

2025-27 State Budget
Expressway Patrol & Courthouse Project Funding
Investing in Justice: Courthouse Complex (IJCC)



Project and Fiscal Overview



Project and Fiscal Overview

- 2017 Milwaukee County Courthouse Advisory Group recommended replacement of the Public Safety Building and housing all criminal courts in one facility
- Five-Year capital plan estimates total project cost of approximately \$490 million
- Initial funding allocations for the building were included in 2024 and 2025 budgets, which included planning and design funds totaling \$15.3 million
- Milwaukee County requested funding from the State of Wisconsin to support the cost of this building in the 2025-27 State budget process and prior
- The State provided a \$38 million increase in expressway policing aids to Milwaukee County over the biennium. The legislative intent of this allocation was to reimburse the County for expressway patrol and allow the County to free up tax levy to fund the courthouse project.
- It is anticipated the expressway patrol allocation will be maintained in the future, subject to future biennial budget appropriations, which could result in approximately \$400+ million over 20 years, available to offset project costs and reduce taxpayer impacts.
- Informational updates on this project have been submitted to the County Board and presented to the Intergovernmental Relations Committee and Economic Development Committee (24-44, 24-738, 25-411, 25-582)



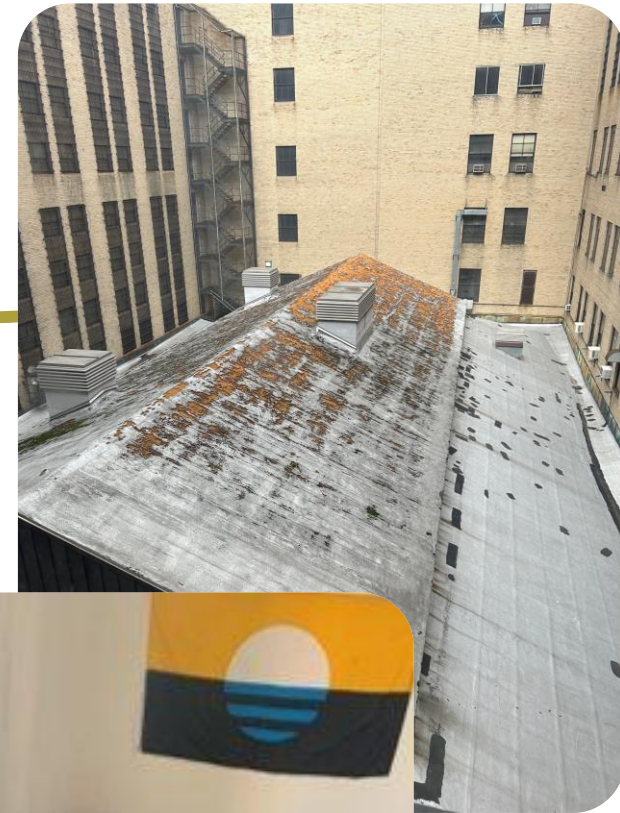
Current State Uses

Public Safety Building Created to Support Mandated Judicial and Public Safety Services

- Built in 1929 by and for the City and County, the Public Safety Building was designed with partnership in mind; to serve several jurisdictions and purposes.
- The 322,000 square foot building is now home to the Milwaukee County criminal courts, Sheriff and DA's offices, and other related uses.

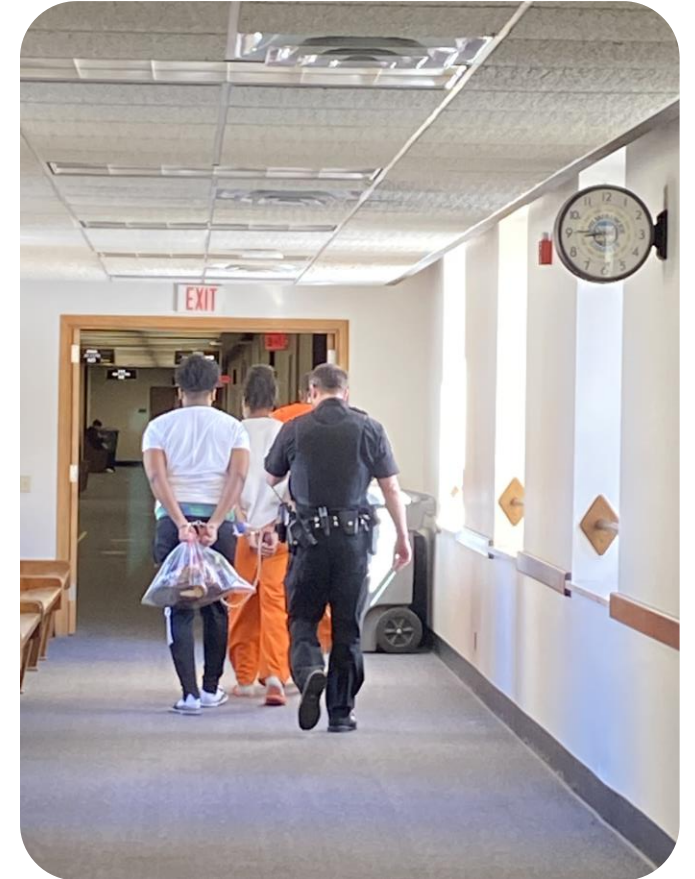
The State's Largest Judicial District is in Milwaukee County – Comprised of 47 Trial Courts & 23 Court Commissioners

- In 2022, 107,305 cases came into Milwaukee County. This represents 14.7% of all cases in the state (more than Dane, Waukesha and Brown Counties combined).



Public Safety Building Risks

- **Poor Building Flow Impacts Court Outcomes**
 - Mistrials occur due to interactions in common hallways; transportation of defendants and juries cause delays.
 - Slow justice leads to backlogs.
 - No secure path to transport defendants.
- **Functionally Obsolete**
 - Many spaces are not ADA compliant; 60,000 square feet (20%) of former jail space and other areas obsolete; limited air distribution.
- **Failing Infrastructure**
 - Crumbling façade, plumbing leaks, broken windows, electrical system is beyond useful life.
 - \$500,000 is reserved annually for emergency repairs
- **Unsafe by State Standards**
 - Does not comply with Supreme Court Rule #68 (Structure and Design of Courthouses).
 - Current facility impedes justice and risks safety.



Fiscal Impacts & Recommendation

- The building is severely outdated, functionally obsolete, has significant public safety and security issues, and does not reflect the quality of service for which the State holds the County responsible.
 - Deferred system replacements do not include code and safety issues.
 - Upgrades to meet code compliance would not address obsolete, unsafe layout of the facility.
- The 2017 Milwaukee County Courthouse Advisory Group recommended replacement of the Public Safety Building and housing all criminal courts in one facility



**Crumbling exterior of
the Safety Building falls
on police car**

Project Financing



2025-27 State Budget – IJCC Impacts

- Five-Year capital plan estimates total project cost of approximately \$490 million. Estimate is subject to changes based on results of planning and design work, which is now underway.
- Milwaukee County requested \$250 million in State funds for the Courthouse project in the 2025-27 State budget.
- The State has not funded courthouse projects for other counties, and therefore, although legislators understood the need for the project, concerns were raised about maintaining uniformity across counties.
- The County worked with legislators on a creative compromise that acknowledged the responsibility for delivering state-mandated services unique to Milwaukee County.
- Milwaukee County is the only county in Wisconsin required to provide expressway patrol through the Sheriff's Office, estimated to cost approximately \$19 million in 2025 and growing in future years
- Legislators agreed to provide direct state funding for Milwaukee County expressway patrol services, thereby "creating uniformity" with other counties, while freeing up equivalent local resources which legislators intended to be applied toward the IJCC project
- The Adopted State budget included an \$18 million increase in 2025-26 and \$20 million in 2026-27 for this purpose.
- Increased expressway patrol disbursements have started in Q3 of 2025, resulting in a \$9 million anticipated increase in calendar year 2025 (Milwaukee County 2025 budget impact)
- The increase in expressway policing aids is expected to be maintained in the future, subject to future State biennial budgets, thereby providing approximately \$400 million over a 20-year period.



State Budget (continued)

- Increased Expressway Policing Aids funding was identified as a Milwaukee County legislative priority under the Fair Deal Work Group (2018/2019)
- Increased Expressway Policing Aids have been requested in each State budget since 2019-21, however, these funds previously remained flat at \$1 million
- The funding request gained traction during the 2025-27 State budget process as a compromise to help fund the courthouse project
- Extensive reviews were conducted, and 24 members of the State legislature attended courthouse building tours, in addition to representatives of the U.S. Senate, U.S. Representatives, the County Board, and other stakeholders
- Throughout this project broad support for the capital project was expressed
- Several state representatives also took a vested interest in providing funding that would reduce Milwaukee County taxpayer impacts



Estimated Debt Service Costs

	Bond	Cash*	Total
Estimated Project Cost (5 Year Capital Plan)	\$ 463,311,172	\$ 26,411,280	\$ 489,722,452
Estimated Interest Cost on \$463M Bonds	\$ 302,458,361		
Total Debt Service (Principal + Interest)	\$ 765,769,533		

- *SBP estimates based on current five-year capital plan. Assumes \$26M of cash financing, 20- year debt payments, 6% interest
- *Estimates subject to change based on project costs, cash financing schedule and amounts, other factors
- The above chart does not account for offsets related to funding provided in the State budget

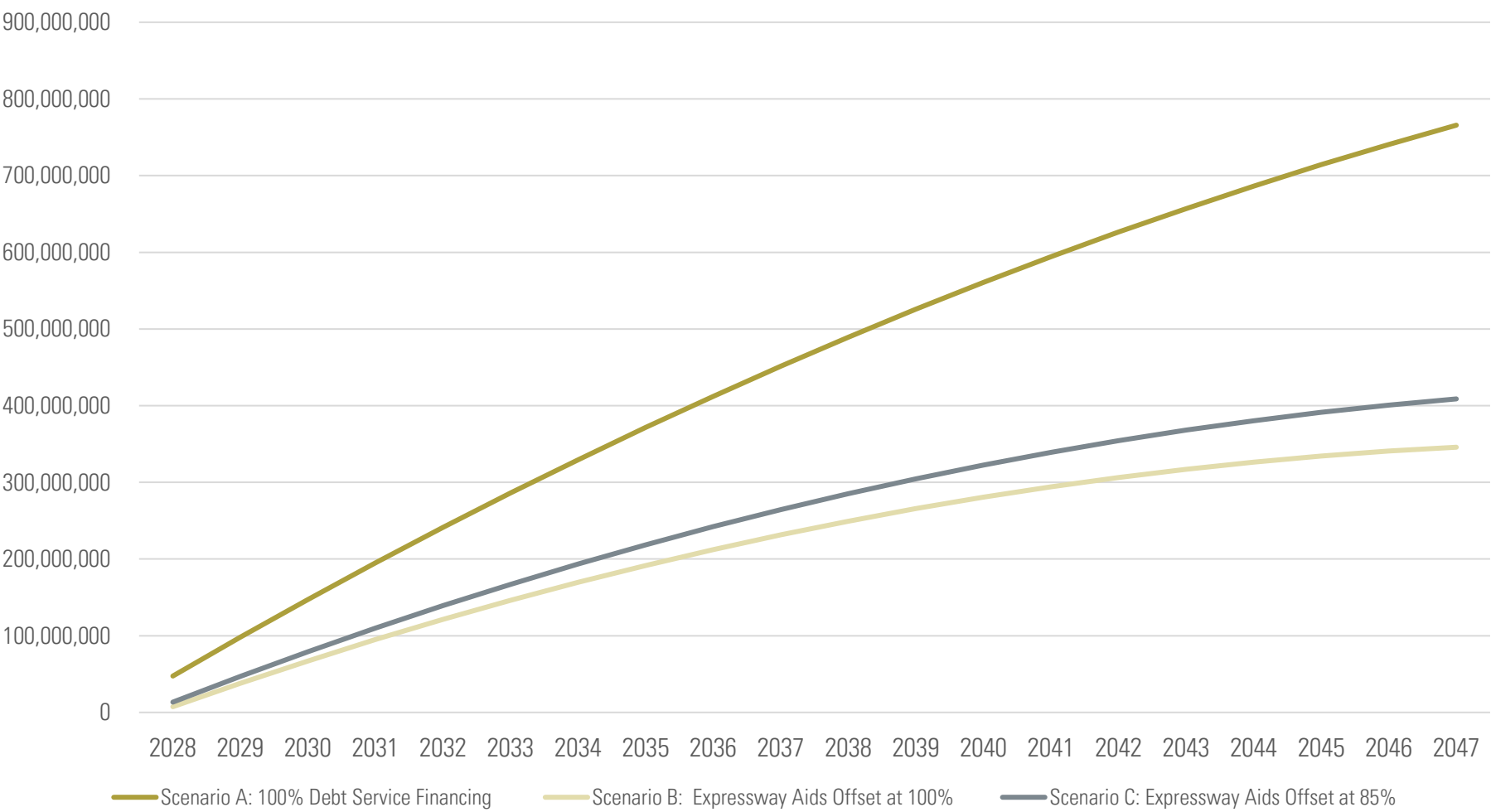
Expressway Patrol Funding: Estimated Impacts on Debt Service & Property Taxes

- Based on current estimates, the expressway patrol allocation provides Milwaukee County the opportunity to reduce debt service costs and taxpayer impacts approximately 50%

				EST Property Taxpayer Impacts			
				\$150,000 Home		\$300,000 Home	
Scenario Description	Total Estimated Principal & Interest	Offset (Direct Levy from Reallocated Expressway Aids)	EST Net Total Debt Service (passed on to Property Owners)	EST Total	EST Annual Avg	EST Total	EST Annual Avg
Scenario A: 100% Milwaukee County Debt Service Financing	\$ 765,769,533	0	\$ 765,769,533	\$ 1,061	\$ 51	\$ 2,123	\$ 102
Scenario B: \$420M offset - Direct Levy 100% Expressway Policing Aids Increase	\$ 765,769,533	\$ (420,000,000)	\$ 345,769,533	\$ 485	\$ 22	\$ 970	\$ 44
Reduced Debt & Taxpayer Impact			420,000,000	\$ 577	\$ 29	\$ 1,153	\$ 58
% Reduction			55%	54%	57%	54%	57%
Scenario C: \$357M offset - Direct Levy 85% Expressway Policing Aids Increase	\$ 765,769,533	\$ (357,000,000)	\$ 408,769,533	\$ 571	\$ 26	\$ 1,143	\$ 52
Reduced Debt & Taxpayer Impact			357,000,000	\$ 490	\$ 25	\$ 980	\$ 50
% Reduction			47%	46%	49%	46%	49%

Debt Service & Property Tax Impacts

IJCC: Estimated Debt Service & Property Taxpayer Scenarios (Cumulative)



Recommendation

- Recognize \$9 million increase in expressway policing aids in the Office of the Sheriff 2025 Budget
- Reallocate \$7.5 million tax levy from the Office of the Sheriff to the courthouse project to increase project funding
- Allocate \$1.5 million to the Office of the Sheriff to offset increased public safety expenditures in 2025, and to offset a projected deficit in the department

