

Overview for Land Use, Urban Ag & Reforestation Working Group Milwaukee City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity

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1. FOUNDING CITY-COUNTY RESOLUTIONS

These resolutions established the Task Force with 13 members designated by the organizations identified in the resolutions. The Task Force is charged with making recommendations to achieve the goals of reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions 45% by 2030 and to net zero by 2050 or sooner AND mitigating racial and income inequality through “green jobs.”

[City Common Council Resolution 190445](#)

[County resolution 19-582](#)

The Task Force is subject to open meetings laws. Task Force information, including minutes of meetings and presentations to the Task Force, are available at the [Legistar portion of the City’s website](#). Information is also available on the [City’s Environmental Collaboration website](#).

The Task Force met starting in November 2019. It published its Preliminary Report with findings and recommendations in March 2020 (see #4 below.) The current phase of planning, Phase 2, will recommend a final Climate and Equity Plan to meet the City-County mandates.

2. PHASE 2 PROJECT CHARTER

Erick Shambarger, Director of Sustainability and head of the City of Milwaukee’s Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO), is the Project Manager for this phase of work. He, along with Gordie Bennett, County Sustainability Director, created a 13-page [Project Charter](#) that defines the process to create the final plan. It establishes project parameters including scope of work, a high-level timetable, roles & responsibilities, constraints & assumptions, funding & budget along with measures of success. It establishes 10 working groups:

Jobs and Equity	Education and Outreach	Adaptation and Climate Resilience
Greening the Grid	Transportation and Mobility	Land Use, Urban Ag & Reforestation
Finance	Green Buildings	Waste and Sustainable Consumption
Implementation, Accountability, and Reporting		

The Task Force has named a Chair or Co-Chairs and will name official members of each working group. All working groups meetings are open under public meeting laws, and the public will be invited to attend.

A WORKING GROUP TEMPLATE is being developed and will be utilized to guide the progress of each working group.

3. ICLEI GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY

Working Group members should become very familiar with this report, as it establishes the basis for plans and actions to address climate change.

The City funded an analysis of Milwaukee’s communitywide GHG emissions by “ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability.” The intent is to establish a baseline against which goals and progress can be measured, along with estimating impacts of proposed actions. It documents sources of data and wrestles with problems of limited data in certain categories. The 26-page report is [available here](#).

It is important to note, for the purposes of the Land Use working group, that while the ICLEI Inventory measures CO₂ emissions, it does not attempt to measure carbon sequestration. For this reason, ICLEI was asked to prepare a separate Milwaukee countywide GHG INVENTORY FOR FORESTS AND TREES, using new measuring tools (copy provided). While the inventory numbers are modest, it must be remembered that atmospheric levels of greenhouse gases are already well beyond ideal levels and can only be drawn down through carbon sequestration as is performed naturally by trees, plants, healthy soils and regenerative agriculture.

4. ICLEI GREENHOUSE GAS PLANNING SCENARIO

ICLEI has prepared for the City a brief [Planning Scenario report](#), showing Business-As-Usual modeling for GHG emissions through 2050 and identifying most promising avenues for emissions reductions.

5. RELEVANT ITEMS IN PRELIMINARY REPORT

The founding resolutions establishing the Task Force required a report to the City and County. After approximately five months of work, the Task Force produced what it called a [“Preliminary Report.”](#)

This 70-page report was published and released to the public in March 2020 as a progress report towards achievement of the Task Force’s mandates. It included an inventory of the current state of affairs, along with guiding recommendations as the region enters the new “green” economy. It was seen by the Task Force not as the conclusive guidelines for addressing climate change and economic equity in the region, but rather a crucial step in the planning process. It documented current relevant efforts underway that should be built upon and recommended a phase 2 to develop a final plan that achieves the twin goals of addressing climate change (reducing GHG emissions) and promoting economic equity. The Phase 2 charter described above is this next phase of work.

Here are some of the findings from the Preliminary Report that pertain to the Land Use Working Group:

A. “Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment and Reduction Strategies” (Part III of Report)

P. 13, Discussion of existing programs – the City’s Green Infrastructure Plan, HOME GR/OWN program, Eco-neighborhood designations, and ReFresh Milwaukee Plan for sustainability.
Pp. 17-18, referencing the book, *Drawdown*, edited by Paul Hawken, and other resources
[From Table 1, Sector-Specific Strategies \(p. 20\)](#)

Land Use: Address urban planning and natural landscapes – forests, prairies, native plants for carbon sequestration, plant and wildlife habitat, water resource management [note that urban agriculture has been added to the scope of the working group]; a link is provided to a USDA document on the role of trees in managing stormwater

Short-Term Projects/Programs

P. 22, Maintain and expand ECO programs

B. Jobs and Equity (Part IV of Report)

See pp. 24-28 for documentation and findings of systematic inequity.

Among the specific equity programs listed (p. 28):

- HOME GR/OWN and Walnut Way collaboration with national grants
- City efforts to green Milwaukee Public Schools’ playgrounds and schoolyards
- Massive investments by the City and MMSD in 30th Street Industrial Corridor to reduce flood risk and install green infrastructure
- MMSD funded outreach efforts to boost climate resilience through green infrastructure installations in the neighborhoods surrounding the 30th Street Industrial Corridor,

including the Century City Triangle, Garden Homes, Sherman Park, and Lincoln Creek Neighborhoods, among many others

Among the sectors listed for examining jobs and equity potential as well as training, hiring and advancement opportunities (p. 34-35):

- Combining decarceration efforts with employment pathways in green energy, reforestation, green infrastructure and conservation efforts

Short Term Projects / Programs (pp. 35-36)

Recommending additional support for existing programs, including:

- Tree-planting projects (Ex. Branch out Program, Ash Tree Replacement, City of Milwaukee Urban Forestry program, Decarceration and Reforestation program)
- Greening efforts of MPS and playgrounds (MMSD)
- The Milwaukee Water Commons recommendations related to water quality and diversifying the workforce in water-related jobs

Possible near-term new projects (pp. 36-37):

- Combining decarceration efforts with reforestation and conservation efforts along the lines of Civil Conservation Corps models: With the impending extinction of key canopy species such as ash trees and following multiple years of divestment in natural areas, it is proposed that paid, hands-on training efforts intentionally include soon-to-be returning citizens in green-infrastructure installation and maintenance, engage under and unemployed community members in water treatment career pathways (MMSD, Walnut Way, Groundwork MKE, Cream City Conservation Corps, DNR, County Parks, WI Fast Forward, City of Milwaukee Forestry, MATC), and re-evaluate paperwork requirements by federal and local entities for subsidized employment
- Urban agriculture such as the program at Vincent High School, including Vincent's salad sales entrepreneurial programs at the Brewers stadium.

C. Finance and Funding opportunities (Part V of Report)

The chapter catalogues 10 innovative financing solutions the City has used to address climate change (pp. 37-39) and 45 additional financing possibilities (pp. 39-47). Note that the Finance working group can serve as a resource for the funding of projects identified by other groups.

D. Education and Community Outreach (Part VI of Report) and Monitoring and Accountability (Part VII)

These are process-oriented chapters discussing the importance of these functions to the overall climate and equity planning.

6. GOVERNOR'S CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE REPORT

The state task force recently released its [final report](#), containing a list of 46 recommendations. Recommendations that appear to have greatest potential for integration into the plans of the Land Use group are found in Chapters 38, 41 and 44 of the report.

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