

Supporting Local Governments to Act on Climate Change

Actions State of Wisconsin agencies could take to support local governments' climate goals



Prepared by City of Milwaukee Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO) April 27, 2020

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION ACTIONS & PUBLIC UTILITIES

- Wisconsin's Office of Energy Innovation (OEI) should release additional funding to local governments through the Energy Innovation Grant Program (EIGP).
- Clarify that solar installers that provide customer financing for rooftop solar are not "public utilities," thus ensuring that utilities connect third-party financed systems to the grid.
- Require electric and gas utilities to annually issue [community energy reports](#), like Xcel energy does.
- Allow utilities to invest in electric vehicle charging infrastructure as part of their rate base.
- Set solar net metering rates equal to the retail rate of electricity and allow for net metering on properties up to 1 MW
- Require Wisconsin electric utilities to develop plans to phase out all coal-fired power plants by 2040, and retire WEPCO's South Oak Creek power plant (units 5-8) by 2023.
- Require utilities to invest in energy efficiency by requiring them to offer "[on-bill financing](#)."
- Help utilities meet customer demand by requiring them to offer [community solar](#) options.
- Allow "[master-metering](#)" so that a single solar array can support multiple tenants of a multi-family building, even if the individual units separately pay their own energy bill.

BUILDINGS

- Strengthen Wisconsin's Commercial Building Energy Code (SPS 363), by specifically removing provisions that water-down full adoption of the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code. For example, SPS 363.0403(9) eliminates the requirement to commission HVAC systems, even though [commissioning ensures the building will operate as designed](#). Alternatively, the State could allow municipalities to adopt a stronger "[stretch code](#)" for energy.
- WHEDA should develop a new Net-Zero Energy home financing program to advance net-zero energy infrastructure (including HVAC, lighting, building envelope) for new construction and gut-rehabs in low-income neighborhoods. ECO will provide a more detailed proposal.
- Establish a "[Green Bank](#)", perhaps through the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands or WEDC, structured to provide financing to local governments *without contributing to their municipal debt limit*.
- Ensure Wisconsin's technical colleges have programs in renewable energy, weatherization, and HVAC and take proactive steps to make these programs accessible to people of color.

TRANSPORTATION

- Provide balanced transportation funding from the WisDOT. In particular:
 - ✓ Transportation plans and funding should be designed to support and increase population density, rather than fueling new ex-urban development. Example: [SEWRPC's Vision 2050](#).
 - ✓ Increase funding for multi-modal freight networks and public transit