



December 8, 2011

Dear Citizens of Waukesha County:

It is my privilege to present to you the Waukesha County 2012 Adopted Budget that maintains Waukesha County's high standard of excellence. It has always been my goal to provide high quality services to residents at a low cost by finding government efficiencies. In fact, last year we were named the lowest spending per capita county in the state of Wisconsin by the Taxpayers' Alliance. This budget maintains the County's high standard of excellence by freezing the County portion of the tax bill for the average Waukesha County resident.

Waukesha County continues to innovate and take advantage of opportunities to streamline the delivery of quality County services. This budget continues our efforts to make public safety a top priority and effectively serves those individuals and families who are at-risk in these difficult times. Additionally, this budget includes significant investments in our buildings, roads and technology infrastructures to improve their safety and functionality while helping to provide for continued economic growth and vitality for future generations.

TAX IMPACT ON HOMEOWNERS

Waukesha County has a history of a high standard of excellence when it comes to limiting taxes. My administration continues to diligently work in partnership with the County Board to limit property tax spending. Despite a reduction in the overall County tax base, the County portion of a homeowner's tax bill should see no increase from last year.

We continue a standard of excellence by having the lowest county property tax rate in the State among counties without an implemented, county-imposed sales tax. We are only one of ten counties that have not implemented the County sales tax option. Additionally, we continue to be one of fewer than 4% of county government agencies (out of more than 3,000 throughout the country) to hold the coveted AAA/Aaa bond rating status. This coveted status is reflective of our exemplary financial management practices and allows us to borrow funds at the lowest cost possible to help keep our taxes low.

COOPERATION & EFFICIENCIES

The County continues to set its high standard of excellence by positioning itself for an even better tomorrow. The 2012 Budget identifies several key efforts of continued cooperation, teamwork and strategic collaborations that allow us to leverage our limited resources and reduce operational costs to taxpayers while providing improved and more efficient service delivery.

In the Human Services area, the Juvenile Center Program budget implements a more cost-effective alternative to housing female juveniles in secure detention. The Department will contract with Washington County to provide care for girls in secure detention. This will result in estimated savings of \$200,000. Savings are being invested in community-based juvenile programs to prevent costly juvenile correction placements. Additionally, the Criminal Justice Collaboration Council will use federal grant funding to expand the Alcohol Treatment Court program, allowing it to serve an additional 140 participants and a federal grant will be used to create a drug treatment court. Both programs have the goal of reducing recidivism of the inmate population.

The Medical Examiner is working in cooperation with Washington County's Medical Examiner to extend Medical Examiner Forensic Pathologist services under a fixed flat rate contract benefitting both offices.

The following departments will be working together with the Payroll and Human Resources divisions of the department of Administration to implement a workforce management project streamlining time and attendance reporting and improving work scheduling efficiency: Sheriff, Emergency Preparedness Communication Center, Park and Land Use and Public Works.

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BUDGET DRIVERS

The 2012 budget continues to address areas where declining revenue streams impacting the County must be addressed, while also funding the escalating operational costs from certain areas that increase at rates greater than inflation. This includes jail inmate medical costs, fuel and utility costs, employee health costs, County highway operations and road maintenance costs. Also, major revenue sources are reduced by over \$2.75 million as a result of the State action to resolve its budget deficit in the State's 2011-2013 biennial budget. This was mostly offset with \$2.45 million in savings from County employees picking up half the retirement contribution for a full year in 2012. Several of the key impacts to address in the 2012 County budget are as follows:

- State Transportation Aids are decreased in this budget by nearly \$650,000.
- State Youth Aids funding to Health and Human Services is reduced almost \$435,000.
- State Family Care enrollment caps, put in place to help limit State medical assistance spending, is expected to shift an estimated \$300,000 in costs to Health and Human Services Adult Protective Service programs.
- State Transit Operating Assistance funding is estimated to decline by over \$220,000.
- State Circuit Court Support grant (frozen since 2000) and other state court funding drops by nearly \$190,000.
- Investment income in the Treasurer's budget is reduced by \$100,000 after a reduction in the 2011 budget of \$430,000 due to continuing, historically low interest rates of return.

To address these declining revenues, personnel costs are decreased by nearly \$1.95 million from the 2011 budget. This decrease is partly due to county management proposing to no longer fund 18.7 FTE positions resulting in net cost savings of over \$1.0 million. Also, the State Budget Repair Bill, Act 10, requires most County employees to make a 50% contribution to their pensions in the Wisconsin Retirement System.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

The County has consistently demonstrated prudent fiscal planning and this budget ensures our standard of excellence is sustained in the 2012 Capital Budget. The capital projects plan addresses the County's long-term facility needs. It includes the largest County building project in our history with the construction of a new Human Services Center in 2012-2013.

The County's first rate County Trunk Highway (CTH) system continues to be a critical contributor to our growth and economic vitality. This important infrastructure promotes public safety and economic development. Projects include the completion of CTH L (Janesville Road) in the City of Muskego, which is the largest County highway project to date. Additionally, under the plan, the County will begin the construction of the Waukesha West Bypass under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Major Parks projects include park roadway maintenance and bikeway pavement improvements partially funded with federal funds. Additionally, the County will continue to make investments in sustainability and energy conservation with the goal of saving tax dollars. In upcoming years (2012-2014) the County will implement energy efficiency improvements for lighting upgrades at the Juvenile Center parking lot, Jail entrance and connector and the parking lot of the existing Health and Human Services building. These projects are expected to achieve reduced energy consumption and on-going costs savings of at least 10 to 20 percent.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are ensuring the County sustains its standard of excellence for the future by focusing on our core service priorities, establishing strategic collaborative partnerships and using teamwork to continue implementing business process 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 helping prepare the 2012 Adopted Budget that continues to set a high standard of excellence. The County strives to deliver quality services and make wise investments for the future to ensure we maintain our low taxes.

Sincerely,



Daniel P. Vrakas
County Executive