

Bold American Rescue Plan Act Ideas for the City of Milwaukee

1) Financing Residential Energy Efficiency Upgrades for High Energy Burden Households (See [attached powerpoint proposal](#) for the preferred option of an on-bill tariff implemented in coordination with WE Energies)

- Address two major issues in Milwaukee simultaneously: energy [burden](#) and energy debt. Energy burden is an ongoing issue due to the number of low income households in Milwaukee. Energy debt is an issue that has skyrocketed during COVID-19 pandemic that will face major reckoning on April 15. There is urgency to addressing this issue. American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds offer us an opportunity to create an innovative program to address both issues in a way that will lessen the financial problems going forward and reduce emissions. If WE Energies does not partner with the City on this, the program should be implemented in other ways

2) Affordable, energy efficient modular homes with good paying manufacturing jobs in the Century City Triangle Business Park

- Development of manufacturing plant and supply chain businesses to create energy efficient housing units for vacant lots in the city
- This plant and supply chain could also incorporate some on-the-job training using subsidized employment funds--the subsidized employment funds could also be provided through the ARP funds coming to the state Dept of Workforce Development.

3) Create Equitable Career Pathways through Restoration of Urban Tree Canopy and Depaving excess asphalt parking lots

- Utilize transitional jobs funding to increase forestry department training opportunities. Dramatically increasing the Urban Tree Canopy will help provide shading and cooling of the urban island heat effect, especially in highly urbanized, often underserved neighborhoods. These trees will help to absorb the heavier rains we are already seeing and will continue to see from climate change impacts, particularly in flood-prone underserved neighborhoods. Additionally, planting more trees is a key climate change strategy that can (if increased at a sufficient scale) play a major role in meeting greenhouse gas reduction targets, as trees absorb GHGs and cool the environment through evapotranspiration.
- Create space for more trees by depaving excess asphalt parking lots and adding trees and green infrastructure as outlined in the City's Adopted Green Infrastructure Plan, and fund parking lot greening grants as outlined in Council File 190186

4) Urban Renewal and Green Spaces Projects

- Development of a bike trail next to the 30th Street Industrial Corridor railroad, providing an off-street bike path along this industrial corridor to provide bike commuting paths and connect the Hank Aaron to the Oak Leaf trails. Cost of about \$15 million for the Wisconsin DOT to purchase this railroad from Canadian Pacific

5) **Pay-As-You-Save (PAYS) fund to electrify MCTS bus fleet**

- A revolving fund to support conversion of the MCTS to electric buses could be set up as follows:
 - The County uses ARP funds to establish a fund for the purchase of electric buses
 - WE Energies is asked to put a matching amount into the fund. Because electrification of the bus fleet would grow demand for electricity, WE Energies has an interest in electrifying Milwaukee's bus fleet.
 - Over the life of each electric bus purchased, the County pays back into the fund the difference between the cost of operating the electric bus compared to the average cost of operating fossil-fueled buses in its fleet.
 - As the fund is replenished, it enables the County to purchase additional electric buses to expand bus service and/or replace diesel buses that need to be retired.
- See these [slides](#) which illustrate some of the key concepts for this mechanism.
- The same type of mechanisms could be utilized for the conversion of other City and County vehicle fleets to electric vehicles, not just for MCTS buses.