

The 2015 City Budget increases funding commitments to neighborhood revitalization, improved infrastructure, and public safety. These priorities are consistent with the community's interest in a strong local economy and a safe city. Just as importantly, the 2015 adopted Budget continues to manage the City's finances and long-term obligations in a responsible manner.

The Adopted Budget includes \$7.2 million in capital funding for the Strong Neighborhoods Plan, including several new initiatives which will focus on reducing code violations, enabling essential home repairs, creating incentives for area redevelopment and affordable rental housing, and supporting investment in commercial properties. As a result, the City expects to sell at least 350 residential and commercial properties, improve housing opportunities, generate business development, and reduce the City's property inventory.

The Adopted Budget provides \$83.5 million for core infrastructure—streets, bridges, street lighting, and sewers, and initiates a significantly increased water main replacement program which will replace 101 miles of mains over the next six years. The Water Works capital budget projects the replacement of 78 of the 100 most problematic main segments during 2015. The capital budget also accelerates a popular and cost-effective preservation strategy through the Local Streets and High Impact programs, which will repair 29 miles of streets in 2015, compared to 20 miles in 2014.

The 2015 Budget improves the Police Department's capacity for proactive deployment by funding an additional 12 FTE police officers, enabling continuation of the expanded shot spotter program, and adding 6 civilian positions which will serve as a sworn strength multiplier by enabling the assignment of police officers to community policing. The adopted Budget also continues the commitment to improved police deployment strategies via \$3.2 million of capital budget investments in communication upgrades, mobile data computers, and the new Records Management System.

The 2015 Budget initiates strategies to address the needs of crime victims, including \$250,000 to support response capacity in the form of trauma intervention and crisis care. These resources will provide emotional aid and practical support to victims of traumatic events and their families in the first few hours following a tragedy. Trauma informed care is an evidence-based approach that increases coping skills and protective factors, and is especially vital to children who have been victims of, or witnesses to, violence or abuse. The City will collaborate with Milwaukee County to develop an action plan that allocates this funding effectively.

Milwaukee's economy has been rebounding from the effects of the Global Financial Crisis, which have generated increased unemployment as well as significant challenges to the local housing market. The City is taking aggressive action to generate redevelopment and tax base growth by collaborating with private sector partners on projects such as the Menomonee Valley Business Park, the Brewery, Reed Street Yards, and the expansion of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance headquarters.

However, many Milwaukeeans face substantial barriers to employment. A key Mayoral initiative in the 2015 Budget, *Compete Milwaukee*, will implement a multifaceted approach to reduce the disproportionate underemployment of city residents, including those reentering the community from the corrections system and teenagers making the transition from foster care to self-support. *Compete Milwaukee* will build on efforts that the city initiated during 2014 to place persons facing significant barriers to employment in transitional jobs. The city expects to make at least 135 placements available during 2015. In addition, *Compete Milwaukee* will link current labor market information, employer needs assessments, and available training programs so that workforce development becomes a regional competitive advantage.

The 2015 Budget continues to improve the City's structural budget balance while managing the impacts on taxpayers. The City's stable employer pension contribution policy and prepayment strategy began in 2013 and is expected to save \$23 million through 2018. The City's property tax levy of \$256.77 million represents an increase of 1.2%, well below the projected rate of inflation. The restructuring of health care benefits and pension finance has generated a stabilizing influence on the annual budget. This enables city departments to continue mission critical services and implement new initiatives within a moderate level of increased cost of 1.9% to the typical residential property owner.