
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

June 15, 2021

Ald. Cavalier Johnson
(414) 286-3777

Millennial Task Force report received and has first recommendation approved

The wide ranging report and recommendations of the **Millennial Task Force** were today accepted and placed on file by the full Common Council, which also approved a recommendation to attract remote workers to Milwaukee, a move supported by the task force.

Created by the Common Council to investigate the issue of “Brain Drain” in Milwaukee, the Millennial Task Force was charged with specifically assessing the major reasons Millennials choose to leave or stay in Milwaukee after college. It was also charged with analyzing programs and policies designed to attract and retain talented, young individuals and make recommendations to the Common Council regarding potential legislative changes and other measures needed to address the Brain Drain problem.

Today the task force’s full report and recommendations were accepted by the Council, and **Alderman Cavalier Johnson**, the primary sponsor of the legislation creating the task force (Common Council file #191180), said he was grateful for his colleagues’ support for what is the task force’s first related action item to come before the Council – file #210236 – a resolution directing the Department of City Development to collaborate on a report outlining strategies and partnerships to encourage remote workers to relocate to Milwaukee.

“With so many highly talented and skilled workers able to work remotely and not be tied to a commute and a physical office, we need to be bolder in finding ways of reaching out to these Millennials so they can see the great amenities and opportunities Milwaukee has to offer,” Alderman Johnson said. “I am grateful to my colleagues in agreeing with this important effort and in unanimously adopting file #210236 today.”

File #210236 was authored by Alderman Johnson and co-sponsored by **Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs** and **Alderman José G. Pérez**.

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Millennial Task Force/ADD ONE

Marquayla Ellison, the chair of the Millennial Task Force, said she was pleased to see immediate action coming from the Council on a task force item.

“I’m excited about the focus on attracting remote workers,” said Ms. Ellison, a business owner and graphic design professional. “With so many affordable Milwaukee amenities to make people aware of, this (Council) action can help us infuse Milwaukee with more talent that we may not otherwise get to see.”

A 2019 report by the Office of Workforce Development showed Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin struggling to attract and retain young, educated workers. The number of 25- to 34-year olds living in Milwaukee decreased by 1.8% between 2010 and 2015 while that age group increased by 3.8% nationwide. Additionally, between 2010 and 2014, approximately 9% of 25- to 29-year olds moved out of Wisconsin, exceeding the respective national out-migration rate of 7%.

Please go to milwaukee.gov/mtf to see the full report and recommendations and to view information on each task force member.

The Millennial Task Force’s report and recommendations called for the following in specific topic areas:

Infrastructure and Transportation

- Commit to modern, multi-modal transportation, equitable development, and Vision Zero, and join NACTO.
- Create a modern transportation agency; reorganize Department of Public Works (DPW) Infrastructure Division to address equity, climate change, safety, economic development, mobility, etc.
- Develop a sustainable infrastructure funding source that would generate local revenue for transportation.
- Eliminate jaywalking as an offense in the city.
- Develop an ambitious pedestrian road map that converts one street or alley in each neighborhood to a pedestrian plaza or public space.

Employment and Economic Development

- Develop a ‘Milwaukee Residency Program’ with immersive programs and experiences for startups.
- Create an Opportunity Zone Fund and/or a Revolving Loan Fund for Community Development.

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Millennial Task Force/ADD TWO

- Formalize a resident-first planning process to protect neighborhoods at risk of displacement.
- Create Department of Transformation to act as “modern-day suggestion box” for improving public services.
- Establish a department, task force, or program devoted to attracting and retaining talented people.
- Create Talent Investment Districts to collect and allocate funds towards attracting talented individuals. Talent Investment Districts would be funded through assessing additional fees on surface parking lots, which offer little value to Milwaukee.
- Increase funding for the Direct Connect MKE program. Support a comprehensive print and digital media campaign to reach young people living in Milwaukee’s ZIP codes with the highest unemployment rates.
- Explore a Universal Basic Income (UBI) program.
- Establish a social entrepreneurship fund whereby the City provides funding, mentorship, and other resources to social entrepreneurs. The City should outline specific challenges facing Milwaukee and then select applicants who propose one-year action plans to combat targeted problems.
- Assist and expand startups, apprenticeships, and internships.
- Expand economic development tools such as Business Improvement Districts (BID) and Tax Incremental Financing (TIF).

Racial and Criminal Justice

- Implement anti-racism solutions.
- Increase tax levy support for the Department of Administration’s Office of African American Affairs (OAAA) from \$190,850 to \$240,850, connect it with the Health Department, and coordinate with the County’s OAAA office.
- Provide an update on the draft assessment report recommendations from the Milwaukee Collaborative Reform Initiative, tasked with addressing racial and criminal justice issues.
- Modify police training. Implement OVP’s Blueprint for Peace and the Wisconsin Policy Forum’s policing reform recommendations in police training.
- Expand emotional intelligence and cultural competency assessments to all City employees. Incentivize first-time home buying in Black and Brown neighborhoods.

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Millennial Task Force/ADD THREE

Health and Wellness

- Address the major impacts COVID-19 has had on the Black and Brown community.
- Recommend Council-sponsored report analyzing the supply of neighborhood amenities within each Common Council district, and average distances between residents' homes and these essential locations.
- Increase tax levy support of the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) from \$2,142,625 to \$2,442,625, annually review and advocate for the goals and strategies in the Blueprint for Peace, and balance violence prevention investment with the Milwaukee Police Department's (MPD) budget.
- Ensure that state and federal lobbying prioritizes advancing violence prevention policies and investment.
- Treat victims of domestic and intimate partner violence with dignity and protect their rights through increased engagement and investment.
- Eliminate death and injury caused by police violence.
- Prioritize gun violence prevention.
- Create free mental health introductory consultation or counseling services for all Milwaukee residents.

Education

- Incentivize young people to stay in Milwaukee for college through scholarships and discounted tuition.
- Expose young people to non-traditional career pathways available in Milwaukee, such as apprenticeships and jobs that don't require college degrees.
- Improve the college experience, implement curriculums to teach students about Milwaukee job possibilities, and expose them to the city.
- Elevate the City's Earn and Learn program.

Marketing and Storytelling

- Create a central storytelling hub within City government to help promote a positive narrative and to reach a large audience through program marketing.
- Work with and encourage outside organizations to develop a positive narrative for Milwaukee and to increase public awareness of opportunities and assets in the city.

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Millennial Task Force/ADD FOUR

- Improve City government's "company culture." Expand File Number 191461, which directs the Employee Relations Director to implement a plan for conducting regular "stay interviews" with City employees.

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