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Summer 2024

Milwaukee Sustainability Newsletter



Message from the Director

The City of Milwaukee adopted a historic [Climate and Equity Plan](#) in 2023 after over three years of public engagement and community discussion. This plan effectively positioned the City of Milwaukee to take advantage of the major federal investments from the Biden-Harris Administration and Congress, who passed the largest bills in the history of our country to address climate change and other infrastructure priorities.

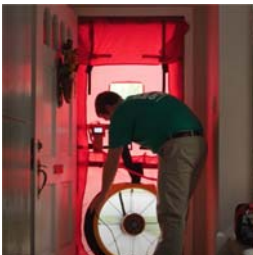
Although we didn't win every grant we applied for, I'm proud to say that ECO, the City of Milwaukee, and our partners have now **secured major federal funding to make each of the 10 Big Ideas in the [Climate and Equity Plan](#) a reality**; We are 10 for 10! As a result, we've been able to add staff and develop plans for major community improvements in 2025 and beyond. I'm grateful to Mayor Cavalier Johnson, supportive members of the Milwaukee Common Council, the ECO team and the Department of Administration, and all of our community partners who are working together to take bold action on the climate and racial equity. Read about our progress on each idea below:



Green Jobs Accelerator

ECO's **NEW Green Jobs Coordinator** will develop training plans and materials connecting workers with training and employers. They will also support the USDA Forestry grant by building a career training ladder for workers to progress from landscaping/pre-apprenticeships to arborists.

WRTP/Big-Step received a [\\$1.6M grant](#) for training EV Charging Technicians and the Milwaukee Environmental Youth Collaborative received a [\\$500,000 grant](#) for high school internships.



Healthy Home Energy Upgrades

Working with Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity and the Health Department, 80 homes are receiving coordinated lead abatement and energy efficiency improvements with **\$2M in federal funding**.

A [\\$1M federal grant](#) will support homeowner education through Resilience Ambassadors, [FREE energy assessments](#) available to 300 qualified homeowners, and connections to local, state, and federal funding. This includes [\\$149M available in rebates](#) through the state.



New, Net-Zero Energy Homes

A [\\$3.4M federal grant](#) will advance work with UWM and the national Advanced Building Construction Collaborative to test and deploy new housing types. Of this, \$1M will go to a subsidy for a **panelized**



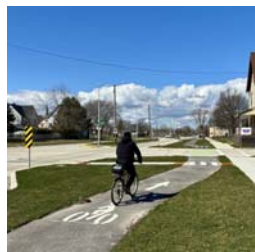
housing factory in Milwaukee and \$1M will go to **gap financing to make 35 new units of housing** that meet and exceed the U.S. Department of Energy's Zero Energy Ready Homes Standard. Additionally, ECO is using ARPA funds to work with Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity to build the first of these homes in Milwaukee in 2025.



Commercial Building Benchmarking & Standards

The City adopted a [new benchmarking policy](#) for large buildings to track their energy use starting in 2025. Support for this work is [available online](#) and a more robust service will be developed in 2025 with new funding. A [\\$9M federal grant](#) will support the development, adoption, and implementation of a building performance standard.

A [\\$400,000 federal grant](#) is supporting Sherman Park Community Association with energy efficiency in small buildings/places of worship.



People-Centered Transportation & Urban Design

Mayor Johnson's administration is rethinking street design to reduce reckless driving through the [Vision Zero initiative](#). This includes making our streets more bike and pedestrian-friendly.

In addition to traffic calming and bike lane improvements, a "complete streets" approach to major roads is being funded by a [\\$36.6M federal grant](#) to convert 2.6 miles of 6th Street; a [\\$14.3M grant](#) will reimagine Villard Avenue; and [\\$25M](#) will upgrade Center Street.



Electrify Transportation

Milwaukee adopted [a new policy](#) to purchase low emission and electric vehicles for the municipal fleet when practical to do so. ECO hired a **NEW EV Coordinator** to oversee municipal adoption and the build out of a public electric vehicle charging network in Milwaukee. To build this network, ECO received a [\\$15M federal grant](#) and will follow the guidance in the ["Preliminary EV Readiness Plan."](#)



Greening the Electric Grid

The City is working with We Energies on [2 major solar energy projects](#) to allow the City to source 25% of its municipal power needs from renewable sources by 2025—**enough to power 80 buildings!**

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation will receive a [\\$62.4M grant](#) to support solar energy projects in disadvantaged communities, including Milwaukee. The City also works with the Midwest Renewable Energy Association to offer a **Group Buy Program** for bulk solar.



Nature in the City

The City has agreements in place with Milwaukee County, Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee Community Service Corps, and Branch Out



Milwaukee to support planting, pruning, and dead tree removal; workforce training; and community education through a [\\$12M grant](#).

ECO continues to support green infrastructure projects in achievement of the [City's 2019 Green Infrastructure Plan](#) of installing 36 million gallons of stormwater capture by 2030. **We are at 80% of the goal!**



Waste Reduction & Sustainable Consumption

ECO hired a **NEW Food Waste Coordinator** funded through a [\\$400,000 cooperative agreement](#) to reduce organic waste, feed hungry people, and support community composting. [Mini-grants are now available](#) to community organizations for qualifying food rescue and composting. A Mayor's Food Saver Challenge will launch in 2025.

Milwaukee Public Schools received a [separate cooperative agreement](#) to promote composting at 10 schools.

Resilience Ambassadors

With a [\\$1M federal grant](#), Sherman Park Community Association and Clean Wisconsin are hiring Resilience Ambassadors to help residents receive free energy and healthy home assessments; connect homeowners to resources to reduce energy bills and remove home health hazards; and offer education on this issue.



With gratitude,

Erick Shambarger

Director of Environmental Sustainability
City of Milwaukee

Improve Your Home with NEW Funding



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There's never been a better time to invest in upgrades to your home thanks to major [NEW federal investments!](#) Redirect the money you spend on high energy bills toward an investment in your home that will keep you and your family comfortable year round. You'll help your pocketbook, your family, the local economy, and the environment.

The [Milwaukee Energy Efficiency Program \(Me²\)](#) offers an accessible, fixed-interest loan that can help you decrease your costs and increase your savings. Through our partner, Summit Credit Union, Me² provides affordable **financing up to \$20,000** for eligible home improvements. NOW available, see if you are also eligible for a **FREE energy assessment** from an approved contractor.

If a loan isn't right for you, the project can be completed and you can still take advantage of additional savings with [Focus on Energy rebates](#), federal tax credits and direct rebates, and **Me² Bonus Incentives**.

Looking for additional resource and incentive programs for improvements to structural repairs or home environmental health hazards such as lead? Try the City's [NEW Home Improvement Resource Navigator](#) and filter by location, service, or income for your housing needs.

Get Started Today

Welcome to Our New Staff!



Andi Sciacca, Food Waste Coordinator

Andi coordinates the [FEED MKE Project](#), which will drive implementation of [Waste Reduction and Sustainable Consumption](#) in the *Milwaukee Climate and Equity Plan*. Her position is funded through a 2-year grant from the USDA Compost and Food Waste Recovery Cooperative Agreement and her work will be focused on the design, promotion, and management of the grant initiatives, including a Milwaukee Food Saver Challenge.

Andi previously worked with The Culinary Institute of America as the dean of faculty and instructional development, where she developed their graduate degree programs—including a Master's in Sustainable Food Systems. Her academic career also includes positions with The Milwaukee Institute of Art + Design, The City University of New York, The State University of New York,

Marist College, Bard College, and The European Graduate School.

Andi is a former board member of the Milwaukee Food Council and a current member of ReFED's Food Waste Action Network, Food Tank's Academic Working Group, and the Second Nature Climate Coalition. She is a graduate of the City University of New York, of Harvard Kennedy School's Public Leadership Credential program, and of the Social Impact Leadership certificate program at the UC Berkeley-Haas School of Business.



Nathan Coe, Electric Vehicle Coordinator

Nathan coordinates the transition to electric, hybrid, and low-emission vehicles in the City's municipal fleet as defined by [ordinance](#), as well as expanding [electric vehicle](#) charging infrastructure in Milwaukee. He is a political scientist and urban planner, with masters degrees in each field. He brings to bear over 7 years of government and public services experience.

During this time, he clerked and managed projects for various municipal, county, and state government initiatives. Nathan also has over 9 years of experience in the private sector as a property manager, where he was

successful in writing, procuring, and managing government grants. He is a strong believer in the power of customer service through civil service, and is passionate about sustainability and green technology. Nathan enjoys gardening, and his favorite book is the Count of Monte Cristo.



Cole Hager, Green Jobs Coordinator

Cole coordinates workforce development in the sustainability space, supporting the training, development, recruitment, and creation of the green career pipelines in Milwaukee. His position is funded through a 5-year grant from the USDA Forest Service for the ["Growing Milwaukee's Tree Canopy and Community Resilience" Project](#).

Efforts are focused on assisting historically underserved communities through the grant's initiatives. Prior to his current role, Cole served as a Workforce Development Program Assistant at the Wisconsin Forestry Center while completing his bachelor's degree in Forestry from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. In that role, he contributed to the development and implementation of educational programs designed to enhance workforce readiness in the forestry sector.

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