



## PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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### **U.S. Green Building Council Announces the City of Middleton Will Join the 2020 LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for Cities and Communities Grant Program**

*Program Addresses Climate Change, Resilience and Social Equity Challenges through LEED with Support from Bank of America*

CITY OF MIDDLETON – (February 28, 2020) – The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), creators of the LEED green building rating system, announced that the City of Middleton is among 20 new cities (the first in Wisconsin) and counties selected to participate in the 2020 LEED for Cities and Communities Grant Program. This program helps committed local governments accelerate progress on climate change, resilience and social equity planning, measure and track performance using LEED.

This grant was written jointly by the City of Middleton and Dane County, and the City will be working in partnership with Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change staff on this certification, to blaze a trail for certification and performance measures that can be pioneered to guide other Dane County communities seeking certification.

“Dane County is excited to partner with the City of Middleton on this grant,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. “Middleton’s commitment to pursue LEED certification is a great example of what our community can achieve as we work to address climate change and increase prosperity. We are proud that Middleton will be the first Wisconsin community to achieve LEED for cities, and we look forward to what the future holds.”

“We are delighted to partner with Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change as we seek certification. Working in tandem we can scale up our efforts on climate change, resiliency, and quality of life county-wide,” said Middleton Mayor Gurdip Brar. “LEED certification helps demonstrate a city’s commitment to sustainability. It not only helps benchmark a city’s current performance, but it communicates to residents, visitors, and business owners our progress and priorities and enables continuous improvement for a higher quality of life in our city.”

Middleton has been a state and local leader in sustainability over the past decade. Middleton was the first city in the nation to hold an advisory referendum asking residents if they support a carbon fee and dividend proposal. A resounding 72% responded “Yes.” The City also passed a resolution in 2018 that sets city and community-wide 100% renewable energy goals by 2040 and 2050 respectively. After installing three new solar arrays on municipal buildings this year and once Madison Gas and Electric’s new shared solar array is energized at the Middleton Municipal Airport this fall, the City will meet 50% of its electricity needs using renewable energy. Kelly Hilyard, Middleton’s sustainability coordinator, wants to take this momentum community-wide and also expand sustainability beyond climate change and recycling efforts.

“I am excited about LEED’s attention to quality of life issues. It’s important that sustainability initiatives and benefits don’t leave anyone behind in our community. The metrics we collect for this certification will present a public facing snapshot of where we stand on equity, empowerment, civic engagement, public health, education, and housing affordability. Certification is a starting point. LEED provides ongoing support and technical assistance to help us improve our City’s social, ecological, and economic performance in quantifiable and equitable ways. Building community relationships and empowering neighborhoods and residents is the key to a more sustainable Middleton.”

LEED is the most widely used green building rating system in the world and is now being used by cities and communities to hone metrics around sustainability initiatives; benchmark performance relative to peers; and communicate and partner with stakeholders. LEED provides planners, developers and local governments a framework to address energy, water, waste, pollution and carbon, and takes into account social and economic indicators including health, equity, education and prosperity.

“Local governments see the on-the-ground effects of a changing climate and how it impacts people, businesses and communities. They also understand that taking action can lead to a stronger economy and better quality of life for their residents,” said [Mahesh Ramanujam](#), president and CEO, USGBC. “More than 160 cities and communities around the world are participating in LEED for Cities and Communities outside of the grant program and thanks to our partners at Bank of America, we are able to welcome even more into the LEED family.”

Since 2018, Bank of America has provided \$1.25 million in grant funding to the LEED for Cities and Communities program, supporting a total of 41 cities and counties to date. The company’s [2019 grant](#) helped 15 cities and its [2018 grant](#) supported six cities and communities. The 20 cities and counties selected for the 2020 program represent more than 10 million Americans in urban and rural communities around the country and include:

- Abington Township, PA
- Charlotte, NC
- Cleveland, OH
- Costa Mesa, CA
- Fayetteville, AR
- Johnson County, KS
- Kane County, IL
- Louisville, KY
- Miami Beach, FL
- Miami-Dade County, FL
- Middleton, WI
- Nashua, NH
- Newark, NJ
- Northampton, MA
- Orange County, FL
- Orange County, NC
- Palm Beach County, FL
- Santa Monica, FL
- Sarasota, FL
- Tampa, FL

To learn more about Middleton’s sustainability goals and LEED for Cities and Communities certification progress visit the City’s Website [HERE](#) and follow the City of Middleton on Facebook [HERE](#).