

MAYOR CAVALIER JOHNSON

Economic Prosperity
A Vision for Milwaukee

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INTRODUCTION

My vision for the future of Milwaukee is aspirational, but it is also strategic. We will be a thriving and prosperous city with plentiful family-supporting jobs, and all of our residents, regardless of ethnic background or economic status, will live in safe and healthy neighborhoods. Our population will grow, our residents will have greater economic mobility, and our employers will flourish and give back to our community. Our youth and families of color will not face the same disparities I faced and will have equal opportunity to share in our community's success.

This is not the Milwaukee of today, but it is one we can aspire to create. I am committed to leading the city in this direction with the benefit of many assets to build upon. We can be strategic about our future investments and policies and we can be visionary in imagining a better tomorrow. It will take hard work and perseverance, but who better to take this on than a city known for its Midwest work ethic?

As Mayor, I am someone who beat the odds to get to where I am today. But, there aren't enough kids who look like me and who grew up in the neighborhoods I grew up in, who have hope and opportunity for the future. To make this vision possible, we need to ensure that we direct our focus on opportunities for those who face the toughest barriers to success, to ensure that we move everyone towards greater economic mobility and investment.

You don't have economic mobility if you don't feel safe, which is why we are ensuring that safety and development go hand-in-hand. Safer neighborhoods promote development, and development promotes safer neighborhoods through family-supporting jobs.

I am pushing hard for economic investment that is extended into neighborhoods where employment and incomes have lagged. I embrace socially and environmentally sustainable development that enhances the treasure of our diversity and our natural environment. And, since our people are our most important resource, we are developing, growing, and attracting new talent instead of outsourcing it.

In this future I envision, we will have one million residents and many more peaks to our skyline. Neighborhoods across the city will have robust commercial corridors filled with small business owners, providing direct opportunity for employment and shopping right in our own neighborhoods. Our residents will have access to economic mobility, enjoy our natural resources, and experience our cultural and entertainment assets. We will be known as one of the "most livable" cities in the nation, and leaders across the country will aspire to be more like Milwaukee.

Within this plan, I lay out my three-part strategy to **grow Milwaukee's economic prosperity and create family-supporting jobs for residents** by:

1. Creating **economic mobility for all** by reducing barriers to advancement, enhancing connections to educational and skill-building opportunities, and enabling intergenerational wealth
2. Using **public infrastructure investments to stimulate job creation** in a way that will foster safer, healthier neighborhood environments
3. **Attracting and growing new economic investment** that will result in more locally headquartered companies, more real estate development, and a stronger tax base

This strategy is grounded in the following **principles** to guide my decision-making, policies, and investments while Mayor:

- **Equity-centered**, so that employers, city leaders, and our partners take on racial disparities in employment and economic opportunity together
- **Worker-focused**, understanding the needs of residents looking for more, better, or new work while raising families, caring for loved ones, and keeping food on the table
- **Employer-engaged**, to make sure high-demand jobs get filled and companies know how to find and grow their future workforce
- **Growth-minded**, to ensure people and business want to locate here and be part of our success

ECONOMIC MOBILITY STRATEGY

Commit to creating **economic mobility for all** residents by reducing barriers to advancement, forging connections to educational and skill-building opportunities, and enabling intergenerational wealth. Providing pathways to greater and higher earning employment will boost the City's recovery from the pandemic and lay the groundwork for future growth.

1. Work with Employ Milwaukee and the State of Wisconsin to build new apprenticeship and training programs for high-growth, high-wage jobs. Support apprenticeship programming for the trades, including in our Department of Public Works and fortifying youth access to information on careers in the trades.
2. Convene labor leaders, industry partners, and training providers to turn City funded projects into permanent work in construction and trades for Milwaukee residents.
3. Increase the number of certified Small Business Enterprise firms in Milwaukee to ensure City funded projects generate returns and work for Milwaukee businesses.
4. Ensure the City's Small Business Enterprise and Resident Preference Program, along with other incentives for Milwaukee businesses, are well-promoted and high-performing.
5. Champion transitional job placements and partnerships with employers facing labor shortages. Fund programs and partnerships to make job connections for city residents, including with City departments and contractors and new and growing sectors like logistics, IT and hospitality.
6. Implement American Rescue Plan (ARP) funded partnerships with MPS, MATC, and early childhood providers to bring a new generation of community-connected and credentialed teachers into early childhood. Work with partners to fortify a career advancement pipeline for early childhood professionals.
7. Implement policies that will increase equity through the use of race-and-gender diverse contractors and vendors.
8. Support the rebound of our hospitality and service sector employees by convening employers around the benefits of providing \$15 an hour wages and childcare for employees. Extend this effort to other sectors like security and janitorial services. This includes supporting resources across the career pipelines to keep women and people of color in the workforce as we recover from the impact of COVID-19 on working families.
9. Explore creating a responsible bidder ordinance to establish shared community standards for public projects to ensure high-quality and financially responsible work.

10. Support efforts to provide training, upskilling, and reskilling to keep residents' skills current in today's labor market.
11. Utilize Employ Milwaukee's labor council to be nimble in responding to labor shortages and connect residents with opportunities to be trained and recruited by local employers. For instance, support programming such as:
 - a. Upskilling for service sector and hospitality workers
 - b. Bankworks program to support financial industry career training
 - c. Advance Aurora health care partnership to provide medical assistant training
 - d. Industry-led partnerships such as, expanding the Fresh Coast Tech Hub to include cyber security
 - e. Digital literacy labs
 - f. Future programs to support the needs of Afghan refugees
12. Expand the impact of the City's Earn and Learn summer youth enrichment program by increasing connections to 21st century job experiences. Expand the educational component of the program to support financial literacy and entrepreneurship.
13. Fortify connections between families and educational attainment as a path to economic mobility. This includes connecting unemployed city residents to higher education, expanding dual enrollment in high school for a wider scope of youth, and bridging college to employment. This includes supporting efforts like the moon-shot initiative to bridge the equity gap in college completion and encouraging FAFSA utilization.
14. Support equity in STEM and tech through bootcamps, micro-credentials, and bite-sized learning to stack towards a degree. Support efforts to upskill our workforce in tech through on the job experiential learning.
15. Provide opportunities for youth to flourish in their future careers. The Mayor's role in education is affecting the environment around the school. What youth in our city experience before, after, and around the classroom affects their learning no matter which school they attend.
 - a. Work with companies and schools to increase connections to technology in the classroom
 - b. Collaborate with community organizations and government partners to ensure affordable, reliable, and high-speed internet is accessible to every student and family in Milwaukee.
 - c. Partner with organizations like the Boys and Girls Club and Employ Milwaukee to ensure more connections to career opportunities for our youth.
16. Support models like Daily Table in Massachusetts to provide family supporting jobs that provide fresh food into our neighborhoods and bring opportunities to justice involved community members.

17. Support the Common Council office of workforce development in reaching underserved and underemployed populations through job fairs and digital communication.
18. Increase opportunities to reach residents by bringing partners together to raise awareness of economic mobility opportunities including apprenticeship programs, upskilling, and re-skilling initiatives and how to get involved with City projects.
19. Support programs which increase connections between residents of color and women and City employment such as the Appraiser Diversity Initiative with Employ Milwaukee and MKE United through MATC.
20. Join the next cohort of the Milwaukee Anchor Collaborative to increase collective hiring and purchasing from our most disadvantaged zip codes.
21. Partner with the Community Development Alliance to ensure that affordable and dignified housing is available to everyone. This includes connecting more residents of color to accessible pathways to home ownership and the economic stability and wealth generation that home ownership brings.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Commit to using **public infrastructure investments to stimulate job creation** in a way that fosters safer, healthier neighborhood environments. Leverage public investments to connect city residents and contractors to family supporting jobs and build wealth inside the city.

1. Ensure that projects funded by recent federal investments stay in the pockets of city residents by helping local contractors scale up and get connected to City infrastructure projects.
2. Expand programs to increase knowledge of and connection to City infrastructure careers.
3. Be a leader in green jobs that support resiliency and sustainability for the betterment of our climate and natural resources. For instance, the City is seeking grant funding to create a Green Jobs accelerator in water and energy that will put people to work on projects like the installation of solar panels.
4. Ensure strategic implementation of ARP investments in infrastructure, economic mobility, and economic attraction including:
 - a. Attracting cutting edge and environmentally friendly offsite construction housing manufacturers to locate within the city and support affordable home ownership
 - b. Implementation of the Skillful Transitions program through Employ Milwaukee to connect underserved populations to career pathways in construction, hospitality, health care, financial services, manufacturing, information technology, and transportation/logistics industries
 - c. Training for workers and companies in order to scale up to meet the need of City investments in lead remediation
 - d. Implementation of the workforce component of the Big Clean allocation to address illegal dumping and neighborhood beautification
 - e. Housing stability
 - i. Maximize in-rem housing rehabilitation investments to build wealth for local companies and workers
 - ii. Ensure energy efficiency upgrades to homes are connected to green jobs pipelines for local contractors and workers
5. Evaluate City zoning codes to support higher density development and economic growth.
6. Support continued use of tax increment financing in neighborhoods by investing in public spaces in addition to complete streets to address reckless driving and ensure transit, cyclist, and pedestrian safety and usability to get people to work efficiently, safely, and affordably.

7. Invest in commercial corridors by partnering with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NIDs)
 - a. Launch a pilot program to fund initiatives led by BIDs in Milwaukee neighborhoods
 - b. Provide increased opportunities for infrastructure improvements to attract investment through enhancements to the built environment including improved pedestrian access
 - c. Support Associates in Commercial Real Estate (ACRE) alumni to redevelop tax-foreclosed commercial property purchased from the City
 - d. Partner to support public safety interventions within our BIDs and NIDs such as adding additional security and surveillance cameras and traffic calming measures
 - e. Support programs within the Department of City Development which take an innovative approach towards connecting business owners with city-owned properties along commercial corridors to reduce blight and support entrepreneurship

8. Implement strategies from the forthcoming Public Plaza Feasibility study being conducted by the Department of City Development. This ensures that more neighborhoods have access to quality public spaces for gathering and culturally-relevant programming.

ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY

Commit to **attracting and growing new economic investment** that will result in more locally headquartered companies, more real estate development, and a stronger tax base. Grow jobs by supporting legacy companies in drawing supply chain operations inside the city and grow companies by encouraging the city's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

1. Be proactive in attracting corporate relocations with a focus on getting to yes. Rightsizing the incentives to companies to match the corresponding benefits to city residents. Ensure companies who want city incentives have strong corporate social responsibility policies such as: paying \$15/hour, joining the MMAC's Region of Choice initiative, and giving back to the community.
2. Support recommendations out of my remote worker plan. We need to work to draw people here who work remotely and encourage local companies to keep remote employees in the region. The City also needs to lead by example by continuing remote work options for employees and supporting remote working spaces.
3. Encourage the local venture community to draw start-ups here to create more opportunities for companies and employees to grow in Milwaukee.
4. Foster local entrepreneurship with a focus on the tech sector and getting more underrepresented populations involved including women, people of color, and veterans.
5. Engage with M7 in a new long range regional economic development roadmap with partners.
6. Support affordable housing projects downtown to bring workers closer to job opportunities and increase intergenerational career exposure while connecting employers to the diverse workforce they need to be successful.
7. Support small businesses as a critical pipeline for economic success including:
 - a. Incubator opportunities
 - b. Exploring ways to connect businesses with access to capital or debt reduction
 - c. Exploring ways to connect businesses with back office and administrative support
 - d. Analyzing long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and how to best support small businesses moving forward
8. Convene partners in creating an environment that provides more residents with the opportunity to launch successful start-ups.
 - a. Launch a Mayor's start-up competition
 - b. Provide increased opportunities to convene investors with business owners

- c. Promote streamlined access to resources for business owners to scale and promote their company
 - d. Making connections to access capital for underrepresented groups, including from the venture investment community
- 9. Convene developers and other stakeholders to discuss how to streamline City permitting processes for commercial and residential projects and boost development throughout the community.
- 10. Fortify a talent pipeline of new manufacturing and tech workers to attract corporate relocation. This includes supporting connections in STEM for middle and high schoolers and translating those experiences into college and career opportunities.
- 11. Attract and create jobs that include everything from entry-level positions in sectors short on workforce to those requiring more advanced skills. Ensuring multiple pathways to enter the workforce creates more launching pads to future careers.
- 12. Work with existing anchor institutions to attract their suppliers to locate within the city.
- 13. Embrace clean energy technologies to capitalize in federal investment opportunities and address climate change. Elevate Milwaukee's status as a climate haven attracting future investment that is durable to climate change.

This is just the beginning. I look forward to working with a broad coalition of residents and stakeholders to implement and continue this work. Please contact k.kenney@milwaukee.gov to get involved.