

**MILWAUKEE COUNTY
INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION**

Date: July 27, 2023

To: Scott Manske, Comptroller, Office of the Comptroller; Chairperson, Capital Improvements Committee

From: Gordie Bennett, Sustainability Director, Office of Sustainability, Department of Administrative Services

Subject: Climate Action Component for 2025 Capital Project Scoring

Pursuant to Milwaukee County Ordinance (Section 36.03(b) and (c)) the Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) is responsible for the establishment of capital project scoring criteria (criteria) and prioritization of the projects based upon those criteria. Thereafter, the CIC submits a (non-binding) prioritized capital projects report (typically each August) to the County Board and County Executive to assist with the development of the annual capital budget.

During April 2023, the County Board requested that the Office of Sustainability, Department of Administrative Services (DAS) develop criteria to evaluate the contribution of capital projects to Milwaukee County's carbon neutrality policy and strategic plan¹. In response, the Sustainability Director introduced the below 'Climate Action' component for possible inclusion in the capital criteria at the July 2023 Committee on Community, Environment and Economic Development meeting²:

Component	Impact
Climate Action	5 – Reduces county emissions & provides three or more co-benefits.
	4 – Reduces county emissions & provides two co-benefits.
	3 – Reduces county emissions & provides one co-benefit.
	2 – Reduces county emissions but does not provide co-benefits.
	1 – Does not reduce county emissions but provides at least one co-benefit.
	0 – Neither reduces county emissions nor provides co-benefits.

¹ See [File No. 23-485](#)

² See [File No. 23-697](#)

Definitions:

- 'County emissions' means greenhouse gas emissions generated by Milwaukee County government operations.
- 'Co-benefits' are beneficial outcomes from the County's climate actions that are not directly related to reducing emissions. Research suggests that local governments that track and report co-benefits have more successful climate action programs³.

The final Climate Action 2050 Plan, due to the County Board by June 2024, will provide a detailed list of potential co-benefits from Milwaukee County's climate actions. Based on the guiding principles of the plan (see the [Climate Action 2050 Framework](#)), however, possible co-benefits of climate actions could include:

1. Community Engagement: Increases or improves community engagement with county government.
2. Economic Inclusion: Exceeds county, state, or federal standards for TBE/DBE participation.
3. Public Health: Improves the health or wellbeing of county residents.
4. Model Government: Improves the efficiency or effectiveness of county government.
5. Workforce Development: Provides education, training and/or job opportunities for county residents.
6. Climate Resiliency: Increases preparedness of the County and residents for extreme heating, flooding, or other climate hazards.

Table 1 provides hypothetical 'climate action' scores for four sample Milwaukee County capital projects in the opinion of the Sustainability Director. Note: project descriptions and scores have been updated since presentation to the CEED committee in July 2023.

- **Project WP0760** will haul in and grade out sand at McKinley Beach. Additional work includes a berm and installing new beach safety signage. The project will help improve swim safety and water quality (public health) while increasing the beach's resiliency to climate change. The DBE participation goal is 25 percent, the County's standard for design and construction.
- **Project WY062502** will develop the Climate Action 2050 Plan for county operations. The project provides a roadmap for future climate actions, but it will not directly reduce county emissions, improve climate resiliency, or provide education, training, or job opportunities. The project will emphasize community engagement throughout and will assess the vulnerability of the County and residents to climate change, improving the efficiency/effectiveness of county.

³ Carbon Disclosure Project. (2020). The Co-Benefits of Climate Action: Accelerating City-Level Ambition. Accessed 8/13/21 from <https://www.cdp.net/en/research/global-reports/co-benefits-climate-action>.

- **Project WJ0112** will replace the roof of the Community Reintegration Center Administration Building. The project will reduce building energy use for this building, thereby reducing county emissions and improving the efficiency/effectiveness of county government. The DBE participation goal is 25 percent, the County’s standard for design and construction.
- **Project WY062506** will upgrade lighting in up to 12 county buildings while providing training and job opportunities for local youth apprentices. The project will reduce building energy use across several departments, thereby reducing county emissions and improving the efficiency/effectiveness of county government. Additionally, the project will create career pathways in the skilled trades for area youth – thus contributing to workforce development. The DBE participation goal is 25 percent, the County’s standard for design and construction.

Table 1: Hypothetical ‘Climate Action’ Scores for Sample Capital Projects (Updated)

Project	Emissions Reduction	Community Engagement	Economic Inclusion	Public Health	Model Government	Workforce Development	Climate Resiliency	Climate Action Score
WP0760 – McKinley Beach Safety Improvements	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	1
WY062502 - Climate Action 2050 Plan	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	1
WJ0112 - HOC Admin Building Roof Replacement	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	3
WY062506 - Lighting Jobs Program	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	4

The Office of Sustainability, Department of Administrative Services respectfully offers the ‘Climate Action’ component for possible inclusion in Milwaukee County’s 2025 capital project scoring criteria.

Gordie Bennett

Gordie Bennett, Sustainability Director
 Office of Sustainability, Department of Administrative Services

cc: David Crowley, Milwaukee County Executive
Marcelia Nicholson, Chair, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services
Joe Lamers, Director, Department of Strategy, Performance, and Budget
Paula Phillips, Interim Director, Office of Equity
Lamont Robinson, Director, Office of Economic Inclusion
Stephen Cady, Research & Policy Director, Office of the Comptroller
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk