



# *Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors*

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## **MILWAUKEE COUNTY ADOPTS 2015 BUDGET**

### **Expands Transit Service, Support for Homeless Residents and Provides Funding for Parks**

Milwaukee County adopted a budget today that includes provisions to expand transit with fare reductions and increased service throughout the County, including the passage of the “GO” (Growing Opportunities) pass for seniors and persons with disabilities and new routes added to job centers to our southern and northern suburbs.

“People want more than the status quo for our transit system,” said Board Chairwoman Marina Dimitrijevic. “The Board has taken a balanced approach and delivered a budget for the public that improves our parks and transit system. On transit, it is up to us to take the state’s largest public transit system in our state to the next level.”

She said it was Milwaukee County residents have better access to transit, and that the “GO” pass included in the budget will allow seniors and persons with disabilities to ride the bus free beginning April 1.

“In 2015 our riders will be using smart cards to travel around and outside of Milwaukee County,” she said. “Our County is growing, and we need to grow opportunities to match it. We have some of the highest fares in the region combined with a lack of service to suburban economic development zones for job seekers. The Board’s plan will bring new service to thriving job centers in Brown Deer and Oak Creek.”

The budget also restores funding for homeless shelters.

“As we head into cold winter months in Wisconsin, the adopted budget includes assistance for the homeless population in our communities,” Dimitrijevic said. Supervisors Michael Mayo Sr. and Peggy Romo West recently held sleepovers in Milwaukee County Parks—Dineen and Clarke Square—to highlight the needs in our neighborhoods.

The adopted budget also moves Milwaukee County forward with a plan to address deferred maintenance in Milwaukee County parks and invest in our cultural assets such as the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Villa Terrace and the Charles Allis Museum.

“We have taken a bold step with our historic initiative to commit \$10 million in new capital funding to reverse the downward spiral of the crumbling infrastructure in our parks,” she said. “These resources are just the shot in the arm our parks need to help nurse them back to health while public demand is high and interest rates are near all-time lows.

“In addition, we have restored arbitrary cuts to our cultural assets to ensure that they thrive into the future.”

Dimitrijevic said the 1.3 percent change in the tax levy was within the rate of inflation.

“We have made investments in Milwaukee County,” Dimitrijevic said. “The fact is we can’t afford not to make these investments, and the Board’s budget represents a balanced and fair approach to our County’s needs in order to move our community forward.”

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