

BETTER BUILDINGS WORKFORCE ACCELERATOR

From 2020 to 2023, the City of Milwaukee participated as a partner in the [Better Buildings Workforce Accelerator](#) (BBWA). The BBWA is a Department of Energy (DOE) initiative seeking to raise the level of building science and energy efficiency knowledge in the nation's building-related workforce. Through the BBWA, DOE engaged industry partners in activities that build interest and awareness, streamline pathways, and improve skills for people pursuing green building careers.

The City of Milwaukee aims to connect climate and economic equity goals through its new Climate and Equity Plan to support a clean energy economy that provides more opportunities for people of color. .

About the Partner

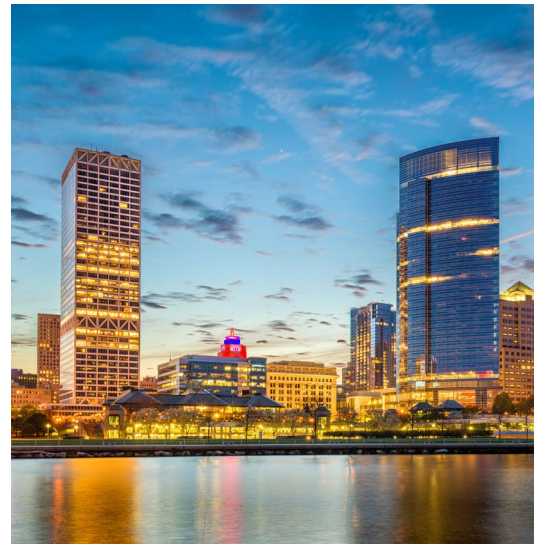
The City of Milwaukee, through its Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO), endeavors to make Milwaukee a regional and global leader in energy policy and climate action. In 2019, the City of Milwaukee and county jointly established the City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity to formulate recommendations on how to:

- ▶ Reduce community-wide net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 45% by the year 2030 and achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 or sooner.
- ▶ Reduce racial and income inequality by assuring that greenhouse gas reduction investments and policies will create the maximum number of permanent green jobs that provide a living wage for people who live in the most impoverished Milwaukee neighborhoods with limited economic opportunity.

After years of research, planning, and public engagement, the [Climate and Equity Plan](#) was approved by the City Council in June 2023.

About the Project

The [Green Jobs Accelerator](#) is a key component of the Climate and Equity Plan. The Accelerator will be led by the City of Milwaukee and Employee Milwaukee, the Milwaukee County workforce development board, in partnership with Milwaukee Public Schools, training providers, employers, and existing workforce organizations. The Accelerator will focus on building excitement for green jobs and careers, clarifying training pathways, building skills through



The City of Milwaukee aims to involve an ecosystem of interconnected partners to support learners and workers as they prepare and progress through their careers.

AT A GLANCE

- ▶ **Partner:** City of Milwaukee
- ▶ **Location:** Milwaukee, WI
- ▶ **Technology:** Energy Management Systems, HVAC, Lighting, Renewable Energy
- ▶ **Audience:** Diverse and Underrepresented Jobseekers
- ▶ **Better Buildings Workforce Accelerator Focus Area:** Building Interest and Awareness, Streamlining Pathways

GREEN JOBS STATISTICS FOR MILWAUKEE COUNTY

Description	Electricians	Plumbers, Pipe Fitters, & Steamfitters	Heating, Air Conditioning, & Refrigeration Mechanics & Installers	Landscape Architects	Insulation Workers, Floor, Ceiling, & Wall
Median Annual Earnings	\$70,625.75	\$72,155.02	\$62,768.35	\$50,533.85	\$35,592.44
2020 Turnover Rate	65%	50%	42%	34%	74%
Typical Entry Level Education	High school diploma or equivalent	High school diploma or equivalent	Postsecondary non-degree award	Bachelor's degree	No formal educational credential
Typical On-The-Job Training	Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship	Long-term-on-the-job training	Internship/residency	Short-term-on-the-job training
Males % of Occupation	97%	99%	99%	70%	92%
Total Diversity % of Occupation	16%	15%	13%	11%	N/A
White % of Occupation	84%	85%	87%	89%	73%

Milwaukee County analyzed green job statistics in several fields as part of the development of the Climate and Equity Plan. The table above details the findings.

subsidized training, identifying transitional jobs with career ladders, identifying community benefits agreements for public projects, and promoting Black and Brown business development.

Challenges

The 2020 preliminary report of the City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity outlines several interwoven challenges that the Accelerator aims to address.

- ▶ **A deep and persistent economic equity crisis in the Milwaukee Metro Area that falls along racial lines.**
- ▶ **Current efforts to address economic inequality and racial disparities are not to scale, comprehensive and integrated, nor sufficiently directed to achieve community-wide outcome goals.**
- ▶ **Limited local government resources**

- ▶ **Insufficient course offerings in high school to introduce students to good paying jobs in the trades.**
- ▶ **Need for better coordination between unemployment agencies, training providers, and contractors.**

Solutions

- ▶ **Aggregation of basic economic data on the emerging green economy in Milwaukee and metric tracking.**

The Green Job Accelerator will track employment rate by race and gender, median household income by race, and the median hourly wage rate by race and gender.

- ▶ **Family-Sustaining Jobs**

The Climate and Equity Plan establishes a goal of creating green jobs that pay at least \$40,000 per year at the entry level with 40% of green jobs to be held by people of color, on track with the White House [Justice40 Initiative](#).

▶ **Subsidized Transitional Jobs**

Paying workers while they are being trained in new skills can help overcome long-standing barriers to employment. “Earn while you learn” opportunities include registered apprenticeship programs which provide \$30 million annually in proven private sector workforce development investment in Wisconsin.

▶ **Workforce Ecosystem Coordination**

Preexisting green job training programs and stakeholders will be more effectively coordinated through the Green Jobs Accelerator. Through participation in the Better Buildings Workforce Accelerator, the city of Milwaukee can apply national best practices locally.

▶ **Alignment with Federal Funding Opportunities**

Federal investment in climate and infrastructure like the [Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\)](#) and [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act \(IIJA\)](#) align with the values of the Climate and Equity Plan and efforts to achieve funding are already underway.

Outcomes & Impact

The city council approved Milwaukee’s Climate and Equity Plan in June 2023. The plan can be viewed as “a living document that gives elected leaders and administrators a clear foundation of priorities.” Through the development of the plan, the city of Milwaukee is directly eligible for funding through the IRA which offers \$5 billion in grants for climate action planning and projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

To finance the Green Jobs Accelerator, the city plans to utilize IRA and IIJA to fund training and workforce development programs. For updates about the Green Jobs Accelerator, visit ECO’s [Green Jobs](#) webpage.

This case study was developed with content from the City of Milwaukee’s Climate and Equity Plan and materials developed by the City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity.