

Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive



December 8, 2010

Dear Citizens of Waukesha County:

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Waukesha County 2011 Adopted Budget celebrating Waukesha County's "History of Excellence." I am proud of this budget which provides for effective and efficient delivery of services while keeping our taxes low. This budget continues the history of excellence Waukesha County is known for while maintaining our position as a low tax leader.

The 2011 Budget continues our efforts to streamline the delivery of County services, makes public safety the top priority and effectively serves at-risk families and individuals. Additionally, this budget includes investments in our buildings, roads and technology infrastructures to improve their safety and functionality while preparing for continued economic growth and vitality for generations to come.

Waukesha County has a long "History of Excellence" when it comes to limiting taxes and spending. Based on analysis by the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, Waukesha County has the lowest per capita spending compared to all the other 71 counties in the state. I am proud to tell you that the 2011 Budget maintains this reputation of low taxes and spending while maintaining quality services by limiting our overall tax levy growth to 1.8 %.

We also continue to have the lowest county property tax rate in the State among counties that have not implemented a county-imposed sales tax. We are only one of ten counties not implementing the County sales tax option. When comparing our County to those with an enacted sales tax Waukesha County ranks 70th out of 72 counties in the State for the lowest tax rate. Additionally, we continue to be one of a select few county governments, out of more than 3,000 throughout the country, to hold the coveted AAA/Aaa bond rating status.

TAX IMPACT ON HOMEOWNERS

My administration continues to work in partnership with the County Board to limit spending and taxes. Despite a reduction in the overall County tax base, the County homeowner, with a median valued home at about \$260,700, will see an average tax increase of only 1.2%.

A commitment to maintaining stable, low taxes is again realized with this budget. One true measure of the County's property tax performance compares property tax control over time. Since being elected to serve as County Executive, residents have benefited from the County's ability to control taxes and spending. Since my first budget in 2006, the median home value has risen by approximately \$4,000, while the County portion of the tax bill on that home, has increased just \$10, which is about 0.4% per year.

TEAMWORK, COOPERATION & EFFICIENCIES

As the County continues to position itself for an even better future, a number of strategic partnerships and efficiencies are included in the 2011 budget. These partnerships enable us to leverage limited resources and reduce operational costs to taxpayers, while providing improved and more efficient services. The Airport is added as a division of the Department of Public Works to better utilize its resources.

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The Criminal Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC) is working with the judiciary, District Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Department to expand the use of the County's Day Report Center program with a goal of providing offenders the skills they need to improve themselves and prevent reoffending. This program expansion is funded with additional tax levy investment of \$83,000 to increase the average daily number of participants by 30%.

The Department of Public Works is working with the Department of Administration's purchasing division to contract out more housekeeping services at a net cost savings to taxpayers of over \$80,000 in 2011. Also, the departments are working together to identify better pricing and fine tuning various building maintenance service contracts which is expected to lower costs by an additional \$66,000. Additionally, the Register of Deeds (ROD) and Emergency Preparedness departments will engage in a cooperative pilot program to share a ROD position between the two departments. The position will provide the Department of Emergency Preparedness with professional fiscal support and may help avoid the creation of an additional position in the future.

BUDGET DRIVERS

This budget addresses several areas of declining revenue streams that the County must address while also funding the escalating operational costs of jail inmates which require over \$600,000 of tax the levy increase. Also, county highway and road maintenance costs, including snow removal, require about \$200,000 in new tax levy. Major revenue sources continue to be affected by the slower than expected economic recovery, historically low interest rates, difficulties in the real estate market recovery and the State budget deficit continues to have a significant negative impact on revenues in this budget. Some significant revenue reductions include:

- Investment income is reduced by \$430,000 due to historically low interest rates of return.
- Real Estate Transfer and Recording Fees are reduced by over \$100,000.
- Health and Human Services (HHS) WI Medicaid reporting funding is reduced \$75,000.
- HHS Alcohol and Drug Abuse funding block grant funds are reduced by about \$93,000.
- State Transportation Aids are decreased by nearly \$100,000.
- State highway maintenance revenues and related expenditures decline by over \$280,000.
- State Shared Revenues are reduced by \$50,000.

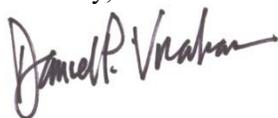
INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

The County has a legacy of prudent fiscal responsibility and this budget ensures our "History of Excellence" is sustained. The proposed 2011-2015 Capital Plan balances maintaining our important infrastructure and delivering critical services to ensure the County's economic viability and growth. The plan also includes a number of environmentally sustainable initiatives that improve our impact on the environment while saving significant ongoing costs. The plan includes five projects to address major County roadways, significant technology investments for public safety equipment upgrades, and an update to the County's 9-1-1 phone system. Also, a project is planned to migrate the existing radio technology from analog to full digital technology in 2014 at a cost estimated at \$9.5 million with funding contributions from municipal partners.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are ensuring the County's "History of Excellence" is sustainable for the future by focusing on our core service priorities, establishing strategic collaborative partnerships and using teamwork to continue implementing business efficiencies to achieve ongoing cost-savings. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Waukesha County's devoted employees, entrusted appointed representatives, and capable elected officials for their professionalism and dedication in helping me prepare this budget that continues our "History of Excellence" by delivering quality services and making investments for the future to ensure we maintain our low taxes.

Sincerely,



Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive