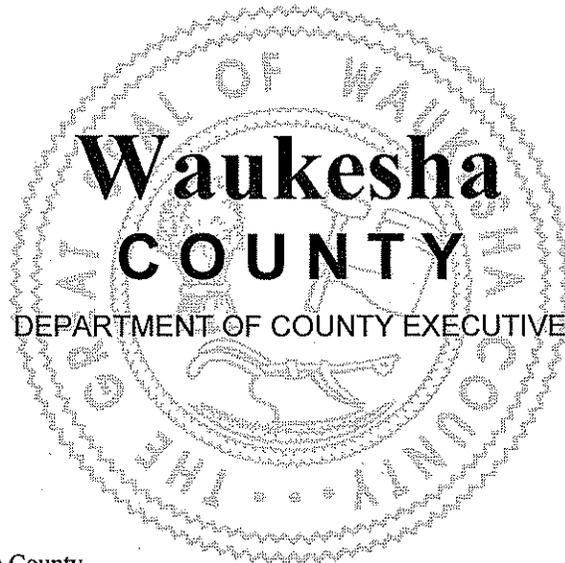


Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive



December 12, 2007

Dear Citizens of Waukesha County,

With approval from our dedicated County Board Supervisors, it is my honor to provide Waukesha County residents with a 2008 Adopted Budget that not only freezes County property taxes, but advances one of the most fiscally conservative public sector budgets in the State. Together, we were able to keep taxes in check by limiting spending, focusing on efficiencies, and investing in projects that promote a sustainable future. As a result, this budget ensures that the tax on an average County home is at or below last year's level.

It pleases me to share with you that Waukesha County does an exceptional job at balancing service priorities with the taxpayers' ability to pay for them. Next year, we will reduce tax levy support for administrative overhead by 24% to make justice and public safety the County's top priority. The 2008 Adopted Budget also demonstrates our commitment to protecting at-risk and vulnerable citizens, maintaining quality roads and buildings, privatizing services, and promoting environmentally friendly facility improvements and operational changes through my Sustainability Initiative in order to save future tax dollars.

Proudly, Waukesha County continues to have the lowest county tax rate in the state for counties that have not implemented a county-imposed sales tax. Yet, even when comparing our County to those counties with an enacted sales tax, you will be happy to know that Waukesha County is tied for 71st place out of 72 counties for the lowest tax rate. In addition, we are one of about 40 county government agencies out of more than 3,000 across the nation to hold the coveted AAA/Aaa bond ratings status, which is reflective of our exemplary financial management practices and ultimately allows us to lower the County's borrowing costs and the tax rate.

In order to maintain and protect our impressive tax rate ranking and bond rating status, this budget identifies new ways of doing business more efficiently by developing collaborative partnerships that seek to enhance service offerings, reduce dependency on tax levy dollars, and generate new revenues streams for the County. The following projects accomplish this goal:

Creating an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC):

One of the largest partnerships that we will embark on in 2008 is the creation of an ADRC as part of the State of Wisconsin's effort to reform Long Term Care services and costs for eligible elders and adults with disabilities. This venture will be managed by the Department of Senior Services and will work towards providing an end to wait lists and improved access to a variety of core services. It is expected that the ADRC will be funded with a \$1.5 million State grant, which will provide a County tax levy savings of \$100,000 in its first year of operation with on-going savings for both the County and the State in the future.

Privatizing the Child Support Division Call Center:

The Child Support Division will continue a pilot project to contract with a private company for the coordination of call center services. By privatizing call-answering capabilities and basic customer service functions, the division is able to unfund two Clerk Typist II positions that were previously assigned these tasks, which will result in a tax dollar savings of approximately \$29,000.

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Reconstructing County Trunk Highway (C.T.H.) P Interchange with I-94:

With continued growth in the western portion of the County, there is a need to address expanded capacity on C.T.H. P and at its highly traveled interchange with I-94. In an effort to leverage resources to accommodate the project sooner than anticipated, a partnership has been established with the City of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and Pabst Farms to help us fund it. The 2008 County Budget calls for using \$1.75 million of Capital Project funds to pay for the County's portion of the \$4.5 million project with the remaining balance coming from the partners listed. The County's contribution to this effort is contingent on a variety of factors, which includes but is not limited to the construction of a regional mall by a major national developer in the 2008-2010 timeframe.

Building a New Substation in Sussex:

The Sheriff's Department has partnered with the Village of Sussex to build a new substation. This project gives our exceptional law enforcement agency the opportunity to provide Village of Merton and Town of Lisbon residents more efficient coverage. Working with the Village of Sussex to build a new substation makes the best use of existing resources and saves our municipalities tax dollars because these communities do not have the costly obligation of maintaining and operating their own police departments.

As we look for additional ways of doing business more efficiently, my Sustainability Initiative helps us reach this goal through a variety of building improvements and operational changes that save real, ongoing tax dollars through environmentally-friendly conservation efforts. In 2008, we will utilize a new salt pre-wetting procedure on our winter roads that allows for a more effective product application and less salt usage. This process will not only reduce the amount of salt needed during its application, but it will be better for the environment. We will also continue to reap benefits from recent projects, such as: the replacement of metal halide lights with linear fluorescent lights at the County's two ice rinks for an annual energy cost savings of \$10,000; and the installation of Light Emitting Diodes in our traffic signals to save taxpayers \$60,000 in electricity costs each year.

By forging strategic partnerships and implementing efficiencies that chart our way to a sustainable future, we are able to manage a number of costs that put a significant pressure on the overall budget. Such items include: increasing health insurance premiums, but are still below the national average; escalating jail costs that will require more than \$300,000 in tax levy support to accommodate our rising inmate population; increased demands for mental health, long-term care, and other human services with \$320,000 in tax levy needed for the mental health area alone; and energy costs growing faster than the rate of inflation.

The 2008-2012 Capital Projects plan strikes a balance between maintaining our important infrastructure and delivering critical services to ensure our County's continued growth, economic viability, and legacy of fiscal responsibility. In addition to a number of important building projects, it calls for a variety of C.T.H. System enhancements to address expanded capacity, including improvements at three intersections over the next two years.

Waukesha County is undoubtedly an asset to the diverse and growing southeast Wisconsin region and the entire State. We are blessed with prosperous businesses, talented workers, quality schools, nationally recognized communities, and exceptional government infrastructure. I would like to thank our County Board, along with all of our devoted employees and appointed representatives, for their professionalism and commitment to advancing a budget that freezes taxes. Their dedication is what makes our County a wonderful place to live, work, raise a family, and retire, and I look forward to the many successes that we will share in 2008!

Sincerely,



Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive