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4 **A RESOLUTION**

5  
6 To reinvest a portion of Milwaukee County budget surpluses into Transit Signal Priority  
7 Technology, Parks Infrastructure Improvements, and Employee Compensation

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9  
10 WHEREAS, the **2013** budget surplus was initially \$21.6 million prior to  
11 transferring approximately \$16.6 million to the Debt Service Reserve (DSR) to establish  
12 an official year-end surplus of \$5 million; and

13  
14 WHEREAS, the Comptroller is projecting that **2014** will end with an initial surplus  
15 of approximately \$25 million; and

16  
17 WHEREAS, policymakers recently approved transferring all 2014 surplus funds  
18 above \$5 million to the DSR; and

19  
20 WHEREAS, final post-closing entries are still being made which may impact the  
21 amount that will be transferred to the DSR; and

22  
23 WHEREAS, the DSR is projected to have a year-end 2014 balance of at least  
24 \$38 million; and

25  
26 WHEREAS, this DSR balance is the largest year-end balance in at least fifteen  
27 years; and

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29 WHEREAS, the 2015 Budget includes a contribution of \$6.3 million allocated  
30 from the DSR, which will leave the DSR with a projected balance of \$32.3 million; and

31  
32 WHEREAS, in a report dated May 28, 2015, the Comptroller is projecting that the  
33 **2015** budget will produce a surplus of \$20 million based on information submitted by  
34 departments after the first four months of the year; and

35  
36 WHEREAS, the DSR is one of the County's only mechanisms to establish a  
37 reserve for future debt service payments and other fiscal challenges due to the  
38 structural budget deficits that are projected to continue in the upcoming years; and

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40 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County has made many prudent fiscal decisions related  
41 to controlling employee compensation and fringe benefit costs, reducing outstanding  
42 debt, reducing costly office space, and implementing numerous cost-saving efficiencies  
43 in departmental budgets; and

44 WHEREAS, it is important that Milwaukee County reinvest a portion of these  
45 annual surpluses into programs and assets that provide benefits to county residents and  
46 to employees that have helped generate the significant surpluses; and  
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### 48 **Transit Signal Priorities**

49  
50 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County operates the Milwaukee County Transit System  
51 (MCTS) through the contract with Milwaukee Transport Services, Inc. (MTS), a quasi-  
52 governmental entity that provides essential transportation services to the community;  
53 and  
54

55 WHEREAS, there are increasingly more opportunities to enhance the speed,  
56 efficiency, and desirability of public transit on high-use routes; and  
57

58 WHEREAS, MTS operates more than 50 routes, including numerous routes on  
59 the Wisconsin Avenue corridor such as the Gold Line from the UWM campus, the 30  
60 and 30X from Sherman Boulevard, and the 31 from State Street to Highland Avenue;  
61 and  
62

63 WHEREAS, Transit Signal Priority equips buses and traffic signals with devices  
64 that grant priority as they approach, often producing 5 to 10 percent reductions in bus  
65 travel times; and  
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67 WHEREAS, the City of Milwaukee has already installed this technology in some  
68 of its traffic signals, including the stretch along Wisconsin Avenue; and  
69

70 WHEREAS, according to a March 2015 report from the Public Policy Forum<sup>1</sup>,  
71 MTS is planning on using Transit Signal Priority in the future on a short stretch of  
72 Wisconsin Avenue; and  
73

74 WHEREAS, Milwaukee County should utilize this technology and provide  
75 resources to implement Traffic Signal Priority and to obtain expert advice on how to  
76 position MCTS to supplement non-tax levy funding for additional bus service  
77 enhancements in the future, especially as expressway reconstruction continues in the  
78 Milwaukee area; and  
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### 80 **Parks Infrastructure Improvements**

81  
82 WHEREAS, a 2009 audit by the County Audit Services Division estimated that  
83 deferred maintenance needs likely exceed \$200 million in the Milwaukee County Parks  
84 System; and

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<sup>1</sup> *Picking Up The Pace: An analysis of best practices for improving bus speeds and their potential applicability to Milwaukee.* Public Policy Forum, March 2015.

85 WHEREAS, the 2015 Adopted Capital Improvements Budget authorized an  
86 additional \$9.15 million in general obligation bonds, for a total of approximately \$17.2  
87 million to make high priority infrastructure improvements within the Parks System; and  
88

89 WHEREAS, there are many park infrastructure needs that are **not** eligible for  
90 general obligation bond financing and must be cash financed within either the Parks'  
91 Operating Budget or the Capital Improvement Budget; and  
92

93 WHEREAS, an investment in cash-financed improvements to park infrastructure  
94 would result in significant benefits that are likely to enhance operating efficiency, reduce  
95 ongoing costs, and/or provide the community aesthetic evidence of park maintenance;  
96 and  
97

98 WHEREAS, park improvement projects proposed by the Director of the  
99 Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, and submitted to the Capital  
100 Improvements Committee (CIC) for review and recommendation, would help ensure  
101 that park projects are well vetted by the public and policymakers; and  
102

### 103 **Employee Compensation**

104  
105 WHEREAS, county employees (and eligible retirees) have significantly increased  
106 their contributions in recent years to employee health and dental insurance coverage  
107 and pension benefits; and  
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109 WHEREAS, a significant portion of the county-wide surpluses generated in  
110 recent years, as well as projected for 2015, are due to savings in the employee fringe  
111 benefit accounts; and  
112

113 WHEREAS, most employees have not been granted step wage increases for the  
114 past three years, and some employees have not received increases for several years;  
115 and  
116

117 WHEREAS, general cost of living adjustments (COLAs) to help offset the impact  
118 of inflation have been minimal; since 2012 most employees have received a total of 2.5  
119 percent in COLAs (1.5% in May 2013 and 1% in April 2014), while the Consumer Price  
120 Index (Inflation) for the Milwaukee area indicates the cost of living rose approximately  
121 4.1 percent from 2012 through 2014; and  
122

123 WHEREAS, the 2015 Adopted Budget does not include any funds for COLAs or  
124 step increases for employees, while inflation and higher health care contributions  
125 continues to erode the purchasing power of employee pay; and  
126

127 WHEREAS, the unusually large surpluses for the past two years, coupled with a  
128 sizable surplus projected for 2015, provide the County with an opportunity to provide  
129 employees with a modest COLA to acknowledge their sacrifice and service in helping to  
130 generate these budget savings; and

131 WHEREAS, while the budget surpluses are a positive development for  
132 addressing Milwaukee County’s overall financial position and future budget challenges,  
133 it is also important to reinvest a portion of the funds into areas that will strengthen the  
134 Transit System, Parks, and the employees that help to provide these programs and  
135 services; now, therefore,  
136

137 **Transit Signal Priorities**  
138

139 BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Board hereby authorizes the Department of  
140 Administrative Services – Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, to process an  
141 appropriation transfer to allocate \$1.5 million from the Debt Service Reserve (Org.  
142 9960) to designated Capital Improvement accounts to implement Transit Signal Priority  
143 along the Wisconsin Avenue corridor from Downtown Milwaukee to the Medical  
144 Complex in Wauwatosa; and  
145

146 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the monies appropriated for Transit Signal  
147 Priority shall be held in an allocated contingency within the Capital Improvement budget,  
148 and shall require County Board approval for its use pending a report from the Director of  
149 Transportation and/or the Director of Milwaukee Transport Services as to the specific  
150 plan on how the funds will be spent for Traffic Signal Priority equipment, and any related  
151 costs to improve service along the critical Wisconsin Avenue corridor; and  
152

153 **Parks Infrastructure Improvements**  
154

155 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Board hereby authorizes the  
156 expenditure of \$5 million for park infrastructure projects that are **not** eligible for general  
157 obligation bond financing; and  
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159 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Director of the Department of Parks,  
160 Recreation and Culture is hereby requested to submit to the Capital Improvement  
161 Committee (CIC) a list of \$4 million in high priority park infrastructure projects that are  
162 likely to enhance operating efficiency, reduce ongoing costs, and/or provide the  
163 community aesthetic evidence of park maintenance; and  
164

165 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the remaining \$1 million shall be appropriated  
166 immediately to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, to be used strictly for  
167 small projects (major maintenance) under \$100,000 that can be contracted immediately  
168 to help reduce future costs; and  
169

170 BE IT FURTHER REESOLVED, that the Department of Parks, Recreation and  
171 Culture provide a written report back to the Committee on Parks, Energy, and  
172 Environment in the September 2015 cycle on the progress of the selected projects; and  
173

174 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that after the County Board reviews and approves  
175 the recommendations put forth by the CIC, the Department of Administrative Services –  
176 Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, is authorized to process an appropriation

177 transfer to contribute \$4 million from the Debt Service Reserve (Org. 9960) to Capital  
178 Improvement Budget accounts, as approved by the Office of the Comptroller, to provide  
179 proper oversight of the expenditures on the proposed park projects; and  
180

181 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Administrative Services –  
182 Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, is authorized to process an appropriation  
183 transfer that is structured to enable a contribution of \$1 million from the Debt Service  
184 Reserve (Org. 9960) to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture accounts to  
185 begin high priority major maintenance projects as soon as possible; and  
186

187 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any contributions from the Debt Service  
188 Reserve through appropriation transfers shall be used to decrease the amount of sales  
189 tax that is required to fund the Capital Improvement Budget in order to provide funding  
190 for the items outlined in this resolution; and

### 191 **Employee Compensation**

192  
193 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Board hereby authorizes a one  
194 and one-half percent (1.5%) cost of living adjustment (COLA) for general non-elected  
195 employees<sup>2</sup> not otherwise covered by a separate labor bargaining agreement effective  
196 Pay Period 14 beginning June 21, 2015; and  
197

198 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Board hereby authorizes the  
199 Department of Administrative Services – Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, to  
200 process an appropriation transfer to allocate \$969,097 from the 2015 Appropriation for  
201 Contingencies account to departmental accounts to provide funding for the employee  
202 COLA for the last half of the year.

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<sup>2</sup> This COLA does not apply to Department of Health and Human Services-Behavioral Health Division (DHHS-BHD) employees. 2013 Wisconsin Act 203 designates the County Executive and Milwaukee County Mental Health Board with setting salaries of DHHS-BHD staff. The County Executive and the Mental Health Board recently approved a one percent (1%) COLA to DHHS-BHD staff in good standing effective July 5, 2015.