



Waukesha County

Office of the County Executive

To: Honorable County Board Members
From: Paul Farrow, County Executive
Date: December 12, 2016

Dear Honorable County Board Supervisors:

Each year I approach the budget with two goals in mind: first, maintain the high quality services we provide the citizens of Waukesha County, and second, continue to hold the line on taxes. The budget process gives us the opportunity to examine new and innovative ways to make our government more efficient and save tax dollars. I am proud of the strategic decisions made throughout the budget process that do just that. This budget cuts the tax rate, invests in our Sheriff's Department and public safety, funds our new economic development organization, allows for the Village of Menomonee Falls to join our consolidated 9-1-1 dispatch service, and does it all while freezing the county portion of the property tax bill on a median-valued home.

None of this would have been accomplished without the countless hours of hard work of the Waukesha County Board. The Board's unanimous support of the budget, for the first time operating with a county executive form of government, is a testament to the true collaborative nature of our budget process.

TAX IMPACT ON HOMEOWNERS

The proposed 2017 County general property tax levy totals \$101.8 million, an increase of 0.84% or \$850,950. This increase in levy is against an equalized property tax base of \$51.0 billion, which experienced a 3.1% increase. This increase includes a net new construction growth rate of 1.63% as compared to 1.07% in the prior year. This results in a levy rate per \$1,000 value reduction of 2.2% from \$2.04 in 2016 to \$1.9965. The median home value in Waukesha County increased by 2.26% from \$250,980 to \$256,650 in 2016. **The reduced rate applied to an increased home value results in no change from last year's bill of \$512 for the county portion of the property tax bill.**

TARGETED SERVICE LEVEL INCREASES

This budget includes targeted increases in Justice and Law Enforcement program areas. This includes increased expenditures of \$1,179,000, 7.75 additional positions and revenue increases of over \$550,000.

- Emergency Preparedness will add 3.00 FTE telecommunicator positions to cover call center activity associated with a new community joining as a partner municipality in 2017. Moving to a regional model gives 911 dispatchers access to more resources and enhances emergency services.
- The Sheriff's Department will add 2 FTE Deputy positions for expansion of a third shift to the Town of Lisbon patrol contract. New revenue of \$178,000 will fund all costs associated with the expansion.
- High Intensity Drug Trafficking (HIDTA) grant funding of \$66,000 will increase overtime resources by 0.33 FTE and fund an additional vehicle purchase. The Special Investigations program which provides narcotics investigative services will also benefit from an internal transfer of 1.0 FTE Detective. General Investigations will also see an additional Detective position.
- Sheriff equipment replacement needs for both jail and non-corrections equipment replacement plans are funded at \$331,600, an increase of \$68,600.

Collaborative Initiatives Continue

- Budgeted support for an economic development organization increases by \$95,000, from \$150,000 to \$245,000 to implement objectives in the business growth strategy.
- Recyclables processed at the joint Material Recovery Facility (MRF) will reach over 60,000 tons to lower the processing fee per the sliding fee scale, resulting in reduced charges of \$133,500 and contributes to a budgeted positive operating income increase in 2017, the second full-year of operation.

INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

The 2017 Capital budget, with total expenditures of \$16.9 million, identifies projects that maintain existing infrastructure and facilities which support high-quality services and provide for future economic development.

Justice and Public Safety

The Waukesha County Communication Center (WCC) will be expanded with capital funding of \$3.5 million in the 2017 Budget. The WCC is the home to our County emergency 911 operations and houses our Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The WCC expansion will allow for additional municipal police and fire agencies to join County dispatch and provide new, expanded space for handling large-scale emergency events.

Following a 2013 Courthouse Future Study, the County continues to plan for a two-phase project to modernize and expand the courthouse (constructed in 1959) to meet current and future needs. The first phase is to construct a new secure courtroom facility to be located adjacent to jail facilities and will feature improved security, prisoner transport and public access. Design for this first phase begins in 2017 with construction in 2018-2020.

Transportation

The proposed 2017 capital budget devotes about \$8.3 million to maintain Waukesha County's existing County Trunk Highway (CTH) infrastructure. Maintaining our roads is key to providing safe transportation for our constituents, as well as offer business consistency in their transportation system fostering greater economic development. Maintenance of existing infrastructure continues with \$4.5 million for road surface repaving and intersection signal and safety improvements.

Construction of Waukesha County's portion of the Waukesha West Bypass happens in 2017 with additional funding in the budget of \$660,000. The State's portion of construction is scheduled for 2018. This project will relieve the congestion on nearby roads that has resulted from the continued growth and development in the area.

A 1.8-mile stretch of CTH I (Beloit Road), between CTH ES (National Avenue) and CTH O (Moorland Road), will be reconstructed with County funding of \$381,000 and Federal funds of \$2.7 million to accommodate new medical services and retail development at the corner of Moorland Road and CTH I. This intersection will also be reconstructed in a separate project with design beginning in 2017.

Parks and Land Use

Projects in this functional area total \$2.3 million. Maintenance of existing facilities includes \$600,000 for the Parks pavement management plan, \$182,000 for the first year of a multi-year plan to address issues at the University of Wisconsin Waukesha and \$260,000 for energy-saving lighting upgrades at park facilities and parking lots. The budget includes construction funding of \$674,000 for a new shelter and restrooms at Minooka Park, which will complete a multi-year effort to meet needs and expectation of park patrons throughout the park system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Waukesha County staff that helped prepare the 2017 County Budget and the County Board Supervisors that sat beside me in countless meetings throughout the year. Thank you for your continued commitment to the taxpayers of Waukesha County.

Sincerely,



PAUL FARROW
County Executive