



December 14, 2012

Dear Citizens of Waukesha County:

It is my privilege to present the 2013 Adopted Budget that confirms Waukesha County's "Commitment to Excellence." It is that commitment that has distinguished Waukesha County as a leader in Wisconsin and the nation. This budget reaffirms this commitment by providing the outstanding services we are known for while respecting County taxpayers.

TAX IMPACT ON HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESSES

My administration diligently works in partnership with the County Board of Supervisors to limit property taxes on hard working families and job creating businesses. In the 2013 Budget, **a homeowner, with a median valued home estimated at \$243,200, will see a \$2 decrease on the County portion of their property tax bill.** Businesses in the County continue to benefit from Waukesha County having the lowest county property tax rate among counties without a county sales tax. I remain committed to maintaining our low tax rate for County residents and businesses.

COLLABORATION & COOPERATION

Waukesha County continues to be committed to excellence by working together with municipalities and other County governments to gain economies of scale and streamline government services while saving money. Over the past few years, these partnerships have saved local taxpayers over \$2.0 million. The collaborations include countywide emergency dispatch services, Sheriff's contracts for police patrols, Public Works highway projects and operations, Parks and Land Use services and others.

The 2013 budget includes several new areas where we will join forces with other governments to reduce taxes.

- Waukesha County Communication Center (WCC) will provide 9-1-1 emergency dispatching to the City of New Berlin, resulting in an estimated cost savings to City taxpayers of about \$900,000 a year.
- Radio Service operations are working with Milwaukee County representatives to address the digital Radio Upgrade project and work toward interoperable digital radio communications across county lines – a plan that would save both county's taxpayers money.
- Prompted by the state, Waukesha County Health and Human Services (HHS) has joined with four other counties (Fond du Lac, Ozaukee, Walworth and Washington) to form the Moraine Lakes Consortium. The Income Maintenance consortium will assist low-income families through Medicaid, BadgerCare, FoodShare, Child Care, and other programs. Participating counties are seeking efficiencies by sharing call center duties, document processing and client interviews. Staff is rotated and cross-trained in these areas to increase productivity.

BUDGET DRIVERS

Costs in certain key areas such as jail inmate medical costs, vehicle fuel prices, mental health and related prescription drug costs and workers compensation costs are increasing at rates greater than inflation. The slower than expected economic recovery, historically low interest rates and slow real estate market recovery continue to have a significant negative impact on revenue sources throughout this budget.

Several key revenue and expenditure highlights in the 2013 County budget are listed below:

- A \$200,000 cut in State youth aids funding to HHS for juvenile prevention, intervention and corrections programs. The state has cut this program by \$630,000 over three years.
- \$350,000 of additional tax levy is being used to fund the higher costs in the County jail.
- Emergency Preparedness expenditures increase by almost \$380,000. This includes the addition of 3.0 full-time dispatchers to support the consolidation of the City of New Berlin into WCC dispatch operations.
- State mental health placement costs for HHS adult and youth clients will increase by over \$300,000.
- Historically low interest rates have reduced investment income in the Treasurer's budget by \$280,000, bringing the 4 years total to \$2 million in income reductions.

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

The County has consistently demonstrated its prudent financial planning by making sound strategic investment decisions to maintain our critical infrastructure. After several years of funding major portions of large construction projects, the 2013 Capital Budget reduces capital spending by over \$12 million to \$27.9 million.

The Capital Budget devotes over \$9.0 million to key highway improvements including \$1.5 million for road surface repaving and intersection signal and safety improvements. Additional priority corridor projects totaling over \$6.0 million include the widening and reconstruction of CTH L (Janesville Road) in the City of Muskego, the reconstruction and expansion of CTH VV (Silver Spring Drive) in the Village of Menomonee Falls and additional planning and design for the Waukesha West Bypass project.

Facility investments include nearly \$10.3 million for the second year of construction on the County's \$35.2 million HHS building project, a \$7.8 million reduction from the 2012 adopted budget. Other building improvement priorities are budgeted at a total of over \$1.4 million. These projects include nearly \$950,000 in improvements at the County owned UW-Waukesha campus, energy efficiency improvements to provide more cost effective lighting upgrades and various additional projects.

Nearly \$4 million is provided for major Parks projects in the 2013 Budget. Paving the Bugline Bike Trail continues in 2013 with work totaling \$2.5 million, funded in part with \$1.9 million in Federal funds. Additional Parks' projects include design work for bridge replacements at Wanaki Golf Course, demolition of the abandoned Menomonee Park Maintenance Building and the replacement of the roof at the Eble Ice Arena.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The County remains committed to our standard of excellence by focusing on our core service priorities, establishing strategic partnerships and implementing efficiencies to streamline operations and 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 preparing and passing the 2013 Adopted Budget. I believe this budget strikes an important balance between funding the County's service needs and controlling taxes and spending.

Sincerely,



Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive