



INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Milwaukee County

REVISED

December 17, 2012

To: Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, Committee on Intergovernmental Relations

Members of the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations

From: Jamie Kuhn, Director of Intergovernmental Relations

Patricia Yunk, Assistant Director of Intergovernmental Relations

RE: Milwaukee County's 2013-2015 Biennial Budget Legislative Priorities

Attached for your consideration is the 2013-2015 Biennial Budget Legislative Priorities. These priorities are intended to provide the framework for the Board of Supervisors, the Departments and the County Executive to work with the State Legislature, Governor, State agencies, organizations, civic groups and business interests to pursue legislative action on budgetary issues important to Milwaukee County relative to the State Biennial Budget.

Next month there will be an additional package presented to the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations to address other legislative policy priorities for Milwaukee County for the upcoming legislative session.

These priorities are based on input from the various cabinet directors appointed by the County Executive, the Chairwoman of the County Board, the Chairman of the Committee on Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) and key administrative staff. In addition, they were formulated with consideration for possible partnerships with other organizations and associations to enhance the likelihood of success on areas of shared interest.

Upon adoption, by the County Board, comprised of 18 members elected to represent individuals throughout Milwaukee County, Intergovernmental Relations staff will have the authority to communicate these priorities to State policy makers and State agencies, as well as coordinate with other entities to promote these priorities.

REVISED



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE BUDGET PRIORITIES

2013-2015 Session
Wisconsin State Legislature



Milwaukee County

The largest and most ethnically diverse county in the State and a source of much economic development, Milwaukee County is comprised of 19 municipalities and nearly one million people.

Milwaukee County is home to an award-winning parks system, a performing arts center, public museums, a technical college, public and private world-class universities, the largest regional airport in the state, a nationally noted zoological park, and the only county-operated transit system in the State.

As a major manufacturing and innovative business region, Milwaukee County is home to world renowned companies that employ thousands of residents and individuals from the surrounding area, while also engaging in international commerce. The Milwaukee County Research Park provides an opportunity for new growth through its innovative incubator startup programs.

The County's cultural attractions bring people from all over the world to our performing arts center, museums, music venues, conventions, hotels, restaurants and largest music festival in the world, Summerfest. Of course, sports fans have no shortage of teams to cheer for and local establishments to frequent before, during and after Brewers, Bucks, Admirals and Wave games.

Milwaukee County's rich ethnic history is invaluable to the County and State, and its diversity positively impacts the economic development in the region.

Milwaukee County has made great strides to put its fiscal house in order. While paying down debt, passing a balanced budget and actively working to control costs such as health care, it is well-positioned, with properly funded State and Federal commitments, to plan for the coming years and the new economy. The County has become more efficient and has also achieved a AA+ bond rating. A thorough examination of County owned facilities is underway and is already proving to be useful for future economic development. Cooperation and consolidation have occurred with our municipal partners on wireless E911 Communication, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and the UW Extension programs.

Additionally, there is no question Milwaukee County plays a central role in the State's continued economic recovery. Milwaukee County residents provide \$875 million dollars in income tax revenue, \$697 million in sales tax revenue and \$145 million is provided through corporate tax revenue to the State. While these revenues are utilized by the State to ensure valuable programs for residents statewide, it is vitally important for Milwaukee County to receive back its fair share of funding to better serve the taxpayers of Milwaukee County.

In the last State biennial budget, counties did their 'fair share' to help balance the \$5 billion budget deficit. And while efficiencies were put in place, there is no doubt that services to our residents are always at-risk due to State and Federal funding levels.

It is realistic to assume fiscal resources will remain a concern in the upcoming State biennial budget. Further cuts to programs (many of which are mandated by the State and Federal government) will not serve the residents of Milwaukee County, nor will they improve the economy. The State heads into the next biennial budget without a budget deficit, so we have an opportunity to ensure that our residents have access to the quality services they need, that businesses can create jobs and that the economy can fully recover.



- The transit system is crucial to residents and their ability to maintain employment; road maintenance and improvements to our transportation infrastructure ensure safe travel for everyone.
- Family Care allows older adults and people with disabilities, who can, remain in their homes; this community setting is far less costly than an institutional placement.
- Public safety and a proper judicial system uphold the promise of government protection and justice.
- Our parks provide recreation and quality community open space.
- Children and families' livelihoods are tied to an efficient child support system.
- Veterans' services maintain our commitment to individuals who have served our country.
- A regional airport not only brings in tourism dollars to the County and the State, it creates economic opportunities for the County to attract new businesses and to create additional jobs.

Of course, collaboration with all levels of government is essential for economic recovery. It is in the best interest of the County and the State that everyone work together to prioritize fair funding of programs that are mandated. Maintain local control so programs can be delivered by those closest to the residents of the communities they serve.

Milwaukee County is invested in working with the Governor and the Legislature, as well as with businesses, educational partners, organizations and citizen groups to ensure the State Biennial Budget is a catalyst for maintaining valued services for all our citizens, especially our most vulnerable, and it provides a real pathway for shared economic recovery for everyone.

TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

Milwaukee County values its partnership with the State and Federal governments on maintenance of highways, mass transit, local roads, and general infrastructure. However, additional cuts to local road aids, raids on the transportation fund and transfer of funds to General Purpose Revenue (GPR) pose immediate problems for Milwaukee County and for the transportation system as a whole. An additional funding source for transportation is necessary.



Milwaukee County supports the following transportation initiatives:

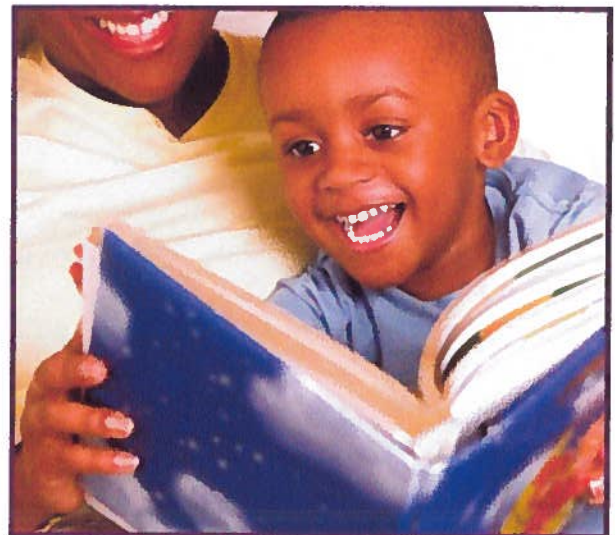
- Restore the 10% cut to General Transportation Aids (GTA)
- Establish a dedicated funding source for the Transit system; allow transit funds to be carried over from year to year; and maintain transit in the segregated transportation fund
- Restore the 10% cut to transit operating assistance. In addition, provide additional funding at levels that reflect the increased cost to the County as a result of previous cuts to base-level funding and inflationary costs. Milwaukee County was able to temporarily utilize Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) grant funding to fill the hole. Milwaukee County is supportive of the State releasing its CMAQ funds to the County.
- Provide realistic funding to support Routine Maintenance Agreements (RMA), based on levels of service that are requested by the State for work done by the County. Currently, the State provides just over \$12 million for \$13-\$14 million worth of work.
- Continue to move forward on the Zoo Interchange
- Make local road repair and improvement program funds sufficient for new needs associated with county growth

SHARED REVENUE AND LOCAL CONTROL

Shared Revenue payments to Wisconsin counties and local municipalities have been reduced since 2002. Because the program originally was designed to reduce property taxes and to share in the cost of local governments providing services, decreased funding of shared revenue shifts these costs onto the local property taxes. Milwaukee County anticipates receipt of \$30.9 million for county and municipal aids in 2012 and 2013, \$8.3 million less than in 2011. This level of funding reflects an annual reallocation of \$20.1 million to finance the State's operation of the Child Welfare Program in Milwaukee County. Milwaukee County will work with its local partners to restore shared revenue funding at appropriate levels to reflect the cost-sharing partnership intended under this program. In addition, the County supports local control of its taxing and spending authority and an adjustment to the property tax levy limits imposed by the State.

CHILD SUPPORT

Milwaukee County Child Support continues to find ways to be more efficient and more effective. The current case load in Milwaukee County is 126,000. Child Support enforcement can mean the difference between children and families living in poverty or not. Established outcome measures are required, and the County has met or exceeded those measures. However, it is possible to lose efficiency if the \$4.25 million annual deficit continues into the next biennium. This federally mandated enforcement program should be funded sufficiently to provide children with the resources they need. While returning to funding levels of previous years is unrealistic, it will be more costly to Wisconsin counties if the deficit continues or is compounded by cuts to the program.



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The delivery of health and human services to vulnerable children and adults is a major responsibility of the County. Working in conjunction with other counties and human service organizations, Milwaukee County supports measures to increase funding for these programs in order to provide greater access to services that improve the quality of life of County residents. Ensuring that Medical Assistance and Community and Youth Aids funding are utilized effectively and efficiently is crucial to these programs. The County has been innovative in addressing budget shortfalls. Positive outcomes have been achieved. For example, the disability services waiting list was eliminated and at-risk youth have been diverted from State institutions and kept in the community.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

- Support the State working with the Federal government to maintain funds for the Access to Recovery grant that supports alcohol and other drug abuse programming
- Seek clarification on how the State will interact with the Federal government on mental health core services coverage under the Affordable Health Care Act. There are budget implications to mental health services, depending on coverage definitions.
- Address nursing and physician shortage to serve patients adequately. Tuition support or forgiveness programs encourage graduates to serve in areas of need.
- Avoid cuts to wraparound programs to ensure the Medical Home Pilot for foster children in the six southeast Wisconsin counties can move forward. Wraparound programs serve children/adolescents with serious mental health needs.
- Freeze the daily rate increases for adults at State institutions
- Preserve FamilyCare funding as Behavioral Health Division (BHD) relies on these dollars to support the integration of individuals in community



DISABILITY

- Maintain consistent funding for the Birth-to-Three Program, which continues to be a valuable service and resource to families with early identification and early intervention. It serves 3,500 children in the County.
- Continue State and Federal funding for Aging and Disability Resource Centers. Milwaukee County receives \$2 million to support its Disability Resource center and \$2.7 million for its Aging Resource Center.
- Preserve funding for the Family Support program that provides in-home support for families with children with severe disabilities. The State provided \$850,000 to the County, and the County provides additional funds.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

With help from the State, Milwaukee County has found innovative ways to prevent some of our youth from entering state correctional institutions. However, those who enter institutions represent a significant cost to the County.

- Support increases in Youth Aids. In 2012, the Youth Aids allocation for the County represented a revenue decrease of \$2.9 million compared to 2011.
- Support continued efforts at the State level to reward Wisconsin Counties that have created, and are creating programs that keep youth in our communities and do preventative work with youth
- Work with the State to ensure that federal funding is increased for the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant.
- Monitor the juvenile corrections daily rates. In 2011, a surcharge was imposed on the daily rate to Counties to pay down the corrections operations deficit. Increases in the daily rate would be harmful to the County's program.

AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE

Services for older adults and people with disabilities are becoming a growing priority for Milwaukee County. Almost 8,000 people participate in FamilyCare in Milwaukee County. Because FamilyCare has not been allowed to truly expand statewide, funding for the program is a concern. Funding for Milwaukee County is not proportional to the increasing numbers of persons in the program. The County was supportive of lifting the enrollment cap and eliminating the waiting list. Keeping people in their homes and in their communities improves the lives of individuals and saves money. Additional needs:

- It is imperative that funding for paratransit be increased so people can stay connected to their communities and retain employment. It is important there be close scrutiny on the new transportation manager contract, as Milwaukee County is now participating in the statewide program.
- SeniorCare has proven to be a quality program for prescription medication for older adults. The County supports all efforts to maintain the Federal waiver so the program is secure.
- The County also is supportive of efforts to increase or provide additional staff for the ombudsman program. Ombudsmen provide needed advocacy for patients in many settings.

PARKS

County residents and tourists alike frequent Milwaukee County's world-class parks system. Parks are essential to the well-being of our communities. As a communal benefit, it is necessary that funding and revenue be consistent so open spaces are maintained.

- Supportive of a discussion surrounding required rights in urban areas for stewardship land. The County relies on the Stewardship program for land acquisition.
- Support measures to fund dredging of water ways on lakes. Without consistent funding, the cost is completely shifted to counties.
- Work collaboratively with other stakeholders to develop a dedicated funding source for lakeshore remediation
- Protect and expand the UW-Milwaukee Freshwater Institute as it is paramount for preserving Lake Michigan and for monitoring water levels so additional costs are not incurred in the future

VETERANS

The County is supportive of continued improvement and coordination of Veterans services and advocacy. Returning Veterans' education and training, employment and health care is important to the County.

COUNTY CLERK

Milwaukee County's Clerk is supportive of the statewide association's proposal to permit counties to impose a fee for actual labor and material costs it incurs in accommodating open records requisition to inspect and/or hand-count election ballots.

COURTS

Milwaukee County supports the State Courts' suggested modification to county financial assistance programs, which includes the Circuit Court Support and Guardian ad Litem payment programs. The County supports full funding of these programs. In addition, the County supports the effort to change the small claims clerk of circuit courts fee for retention by counties for those claims between \$5,000 and \$9,999. While it is the responsibility of the Clerk of Courts to collect filing fees, most of the revenues revert to the General Fund. This revenue, although nominal, would be useful to the courts for administration of these claims that are mandated by the state.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Milwaukee County has substantially invested in public safety. The County increased funding for park patrol, collaborated with the City of Milwaukee to address wireless E911 emergency response needs, and increased security for drivers and passengers of the transit system. The following are additional ways to enhance public safety:

- Find alternative funding sources for 911 emergency services
- Ensure proper funding for expressway patrol
- Restore the State reimbursement for mandated training for law enforcement officers and correctional officers to the previous level
- Support staff in the District Attorney's office to ensure the continued funding of three assistant district attorneys to prosecute domestic violence cases. Funding for these positions ends on June 30, 2013
- Obtain funding for 6.5 FTE clerical positions funded through the surcharge on civil filings to more effectively address caseloads