



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

For Immediate Release November 10, 2014

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MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD APPROVES \$1.3 BILLION BUDGET **Budget Includes Improvements to Transit, Parks, Cultural Assets and Public Safety**

The Milwaukee County Board has passed a \$1.3 billion budget that includes improvements to transit, parks, cultural assets and public safety. Board chairwoman Marina Dimitrijevic called it a “fair” budget with an increase that is within the rate of inflation and that balances the needs of residents and invests in County resources and services.

“The Board has taken a balanced approach and delivered a budget for the public that improves our parks and transit system,” Dimitrijevic said. “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 critical that seniors have better access to transit, and that the “Growing Opportunities” or “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 status quo simply isn’t good enough. The Board’s plan will bring new service to thriving job centers in Brown Deer and Oak Creek.

“Our seniors, and residents living with disabilities, depend on a vibrant transit system for their independence. Our older adults have contributed so much to our society and should not be faced with the difficult decision between buying prescription drugs or a bus pass to see their doctor.”

In addition, the budget includes \$10 million for repairs to parks.

“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.”

Dimitrijevic said the Board also restored funding to homeless shelters and indigent burials while improving public safety.

“We also have provided more resources for public safety with the addition of new community tools. We solidify safety net services for the least among us by restoring funding to homeless shelter support and indigent burials, which the County Executive cut in his proposed budget. We have invested in our frontline public safety officers in county parks by providing them mental health training and body cameras.”

Dimitrijevic said the budget also includes improvements to our cultural assets such as the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Villa Terrace, the Charles Allis Museum and the Milwaukee County Historical Society. “We are lucky to be the home of some of the most popular cultural destinations in our region,” she said. “Our continued ownership comes with responsibilities, but also ensures accessibility for all to enjoy.”

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