



***Monthly Employment Watch:  
Milwaukee and the Nation's Largest Cities***

**A monthly report on employment trends in the nation's largest cities**

**Prepared by:**

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### *About This Report*

Each month, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development, drawing on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, monitors employment trends in Milwaukee and the nation's 50 largest cities. In addition, the Center also compares employment trends in Milwaukee to a smaller and more directly comparable group of "peer" cities, the 20 largest cities of the Northeast-Midwest "Frostbelt" region. Each month, the data compiled by the Center display year-over-year total employment for three different time periods: a) the most recent year (2006-2007); b) the past three years (2004-2007), since the current mayoral administration took office; and c) since 2000, the peak of the last business cycle. By looking at three different time periods, and two different samples of cities, we hope to provide a fuller sense of how Milwaukee's employment growth stacks up against other big cities over time, and how Milwaukee's position has changed over time.

### ***The Monthly Employment Watch: November***

The most recent monthly employment data for cities (November) reveal that Milwaukee continues on the path of sluggish employment growth observed through most of 2007. Employment increased by only 394 in November 2007 compared to November 2006, a miniscule year-over-year increase of 0.16%. Combined with the employment decline reported in October, the signs are troubling that Milwaukee may have already slipped into the recession threatening the national economy. In November, Milwaukee ranked 41st among the nation's 50 largest cities in rate of employment growth over the past year (Table 1), and 12th among the nation's 20 largest "Frostbelt" cities (Table 4). The national ranking is unchanged from the October 2007 "Employment Watch," while the Frostbelt ranking represents an improvement from 13<sup>th</sup> in October.

Since 2004, November employment in Milwaukee has increased by 1,795 (0.72%), placing the city 46th among the nation's 50 largest cities (Table 2) and 13th among the 20 largest Frostbelt cities (Table 5) in the rate of employment growth during this time period. In October, Milwaukee's rate of 2004-2007 employment growth ranked 45<sup>th</sup> nationally and 14<sup>th</sup> in the Frostbelt. Clearly, since 2004 the pace of growth has been much less robust here than in most big cities, both in the nation as a whole as well as in the Frostbelt.

Moreover, as we have noted throughout the year, the tiny recent employment increases have not compensated for the massive employment loss experienced in Milwaukee since 2000. Since November 2000, Milwaukee's employment has declined by 18,103, or 6.7%. This decline places Milwaukee 47th among the nation's 50 largest cities in employment growth since 2000 (Table 3), and 19th among the 20 largest Frostbelt cities (Table 6). Those rankings represent a decline of one position from last month's employment watch.

Finally, comparison of November unemployment rates in the 50 largest cities reveals the degree to which Milwaukee remains one of the country's most distressed urban labor markets (Table 7). In November 2007, Milwaukee had the 47<sup>th</sup> highest unemployment rate among the nation's 50 largest cities, posting a preliminary rate of 7.3%. Only Detroit, Oakland, and Fresno ranked worse. Since 2000, Milwaukee's November ranking on unemployment among the 50 largest cities has steadily deteriorated, placing 34th in November 2000, 37<sup>th</sup> in November 2004, 45<sup>th</sup> in November 2006, and 47<sup>th</sup> in November 2007.

**Table 1 -- Employment Growth in the 50 Largest Cities:  
2006 to 2007**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>November 2006</b>	<b>November 2007</b>	<b>% Change</b>
1	Seattle	341,655	357,884	4.75%
2	Wichita	179,749	186,635	3.83%
3	Miami	161,639	166,390	2.94%
4	Long Beach	223,198	229,446	2.80%
5	Los Angeles	1,801,519	1,851,944	2.80%
6	Atlanta	214,822	220,403	2.60%
7	Memphis	297,472	304,422	2.34%
8	Portland	286,745	293,383	2.31%
9	Omaha	219,995	224,644	2.11%
10	Las Vegas	279,849	285,479	2.01%
11	Austin	402,135	409,799	1.91%
12	Virginia Beach	218,579	222,435	1.76%
13	Fresno	201,633	204,444	1.39%
14	Nashville	304,749	308,972	1.39%
15	Denver	301,678	305,493	1.26%
16	Houston	968,406	979,938	1.19%
17	Dallas	582,036	588,877	1.18%
18	Boston	277,573	280,816	1.17%
19	Louisville	345,600	349,315	1.07%
20	Washington, D.C.	297,980	301,135	1.06%
21	Oklahoma City	254,633	257,159	0.99%
22	Cleveland	176,214	177,888	0.95%
23	Mesa City	247,760	250,063	0.93%
24	Phoenix	815,400	822,978	0.93%
25	Fort Worth	293,455	296,145	0.92%
26	San Jose	418,122	421,784	0.88%
27	Philadelphia	589,478	594,506	0.85%
28	Columbus	399,102	402,336	0.81%
29	San Francisco	409,961	412,958	0.73%
30	San Antonio	590,021	594,225	0.71%
31	Albuquerque	257,076	258,902	0.71%
32	New York	3,640,557	3,663,832	0.64%
33	Jacksonville	397,890	399,986	0.53%
34	Charlotte	332,235	333,922	0.51%
35	El Paso	240,634	241,691	0.44%
36	Chicago	1,279,199	1,284,807	0.44%
37	San Diego	654,440	656,535	0.32%
38	Colorado Springs	207,466	207,977	0.25%
39	Tucson	256,446	256,998	0.22%
40	Sacramento	203,636	204,058	0.21%
<b>41</b>	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>251,539</b>	<b>251,933</b>	<b>0.16%</b>
42	Oakland	181,648	181,734	0.05%
43	Baltimore	264,364	264,114	-0.09%
44	St. Louis	148,210	148,036	-0.12%
45	Minneapolis	212,297	211,253	-0.49%
46	Kansas City	223,976	222,779	-0.53%
47	Tulsa	201,506	199,294	-1.10%
48	Indianapolis	417,332	412,571	-1.14%
49	Honolulu	445,782	440,541	-1.18%
50	Detroit	319,921	313,393	-2.04%

**Table 2 - Employment Growth in the 50 Largest Cities:  
2004 to 2007**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>November 2004</b>	<b>November 2007</b>	<b>% Change</b>
1	Mesa City	225,725	250,063	10.78%
2	Phoenix	742,881	822,978	10.78%
3	Seattle	323,763	357,884	10.54%
4	Atlanta	199,558	220,403	10.45%
5	Memphis	276,877	304,422	9.95%
6	Miami	151,466	166,390	9.85%
7	Fort Worth	269,955	296,145	9.70%
8	Albuquerque	238,505	258,902	8.55%
9	Jacksonville	370,928	399,986	7.83%
10	Wichita	173,094	186,635	7.82%
11	Charlotte	310,817	333,922	7.43%
12	Fresno	190,851	204,444	7.12%
13	San Antonio	555,206	594,225	7.03%
14	Colorado Springs	195,629	207,977	6.31%
15	Denver	287,424	305,493	6.29%
16	Nashville	291,634	308,972	5.95%
17	Long Beach	217,722	229,446	5.38%
18	Los Angeles	1,757,316	1,851,944	5.38%
19	Omaha	213,630	224,644	5.16%
20	Portland	279,151	293,383	5.10%
21	Louisville	332,700	349,315	4.99%
22	Chicago	1,224,604	1,284,807	4.92%
23	Washington, D.C.	287,341	301,135	4.80%
24	New York	3,497,674	3,663,832	4.75%
25	Virginia Beach	212,366	222,435	4.74%
26	Tucson	245,974	256,998	4.48%
27	Las Vegas	273,484	285,479	4.39%
28	Austin	393,280	409,799	4.20%
29	San Jose	404,854	421,784	4.18%
30	Sacramento	196,372	204,058	3.91%
31	Tulsa	192,154	199,294	3.72%
32	Columbus	387,999	402,336	3.70%
33	Baltimore	254,711	264,114	3.69%
34	Honolulu	425,342	440,541	3.57%
35	San Francisco	400,207	412,958	3.19%
36	Oklahoma City	250,117	257,159	2.82%
37	Indianapolis	402,425	412,571	2.52%
38	El Paso	236,217	241,691	2.32%
39	San Diego	641,709	656,535	2.31%
40	Kansas City	218,512	222,779	1.95%
41	Philadelphia	583,823	594,506	1.83%
42	Boston	275,802	280,816	1.82%
43	Dallas	578,769	588,877	1.75%
44	Oakland	178,870	181,734	1.60%
45	Houston	965,793	979,938	1.46%
<b>46</b>	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>250,138</b>	<b>251,933</b>	<b>0.72%</b>
47	Cleveland	177,521	177,888	0.21%
48	Minneapolis	211,521	211,253	-0.13%
49	St. Louis	149,133	148,036	-0.74%
50	Detroit	323,750	313,393	-3.20%

**Table 3 - Employment Growth in the 50 Largest Cities:  
2000 to 2007**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>November 2000</b>	<b>November 2007</b>	<b>% Change</b>
1	Phoenix	670,745	822,978	22.70%
2	Mesa City	203,807	250,063	22.70%
3	Las Vegas	237,873	285,479	20.01%
4	Fort Worth	256,832	296,145	15.31%
5	San Antonio	519,359	594,225	14.42%
6	Fresno	180,366	204,444	13.35%
7	Atlanta	196,128	220,403	12.38%
8	Sacramento	182,543	204,058	11.79%
9	Miami	148,873	166,390	11.77%
10	Tucson	230,075	256,998	11.70%
11	Charlotte	299,569	333,922	11.47%
12	Seattle	321,477	357,884	11.32%
13	Colorado Springs	187,388	207,977	10.99%
14	Virginia Beach	200,583	222,435	10.89%
15	Albuquerque	234,462	258,902	10.42%
16	San Diego	595,749	656,535	10.20%
17	El Paso	221,887	241,691	8.93%
18	Wichita	171,584	186,635	8.77%
19	Jacksonville	370,651	399,986	7.91%
20	Long Beach	214,773	229,446	6.83%
21	Los Angeles	1,733,513	1,851,944	6.83%
22	Omaha	211,126	224,644	6.40%
23	Houston	921,179	979,938	6.38%
24	New York	3,460,877	3,663,832	5.86%
25	Honolulu	418,703	440,541	5.22%
26	Austin	394,449	409,799	3.89%
27	Memphis	293,653	304,422	3.67%
28	Oklahoma City	248,434	257,159	3.51%
29	Columbus	390,315	402,336	3.08%
30	Washington, D.C.	293,840	301,135	2.48%
31	Denver	299,172	305,493	2.11%
32	Nashville	304,345	308,972	1.52%
33	Indianapolis	408,408	412,571	1.02%
34	Louisville	349,151	349,315	0.05%
35	Portland	294,083	293,383	-0.24%
36	Baltimore	265,267	264,114	-0.43%
37	Tulsa	200,860	199,294	-0.78%
38	Dallas	596,055	588,877	-1.20%
39	Chicago	1,303,820	1,284,807	-1.46%
40	Philadelphia	604,983	594,506	-1.73%
41	Kansas City	226,984	222,779	-1.85%
42	Oakland	188,983	181,734	-3.84%
43	Minneapolis	220,383	211,253	-4.14%
44	St. Louis	154,908	148,036	-4.44%
45	Boston	297,472	280,816	-5.60%
46	Cleveland	188,728	177,888	-5.74%
<b>47</b>	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>270,036</b>	<b>251,933</b>	<b>-6.70%</b>
48	San Francisco	462,235	412,958	-10.66%
49	Detroit	354,338	313,393	-11.56%
50	San Jose	481,290	421,784	-12.36%

**Table 4 - Employment Growth in the 20 Largest Frostbelt Cities  
2006-2007**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>November 2006</b>	<b>November 2007</b>	<b>% Change</b>
1	Wichita	179,749	186,635	3.83%
2	Omaha	219,995	224,644	2.11%
3	Boston	277,573	280,816	1.17%
4	Washington, D.C.	297,980	301,135	1.06%
5	Cleveland	176,214	177,888	0.95%
6	Philadelphia	589,478	594,506	0.85%
7	Columbus	399,102	402,336	0.81%
8	Cincinnati	147,396	148,495	0.75%
9	New York	3,640,557	3,663,832	0.64%
10	Chicago	1,279,199	1,284,807	0.44%
11	Pittsburgh	145,900	146,400	0.34%
<b>12</b>	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>251,539</b>	<b>251,933</b>	<b>0.16%</b>
13	Baltimore	264,364	264,114	-0.09%
14	St. Louis	148,210	148,036	-0.12%
15	Minneapolis	212,297	211,253	-0.49%
16	St. Paul (MN)	142,319	141,619	-0.49%
17	Kansas City	223,976	222,779	-0.53%
18	Buffalo	115,382	114,377	-0.87%
19	Indianapolis	417,332	412,571	-1.14%
20	Detroit	319,921	313,393	-2.04%

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**Table 5- Employment Growth in the 20 Largest Frostbelt Cities  
2004 to 2007**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>November 2004</b>	<b>November 2007</b>	<b>% Change</b>
1	Wichita	173,094	186,635	7.82%
2	Omaha	213,630	224,644	5.16%
3	Chicago	1,224,604	1,284,807	4.92%
4	Washington, D.C.	287,341	301,135	4.80%
5	New York	3,497,674	3,663,832	4.75%
6	Columbus	387,999	402,336	3.70%
7	Baltimore	254,711	264,114	3.69%
8	Indianapolis	402,425	412,571	2.52%
9	Kansas City	218,512	222,779	1.95%
10	Philadelphia	583,823	594,506	1.83%
11	Boston	275,802	280,816	1.82%
12	Cincinnati	145,975	148,495	1.73%
<b>13</b>	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>250,138</b>	<b>251,933</b>	<b>0.72%</b>
14	Cleveland	177,521	177,888	0.21%
15	Pittsburgh	146,140	146,400	0.18%
16	Minneapolis	211,521	211,253	-0.13%
17	St. Paul (MN)	141,934	141,619	-0.22%
18	St. Louis	149,133	148,036	-0.74%
19	Buffalo	116,326	114,377	-1.68%
20	Detroit	323,750	313,393	-3.20%

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**Table 6- Employment Growth in the Twenty Largest Frostbelt Cities  
2000 to 2007**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>November 2000</b>	<b>November 2007</b>	<b>% Change</b>
1	Wichita	171,584	186,635	8.77%
2	Omaha	211,126	224,644	6.40%
3	New York	3,460,877	3,663,832	5.86%
4	Columbus	390,315	402,336	3.08%
5	Washington, D.C.	293,840	301,135	2.48%
6	Indianapolis	408,408	412,571	1.02%
7	Baltimore	265,267	264,114	-0.43%
8	Chicago	1,303,820	1,284,807	-1.46%
9	Philadelphia	604,983	594,506	-1.73%
10	Kansas City	226,984	222,779	-1.85%
11	Pittsburgh	150,000	146,400	-2.40%
12	Cincinnati	152,421	148,495	-2.58%
13	Buffalo	118,490	114,377	-3.47%
14	Minneapolis	220,383	211,253	-4.14%
15	St. Louis	154,908	148,036	-4.44%
16	Boston	297,472	280,816	-5.60%
17	St. Paul (MN)	150,019	141,619	-5.60%
18	Cleveland	188,728	177,888	-5.74%
<b>19</b>	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>270,036</b>	<b>251,933</b>	<b>-6.70%</b>
20	Detroit	354,338	313,393	-11.56%

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**Table 7 -- Unemployment Rates in the 50 Largest Cities**

Rank	City	November 2000	November 2004	November 2006	November 2007
1	Honolulu	3.6	3.0	2.1	2.7
2	Virginia Beach	1.9	3.3	2.8	2.8
3	Albuquerque	3.6	4.8	3.2	2.9
4	Mesa City	2.8	3.6	3.0	3.0
5	Omaha	3.0	4.6	2.7	3.1
6	Austin	2.9	5.1	3.5	3.3
7	Seattle	4.5	5.4	4.2	3.5
8	San Antonio	4.0	5.8	4.1	3.7
9	Phoenix	3.6	4.6	3.9	3.9
10	Wichita	4.5	6.5	4.7	3.9
11	Minneapolis	3.0	4.3	3.7	3.9
12	Miami	6.2	6.8	3.8	4.0
13	Boston	2.6	5.0	5.1	4.0
14	Jacksonville	3.3	4.6	3.3	4.1
15	Charlotte	3.3	5.4	4.2	4.1
16	Nashville	3.3	4.7	4.0	4.1
17	Houston	4.5	6.9	4.5	4.1
18	Tucson	3.8	4.5	4.2	4.3
19	Louisville	3.6	4.9	5.1	4.3
20	Fort Worth	4.3	6.9	4.6	4.3
21	San Francisco	3.2	5.7	4.0	4.4
22	Colorado Springs	2.6	5.3	4.2	4.4
23	Denver	2.9	6.0	4.3	4.4
24	Atlanta	4.2	7.5	4.8	4.4
25	Indianapolis	2.4	5.5	4.4	4.4
26	Tulsa	2.6	4.9	3.7	4.4
27	Dallas	4.3	7.6	4.7	4.4
28	Columbus	3.1	5.5	4.6	4.5
29	Oklahoma City	2.6	4.8	3.9	4.5
30	San Diego	3.6	4.4	4.0	4.8
31	Portland	4.5	6.8	4.9	4.9
32	New York	5.4	6.0	4.3	5.0
33	El Paso	6.0	7.0	6.0	5.1
34	Las Vegas	5.0	4.5	4.2	5.3
35	San Jose	2.9	6.4	4.8	5.5
36	Chicago	5.4	7.4	4.5	5.6
37	Baltimore	5.7	7.2	6.1	5.6
38	Philadelphia	5.6	6.9	6.2	5.6
39	Memphis	5.0	8.1	5.9	5.6
40	Long Beach	5.3	6.7	4.7	5.7
41	Los Angeles	5.3	6.7	4.7	5.7
42	Washington, D.C.	5.2	7.6	5.8	5.8
43	Kansas City	3.9	7.6	6.0	6.3
44	Sacramento	4.7	6.2	5.5	6.7
45	St. Louis	5.4	8.9	6.7	6.8
46	Cleveland	6.6	7.8	6.9	7.3
47	<b>Milwaukee</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.3</b>
48	Oakland	5.1	8.3	6.6	7.6
49	Fresno	10.1	9.5	7.3	8.5
50	Detroit	6.9	14.5	13.6	13.7