robert Berlan (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), Martha Brown (City of Milwaukee), Barbara Boxer (Reinhart, Boerner, VanDeuren), James Connelly (Foley and Lardner), Frank Cumberbatch (Trinidad Consulting), Gloster Current (Northwestern Mutual) Timothy Elverman (Broydrick and Associates), Dr. Keenan Grennell (Marquette University), Dana Kraemer (City of Milwaukee), Gilbert Llanas (Northwestern Mutual), Lori Lutzka (City of Milwaukee), Amelia Macareno (Merchants and Manufacturers BanCorp), Steven Mahan (City of Milwaukee), Rocky Marcoux (City of Milwaukee), Kimberly Montgomery (City of Milwaukee), Clay Nesler (Johnson Controls), Cory Nettles (Quarles and Brady), Dru Pasley (Fannie Mae), Maria Prioletta (City of Milwaukee), Sharon Robinson (City of Milwaukee), Dr. Carlos Santiago (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), and Julia Taylor (Greater Milwaukee Committee).

Anti-Poverty Action Team

Co-Chairs: Deborah Blanks (Social Development Commission), Hugo Cardona (LaCausa, Inc.), David Riemer (Wisconsin Health Project)

Team Members: Brenda Bell-White (State of Wisconsin), Dr. Wilma Bonaparte (Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) - Early Childhood Education), Sheila Cochran (Milwaukee Labor Council), Tyrone Dumas (Milwaukee Public Schools), Shirley Ellis (Office of Congresswoman Gwen Moore), Pam Fendt (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Dr. Enrique Figueroa (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), Ashanti Hamilton (Milwaukee Common Council), Ralph Hollmon (The Milwaukee Urban League), Rhonda Kelsey (Office of Mayor Tom Barrett), Julie Kerksick (New Hope Project), Sharon Robinson (City of Milwaukee), Julia Taylor (Greater Milwaukee Committee), Jay Williams (Private Bank), Dr. Ernestine Willis (Medical College of Wisconsin).

