

# Vibrant, Green Economy

A vibrant local economy means good jobs, thriving businesses, and resilient community assets for all Madisonians. Advancing sustainability and climate action presents tremendous opportunities for economic growth, job creation, and prosperity. Growing Madison's green economy means increasing the ability of both public entities like the City of Madison and private businesses to provide and use goods, services, and practices that reduce our impact on the environment and grow our resilience to climate change.





Work in the green economy could include moving to clean energy, innovating to make less waste and pollution, supporting healthy ecosystems, and building climate-friendly transportation and other infrastructure. As one of the largest public entities in the region, the City of Madison uses its purchasing power to drive demand for sustainable products and services. The City is intentional in the ways it spends its money. It buys environmentally-friendly products and services in our community to increase their availability and provides an example that other public entities and businesses can follow. For example, the City is among the first in the state to allow the use of low-carbon concrete in construction of public sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. Switching to this new, climate-friendly material helps us reduce the amount of carbon our construction generates while also helping grow the market for an innovative, more sustainable product.

The City also supports green jobs and business development in several ways. The City's [Engineering, Forestry](#), and [Parks Divisions](#) support training opportunities for green jobs through internship programs, like the [GreenPower Program](#), and partnerships with local workforce development organizations like Operation Fresh Start.

The City's [Office of Business Resources](#) helps businesses open and grow within Madison. Resources for businesses include financial and technical assistance programs, help navigating permitting processes, and assistance finding the right-sized space. The Office of Business resources' [Building Improvement Grant](#) provides funding to help businesses cover the cost of renovating the interior and exterior of retail spaces, including sustainability upgrades.

The following goals and actions focus on growing Madison’s green economy by driving the market for sustainable goods and services, supporting local businesses, and developing green jobs.

## GreenPower Program

The City of Madison is supporting the next generation of solar panel installers and electricians through its [GreenPower Program](#). The program prepares people for jobs in the solar energy and electrical industries while also increasing the City’s generation of renewable energy and decreasing its carbon footprint. The City hires trainees to work alongside Engineering Division Electricians every year. They install solar systems and make energy efficiency upgrades at City facilities. Over the course of the program, the trainees receive classroom and hands-on experience installing equipment. Between 2016 and 2024, 48 solar installations were completed by GreenPower trainees. 1.6 MW is enough energy to power approximately 240 homes.



## Vibrant, Green Economy | Goals & Actions

<b>GOAL 20</b>	<b>Leverage City purchasing power to support products and services that reduce the City’s impact on the environment and support a circular economy.</b>
<b>METRICS</b>	New standards and practices developed
<b>ACTION 20.1</b>	Develop and implement new green contracting, procurement, and purchasing standards and practices.
<b>GOAL 21</b>	<b>Support environmentally-sustainable private business growth, operations, and practices.</b>
<b>METRICS</b>	Number of City and partner programs Number of people served per program
<b>ACTION 21.1</b>	Continue to support local organizations that help businesses adopt environmentally-sustainable and climate-resilient business practices, especially Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses.
<b>ACTION 21.2</b>	Integrate sustainability and climate resilience information and resources into existing City programs that support local businesses.



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<b>GOAL 22</b>	<b>Leverage City financing tools and structural incentives to advance environmentally-sustainable and climate-resilient buildings, business development, and investments in the community.</b>
<b>METRICS</b>	Number of projects impacted and dollars leveraged
<b>ACTION 22.1</b>	Research creation of a Green Zone(s) within the City, where the City will prioritize investments to accomplish a set of sustainability, climate, or environmental justice priorities defined in collaboration with the community.
<b>ACTION 22.2</b>	Use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to incentivize climate-friendly development projects that include net zero buildings and natural climate solutions.
<b>GOAL 23</b>	<b>Work with partners to attract and support the development of new businesses focused on green and climate-friendly services or products, especially Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses.</b>
<b>METRICS</b>	Number of City and partner programs Number of people served per program
<b>ACTION 23.1</b>	Provide support and services to grow businesses, help develop new market channels, improve access to affordable production spaces, and enhance retail and sales opportunities.
<b>ACTION 23.2</b>	Support and encourage minority business ownership in trades and industries that focus on green and climate-friendly services and products.

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<p><b>GOAL 24</b></p>	<p><b>Develop a green workforce and create equitable access to green jobs with a living wage.</b></p>
<p><b>METRICS</b></p>	<p>Number of City and partner programs Number of people served per program</p>
<p><b>ACTION 24.1</b></p>	<p>Support training opportunities and apprenticeships in the trades and other in-demand careers related to renewable energy, energy efficiency, building retrofits, climate change adaptation, natural habitat management and restoration, and other sustainability-oriented careers.</p>
<p><b>ACTION 24.2</b></p>	<p>Continue to partner with local educational institutions and employment-focused organizations to connect individuals with green job opportunities.</p>
<p><b>ACTION 24.3</b></p>	<p>Partner with private industry, local business organizations, local trade unions, and other relevant entities to create and grow a green jobs pipeline within the community.</p>
<p><b>ACTION 24.4</b></p>	<p>Design and implement collaborative work-study programs at Olbrich Botanical Gardens for high school students, along with internships and professional certification programs in horticulture, landscape maintenance, construction and natural resource management, ecology, and habitat restoration.</p>

