

Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive



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WAUKESHA COUNTY EXECUTIVE DAN VRAKAS PROPOSES FREEZING 2012 COUNTY TAX BILLS

WAUKESHA, Wis. – Waukesha County Executive Dan Vrakas introduced his 2012 Executive Budget, which freezes the County portion of the property tax bill, to the Waukesha County Board at its meeting this evening, September 27th at 7 p.m.

“In many ways, some of the positive changes that we’re seeing other local governments now make, are changes that Waukesha County made long ago,” Vrakas said. “The caps on levy increases related new construction growth, which the state is now requiring of local governments, is something that we have focused on for years.”

In order to freeze taxes, under the proposed budget, Waukesha County will reduce the operating budget by 1.4% and personnel costs by 2%. Seeking partnerships between departments, other governments and the private sector to implement efficiencies and ultimately save tax dollars has been key to Waukesha County’s strong fiscal health, Vrakas said.

Some of the partnerships include:

- The creation of an Income Maintenance consortium for Economic Support Administration program with Washington, Ozaukee, Fond du Lac, and Walworth Counties to increase program efficiency and reduce program costs.
- Partnering with Washington County to provide secure detention housing for female juveniles, resulting in estimated net County taxpayer levy savings of approximately \$200,000. The savings will then be reinvested into community based prevention programs aimed at avoiding high-cost, out-of-home placements.

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“Vrakas Proposes Freezing 2012 County Tax Bills,” continued . . .

Vrakas’s proposed budget maintains investments in roads and buildings to maintain their safety and functionality, while anticipating and planning for future growth. Vrakas said that by maintaining infrastructure, Waukesha County will help retain, grow and attract businesses while continuing to provide a high-quality of life for residents.

“In an economic downturn there is a tendency for some in government to cut back on maintenance or eliminate upgrades on buildings and roads. However, in Waukesha County we keep up with repairs and do not push-off routine maintenance into future years,” Vrakas said. “This commitment to properly maintain our infrastructure continues to pay dividends.”

Capital Plans for 2012 include \$7.4 million for the reconstruction and widening of County Highway L (Janesville Road) in Muskego and \$18 million for the construction of a new, more efficient Health and Human Services Center. Also, the proposed budget allocates dollars for the Waukesha West Bypass as well as facility upgrades to UW-Waukesha.

“We operate our County like a business,” Vrakas said. “When we invest in a road or a building project, we put a minimum of 20% down, we receive the lowest interest rate available because of our AAA/aaa bond rating and we pay off the project in ten years or less.”

In his concluding remarks, Vrakas pointed out that Waukesha County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, has the lowest per capita spending of any county in the state, and is AAA/Aaa bond rated. The County has debt service under 10% of operating costs and has no county sales tax.

“We pay our bills on time, we balance our budgets and we respect the Waukesha County taxpayer,” Vrakas said. “We can feel confident moving forward that Waukesha County is on rock solid footing.”

The County Board will review Vrakas’ 2012 Proposed Budget in committee with final passage expected in November.

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