



Mayors and Employment Growth in Milwaukee Since 1990

**A data snapshot prepared by the
UW-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development
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In the past three years, the UW-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development has published a series of reports on the jobs crisis facing the city of Milwaukee. These studies –*Stealth Depression* (2003), *After the Boom* (2004), and *The Economic State of Milwaukee's Inner City* (2006)—all documented the poor performance of the city's economy since 1990 in generating employment for city residents, and recommended fundamental shifts in local economic development policy. Similarly, a recent report by the Public Policy Forum, *Growing Up: Analysis of city of Milwaukee economic development efforts* (2006) criticized several aspects of current economic development practice in the city and also recommended policy changes.

As baseline data for public discussion of the need for policy alternatives in the city, the tables below provide comparative perspective on the city of Milwaukee's employment growth under Mayors John Norquist and Tom Barrett since 1990. The tables look at Milwaukee's employment performance from two angles, first comparing Milwaukee to the nation's fifty largest cities (according to the 2000 census), and second comparing Milwaukee to the twenty largest Northeast-Midwest "Frostbelt" cities (our "peer" group of cities). The data are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Local Area Unemployment Statistics*, which provides data on employment in cities.

During the mayoral tenure of John Norquist, Milwaukee ranked 47th among the nation's 50 largest cities in employment growth, and 15th among the 20 largest Frostbelt cities in employment growth.

During the mayoral tenure of Tom Barrett (so far), from April 2004 to September 2006 (the most recent data available), Milwaukee ranks 45th among the nation's 50 largest cities in employment growth, and 14th among the 20 largest Frostbelt cities in employment growth.

At a minimum, these dismal rankings should stimulate public debate about why Milwaukee's performance has lagged behind so many other cities, and encourage civic leaders to explore new and innovative approaches to produce employment growth in the city.



Employment Growth in the Fifty Largest Cities During the Norquist Administration

Rank	City	Employment-1990	Employment-2003	% change
1	Las Vegas	137,116	254,176	+85.37
2	Austin	256,013	375,424	+46.64
3	Mesa City (AZ)	143,959	212,107	+47.34
4	Colorado Springs	132,319	187,021	+41.34
5	Phoenix	510,853	698,063	+36.64
6	Charlotte	224,758	303,751	+35.15
7	San Antonio	408,040	537,565	+31.74
8	Fresno	150,319	190,882	+27.00
9	Tucson	186,048	233,581	+25.55
10	Omaha	173,301	210,627	+21.54
11	Portland	229,264	275,737	+20.27
12	Albuquerque	196,013	232,892	+18.81
13	Virginia Beach	177,210	210,388	+18.44
14	Fort Worth	217,338	257,342	+18.41
15	San Diego	531,258	621,233	+16.94
16	Denver	238,837	278,825	+16.74
17	Jacksonville	312,710	361,078	+15.47
18	Sacramento	166,289	192,059	+15.50
19	Columbus	336,824	383,661	+13.90
20	Oklahoma City	218,275	245,118	+12.30
21	Houston	836,745	938,612	+12.17
22	El Paso	206,102	227,226	+10.25
23	New York	3,104,302	3,413,467	+9.95
24	Seattle	288,789	317,460	+9.93
25	Wichita	155,980	169,275	+8.52
26	Nashville	265,366	287,453	+8.32
27	Oakland	166,137	178,272	+7.21
28	Minneapolis	198,037	211,412	+6.75
29	Long Beach	199,740	212,528	+6.40
30	Indianapolis	377,387	396,150	+4.97
31	Dallas	538,104	564,412	+4.89
32	Memphis	268,868	280,719	+4.41
33	Honolulu	401,256	416,308	+3.75
34	Atlanta	176,677	181,073	+2.49
35	San Francisco	394,065	403,177	+2.31
36	Tulsa	188,974	192,878	+2.07
37	Louisville	324,282	329,537	+1.62
38	Los Angeles	1,692,706	1,715,369	+1.34
39	Chicago	1,208,686	1,210,797	+0.84
40	Kansas City	218,631	219,516	+0.40
41	San Jose	413,900	404,378	-2.30
42	Boston	286,374	279,089	-2.54
43	Detroit	340,569	328,074	-3.67
44	Miami	152,798	144,075	-5.71
45	Cleveland	185,081	173,739	-6.13
46	St. Louis	165,620	150,435	-9.17
47	Milwaukee	279,586	252,032	-9.86
48	Philadelphia	655,742	579,615	-11.61
49	Washington, D.C.	311,838	275,614	-11.62
50	Baltimore	310,511	255,161	-17.83



**Employment Growth in the Twenty Largest Frostbelt Cities
 During the Norquist Administration**

Rank	City	Employment-1990	Employment-2003	% change
1	Omaha	173,301	210,627	+21.54
2	Columbus	336,824	383,661	+13.90
3	New York	3,104,302	3,413,467	+9.95
4	Wichita	155,980	169,275	+8.52
5	Minneapolis	198,037	211,412	+6.75
6	Indianapolis	377,387	396,150	+4.97
7	St. Paul (MN)	137,443	143,265	+4.24
8	Chicago	1,208,686	1,210,797	+0.84
9	Kansas City	218,631	219,516	+0.40
10	Boston	286,374	279,089	-2.54
11	Detroit	340,569	328,074	-3.67
12	Cleveland	185,081	173,739	-6.13
13	Pittsburgh	156,977	146,403	-6.74
14	St. Louis	165,620	150,435	-9.17
15	Milwaukee	279,586	252,032	-9.86
16	Cincinnati	164,168	146,852	-10.55
17	Philadelphia	655,742	579,615	-11.61
18	Washington, D.C.	311,838	275,614	-11.62
19	Buffalo	134,289	116,107	-13.54
20	Baltimore	310,511	255,161	-17.83



Employment Growth in the Fifty Largest Cities During the Barrett Administration

Rank	City	Employment-4/2004	Employment-9/2006	% change
1	Phoenix	718,118	795,561	+10.79
2	Mesa City (AZ)	218,201	241,732	+10.78
3	Jacksonville	360,362	397,194	+10.22
4	Fort Worth	261,530	287,791	+10.04
5	Nashville	284,467	309,428	+8.77
6	Colorado Springs	189,011	205,219	+8.58
7	Atlanta	178,838	193,896	+8.42
8	Memphis	274,653	296,959	+8.12
9	Denver	277,873	300,265	+8.06
10	Albuquerque	237,856	255,565	+7.45
11	San Antonio	545,315	584,816	+7.24
12	Charlotte	304,457	325,807	+7.01
13	Seattle	322,123	343,749	+6.71
14	Honolulu	420,259	447,051	+6.38
15	Miami	145,570	154,475	+6.12
16	Las Vegas	263,632	278,597	+5.68
17	El Paso	229,685	242,336	+5.51
18	Austin	382,123	402,437	+5.32
19	Tulsa	192,755	202,789	+5.21
20	Virginia Beach	211,719	222,601	+5.14
21	Chicago	1,209,858	1,271,887	+5.13
22	Baltimore	250,042	262,523	+4.99
23	Sacramento	193,149	202,630	+4.91
24	Long Beach	212,719	222,749	+4.72
25	Tucson	241,927	253,325	+4.71
26	Louisville	329,047	344,532	+4.71
27	Fresno	192,835	201,900	+4.70
28	Oklahoma City	248,476	259,578	+4.47
29	Portland	272,259	283,823	+4.25
30	Columbus	379,302	395,346	+4.23
31	New York	3,437,356	3,579,143	+4.13
32	Wichita	170,619	177,577	+4.08
33	Dallas	566,486	588,137	+3.82
34	Los Angeles	1,716,935	1,781,749	+3.79
35	Indianapolis	392,432	406,945	+3.70
36	Houston	943,195	974,798	+3.35
37	San Diego	627,983	648,561	+3.28
38	Oakland	175,968	181,532	+3.16
39	Philadelphia	574,177	589,136	+2.61
40	San Francisco	394,188	404,273	+2.56
41	Omaha	212,071	217,256	+2.45
42	San Jose	398,662	407,224	+2.15
43	St. Louis	146,552	149,449	+1.98
44	Minneapolis	209,300	213,124	+1.83
45	Milwaukee	247,682	251,894	+1.70
46	Kansas City	219,564	222,591	+1.38
47	Cleveland	176,933	178,938	+1.16
48	Boston	273,579	273,523	Unchanged
49	Washington, D.C.	273,428	271,074	-0.86
50	Detroit	324,054	319,487	-1.41



**Employment Growth in the Twenty Largest Frostbelt Cities
 During the Barrett Administration**

Rank	City	Employment-4/2004	Employment-9/2006	% change
1	Cincinnati	144,655	152,106	+5.15
2	Chicago	1,209,858	1,271,887	+5.13
3	Baltimore	250,042	262,523	+4.99
4	Columbus	379,302	395,346	+4.23
5	New York	3,437,356	3,579,143	+4.13
6	Wichita	170,619	177,577	+4.08
7	Indianapolis	392,432	406,945	+3.70
8	St. Paul (MN)	140,769	144,824	+2.88
9	Philadelphia	574,177	589,136	+2.61
10	Omaha	212,071	217,256	+2.45
11	Pittsburgh	145,073	148,013	+2.03
12	St. Louis	146,552	149,449	+1.98
13	Minneapolis	209,300	213,124	+1.83
14	Milwaukee	247,682	251,894	+1.70
15	Buffalo	114,657	116,584	+1.68
16	Kansas City	219,564	222,591	+1.38
17	Cleveland	176,933	178,938	+1.16
18	Boston	273,579	273,523	Unchanged
19	Washington, D.C.	273,428	271,074	-0.86
20	Detroit	324,054	319,487	-1.41