

# **Proposal to Prepare a Milwaukee Climate Protection and Economic Equity Plan**

By Ted Kraig and Bruce Wiggins November 2, 2020

**Goal:** Complete the Plan Recommended in the Preliminary Report by the City County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity by the End of 2021 with robust public involvement

## **BACKGROUND**

The City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity (Task Force) undertook a 5-month process with four Work Groups and completed its Preliminary Report in March, 2020. It made a series of recommendations for immediate action and also proposed that a comprehensive plan be created to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Milwaukee and promote economic equity in the City and County. The Preliminary Report has been presented to committees of the Milwaukee Common Council and Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. Since completion of the report, a detailed inventory of GHG emissions has been completed for ECO, which establishes the baseline for measurable reductions.

The City of Milwaukee has declared racism a public health emergency. In addition, citizens throughout the County have marched and demonstrated for many months to demand actions that address racial and economic inequities in our community. A planning process that involves the community can help address one of our serious challenges, climate change, while also addressing current needs and addressing the need for systematic change to promote equity.

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

A planning effort similar to a comprehensive plan by a local government is needed. Many people and groups are affected and must be involved in carrying out the plan. Therefore, citizens along with leaders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors must be involved in the planning with an extensive community involvement effort. Government must take the lead, with a lead agency or co-leads designated. An overall Project Manager must be designated to oversee the planning, coordinate the various participants, and prepare the final plan with implementation strategies and commitments. The Task Force will continue to provide project oversight and direction.

## **COST**

The total cost of developing a plan of this magnitude in other cities has been significant. According to Boswell, Greve and Seale (Local Climate Action Planning, 2019), comparable comprehensive plans have required either 1,000 to 2,500 hours of staff time or \$50,000 to \$300,000 in consultant costs -- or a combination thereof. The cost in actual dollars appropriated through budgets or funding commitments depends on how many agencies (public, private, or nonprofit) will commit staff and other resources to this effort. To define a budget, the planning process must be defined more precisely, and agency staff commitments obtained. Dollars might be contributed by philanthropic organizations, public agencies, and businesses.

Some consultants will need to be hired for technical matters. All comprehensive plans in other cities have utilized consultants, primarily to organize public outreach/involvement, develop climate vulnerability assessments and develop the greenhouse gas inventory and projections.

## **TIMING**

One year for a planning process on a complicated, multi-faceted problem is quite aggressive. Therefore, to be completed by the end of 2021, the lead agency/agencies and Project Manager must be designated by the end of 2020. A specific budget including dollars and agency staff commitments must also be prepared within a similar time frame.