
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Willie L. Hines, Jr.
Ald. Michael Murphy
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Priorities and services maintained in Council-approved 2014 budget

The 2014 amended city budget approved today by the Milwaukee Common Council addresses key priorities and maintains quality city services at current levels.

The 2014 tax levy approved by the Common Council is \$253.809 million – up but less than the projected rate of inflation of 1.6% – and approximately \$560,000 less than the Mayor’s proposed 2014 budget levy.

When fees are included, the 2014 tax levy means the owner of an average city home valued at \$103,000 will see a \$16.94 increase reflected in city taxes and municipal services fees.

Ald. Michael J. Murphy, chair of the Council’s Finance and Personnel Committee, said the 2014 adopted budget again meets the state’s directives for local government budgets (property tax levy freeze) and reflects the Council’s overall agreement with residents in terms of priorities and flat spending. The alderman said the adopted budget also jibes with the recent report from the non-partisan Public Policy Forum that gave the city high marks for the 2014 budget – especially given the city’s substantial pension contribution, stagnant state aids, state-imposed property tax limits, and \$7.6 million in expiring grants.

“As the Public Policy Forum and many other observers have noted, we continue to strive to maintain a fiscally-sound, responsible budget,” Alderman Murphy said. “Throughout this process, the Common Council has identified priorities most important to Milwaukee’s continued well-being and diverted resources to them, while still finding ways to trim a little from the Mayor’s proposed budget.”

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Common Council Adopts 2014 Budget/ADD ONE

Some of the key budget items passed by the Council today reflect the priorities referenced by Alderman Murphy. **Some of those items include:**

- The Strong Neighborhoods Investment Plan, an \$11.7 million initiative to oversee the demolition or rehabilitation, marketing and sale of city-owned foreclosed homes in the city.
- The filling of 100 new police officers, along with the retention of 50 grant-funded officer positions for which grant funding is ending. An additional 20 officer positions will also be filled after today's approval of a separate measure sponsored by Alderman Murphy, Alderman Joe Dudzik, Alderman Tony Zielinski and Alderman Bob Donovan. The measure takes advantage of grant funding and taps into excess funds from a health care special purpose account to fund the 20 positions, rather than place them on the levy.

Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. said the Finance and Personnel Committee and the Council again handled the 2014 budget with thoughtful deliberation and skill. "It is no small task to maintain our key services in the face of so very many challenges," he said.

"But once again Alderman Michael Murphy and the members of the Finance and Personnel Committee rose to the challenge, and we were able to adopt a budget that maintains services and meets the state's budget constraints for property tax relief," President Hines said.