

ALDERMAN  
ROBERT J.  
**BAUMAN**



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AUTUMN 15

## Dear Neighbor,

Downtown Milwaukee is on a roll. It seems that every day we receive news about a new real estate development, a new company choosing to locate downtown or a new amenity being proposed for downtown. Since 2005, approximately \$2.8 Billion has been invested downtown and an additional \$2.2 Billion in private and public investment is either under construction or on the drawing board. While Downtown represents only about 3% of Milwaukee's land area, it comprises about 18% of the city's tax base. This is huge since an expanding downtown tax base benefits the entire city because that tax base supports city services such as fire, police and street maintenance and reconstruction throughout Milwaukee.

However, there are areas of the city that continue to be plagued with high crime, concentrated poverty and chronic joblessness and many neighborhoods continue to feel the effects of the Great Recession in the form of depressed property values, blight, and abandoned and vacant buildings. That is why I am particularly proud of my work as co-chair of the City's Joint Committee on the Redevelopment of Abandoned and Foreclosed Homes over the last six years and my sponsorship of legislation to address neighborhood deterioration. Initiatives such as the Housing Infrastructure Preservation Fund, Strong Homes Loan Program, Vacant Building Registry and the Accelerated In Rem Foreclosure of Tax Delinquent Vacant Buildings Program have mitigated the impact of the Great Recession and forestalled wide spread demolition of neighborhood housing stock.

In addition, I have supported increased spending on public safety. Since 2005 the police budget has increased 54%. The 2016 budget will appropriate \$278 Million for police (plus \$9 Million in capital) or approximately 44% of the general purpose city budget. I have also supported initiatives designed to create jobs such as the MORE Ordinance, the Earn & Learn Program, the Management Training Program, Compete Milwaukee and the deconstruction program.

In short, we have achieved a great deal over the last decade but many challenges remain. It continues to be a great honor and privilege to serve as your representative on the Common Council.

Sincerely,

**Robert J. Bauman**  
Alderman, 4<sup>th</sup> District



## COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

### CHAIR

- Public Works Committee
- Capital Improvements Committee
- Historic Third Ward Architectural Review Board
- Public Transportation Review Board
- National League of Cities, Transportation Infrastructure Services Committee

### CO-CHAIR

- Special Joint Committee on the Redevelopment of Abandoned and Foreclosed Homes

### VICE CHAIR

- Joint Committee on Streetcar Implementation

### MEMBER

- Judiciary and Legislation Committee
- Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
- Steering and Rules Committee
- Board of Harbor Commissioners
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board
- Frank P. Zeidler Public Service Award Selection Committee
- National League of Cities Board of Directors
- Wisconsin Center District

### VIEW MEETINGS ONLINE:

[www.milwaukee.gov/citychannel](http://www.milwaukee.gov/citychannel)

### FOLLOW US ON TWITTER:

@MKE\_CC, @cityofmilwaukee, and @MKE\_TV for City of Milwaukee Common Council and City Clerk news, info and updates.

### Council Approves Adding Funds to Bolster Home Repair Program >

The Common Council has approved a resolution appropriating \$250,000 in unused prior-year Department of City Development funds for the city's STRONG Homes Loan Program.

The resolution, sponsored by **Alderman Bauman**, will infuse the highly successful STRONG Homes Loan Program with \$250,000 in additional funding that could be applied for by city owner-occupants. Additionally, The Common Council approved \$1.5 million in funding for the program in the 2016 budget.

The program was funded at the level of \$500,000 in the 2015 city executive budget as part of the STRONG Neighborhoods Program. A successful budget amendment offered by Alderman Bauman added an additional \$500,000 to the program, but the demand has been very strong and the program has exhausted the entire available funding as homeowners across the city have accessed it to make repairs to their homes.

"The program has been highly successful, and the demand for the loans remains strong," said Alderman Bauman. "I believe it's important to help owner-occupants make needed repairs – not only to preserve our housing stock, but also to help residents avoid code violation fines that could lead to foreclosures."

Through August, the STRONG Homes Loan program has approved more than \$1.1 million in loans for 88 homeowners to help them make essential repairs to their properties. Many of these loans have funded exterior rehabilitation work such as roof replacements, porch improvements, and siding repairs. Also, loans have assisted owners in making emergency repairs, addressing code violation orders, and remedying items identified by the owner's insurance as reason to cancel insurance policies. Technical assistance is provided as part of the program to help homeowners identify their needs, obtain contractors, and monitor the construction work.

**The additional funds approved by the Council will allow the program to service all qualified applicants already in process with the program** as well as a few existing applications that were held due to the program's oversubscription.

The STRONG Homes Loan Program debuted in January, allowing owner-occupants to apply for loans of up to \$20,000 to pay for emergency repairs, essential rehabilitation and to correct code violation orders, with loan interest rates between zero and 3%. In addition to roof replacement, eligible projects include the replacement of failing porches and the repair or replacement of deteriorating siding or failing exterior paint.

Qualifying households must have an income at or below 120% of the area median (\$84,360 for a family of four). Twenty-five percent of the loan amount will be forgiven if the owner stays in the house for 10 years. ■

### Northwestern Mutual Announces Second Downtown Tower >

Northwestern Mutual announced it will be building a 33-story, \$100 Million "mixed-use" development across from its 32-story corporate headquarters at Mason and Van Buren Street in downtown Milwaukee.

The 925,600 square foot building will be divided into two parts. The building's top 25 stories will consist of 308 high-end apartments and 16 penthouse units. The base of the building will be an eight-story garage with 1,100 parking stalls. The project will have retail space on the ground floor along Jackson, Mason and Van Buren Streets.

"Projects like this are making Milwaukee a destination city," said Alderman Bauman. "However, we have a responsibility to oversee the project through the development process so it adheres to neighborhood standards and expectations."

The residential tower is the latest in a series of major downtown developments by Northwestern Mutual. The new 33-story building will begin construction in March 2016 and expects to be completed and occupied by spring 2018. ■





## Downtown Arena Proposal Wins Council Approval, Moves Forward >

In September, the Common Council voted 12-3 to approve a development agreement with the Bucks that will enable the team to begin construction of a state-of-the-art arena to replace the Bradley Center just north of the current site in downtown Milwaukee.

Prior to final passage, the Council approved amendments to the agreement that: delayed a decision on vacating 4th St. between Highland and Juneau until detailed plans for the street are presented and approved; increased the mandatory hiring of city residents to work on construction, and approved a 50-50 split of naming rights for the new parking structure that the city will construct as part of its overall contribution to the project.

Alderman Bauman said he will continue to review and provide input on all design and development proposals connected with the project, and noted that most of the major pieces will go before the City Plan Commission and the Council for final approval. “No piece of the arena project

will move forward without first undergoing close scrutiny by me and other city officials,” he said.

In negotiations over the project, the city convinced the Bucks to agree that at least 40% of the jobs created to build the new arena will go to Milwaukee residents who qualify as unemployed or underemployed. The agreement also committed \$750,000 to recruiting, training and assisting those workers, ensuring that when work is completed on the new arena, they will be qualified to find work on other construction projects in the future.

The agreement with the Bucks is similar to one the city struck with Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance over its new 32-story, 550-foot tower downtown. Construction is well under way, and NML is exceeding its goals—as of last spring, 46 percent of the construction hours were worked by previously unemployed or underemployed Milwaukee residents, and 35 of the 215 city residents working on the project were taking part in an apprenticeship to learn new skills. ■

## Nationstar Mortgage Provides \$30 Million to Address Foreclosure Problems >

In an effort to alleviate the impacts of the foreclosure crisis, one of the largest Milwaukee area mortgage servicers has agreed to provide \$30 million worth of mortgage loan modifications to customers and provide \$500,000 to the city’s popular STRONG Homes Loan Program, which provides home improvement loans to city homeowners.

“The Nationstar funds are going to help keep hardworking Milwaukeeans in their homes, they will help eliminate neighborhood decay and will reduce the burden that foreclosed properties inflict on our city,” Alderman Bauman said.

Nationstar services mortgages on around 3,400 properties in the city, and about 150 of those mortgages are in

foreclosure. Forty-six of those properties have been abandoned, and pose a risk of becoming neighborhood nuisances if they are not addressed.

Nationstar also pledged to comply with city foreclosure ordinances intended to prevent foreclosed properties from becoming nuisances, donate foreclosed property to neighborhood groups and hold face-to-face meetings with customers at least three times a year. Nationstar is owned by Fortress Corp., which is owned by Wes Edens, one of the new Bucks owners. This connection was a significant factor in the negotiations with Nationstar. ■

## Council Approves 2016 Budget Focused on Public Safety, Libraries and Jobs ➤

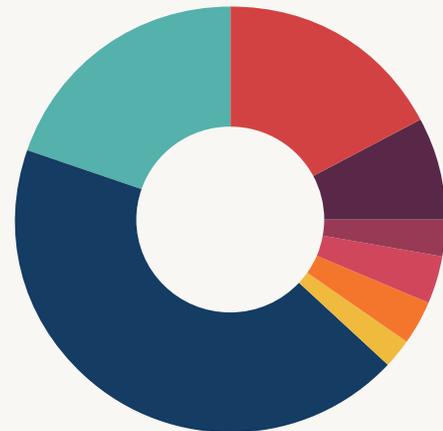
On November 3, the Common Council approved a zero property tax levy increase 2016 city budget focused on public safety, expanded access to libraries and doing more to ensure economic development and job expansion across the city.

The amended budget funds the hiring of 120 additional police officers and increases funding to expand the successful Safe Zones initiative to combat crime through the use of neighborhood advocates. The Council also restored Friday and weekend hours at six of the city's 12 Milwaukee Public Library branches.

Alderman Bauman said the adopted budget holds steady on the tax levy at \$256.7 million, but with the city's tax base expanding again in the wake of the foreclosure crisis, the end result is a slight decline in the tax rate, from \$10.71 to \$10.59 per \$1,000 of assessed value. For the median-valued Milwaukee home of \$104,000, that would equate to a \$13 tax cut to \$1,100 for the year (city taxes).

The Council approved transferring the Small Business Development Program from the Department of Administration to the City Clerk's Office, and also added funding and position control to create the position of Community Economic Development Director in the City Clerk's Office. In addition, the Council voted to continue supporting efforts to help residents obtain transitional jobs that could lead to opportunities on some of the major projects underway downtown (NML headquarters) and planned for the near future (downtown arena project/ancillary development and 33-story NML residential tower, Alderman Bauman said. ■

### Tax Levy-Funded Operating Budget: By Department



*Note: Does not include \$299.66 million of DPW-operated Enterprise Funds (Parking, Sewer, Water). Three departments (DPW, Police, Fire) comprise 80.3% of the 2016 Operating Budget.*

## New Tax Foreclosure Policies Combat Blight ➤

To better protect neighborhoods from blight and decay, the City of Milwaukee will now be able to fast-track the tax foreclosure process in cases of homes that are vacant or abandoned.

Previously, the process of seizing an abandoned home that hadn't paid property taxes took up to three years, Alderman Bauman said. In that amount of time, abandoned homes too often become a target for vandals or illegal scrapping operations, which further reduce the homes' value and leaves them stripped of necessary equipment, plumbing and wiring. By the time the city finally takes possession of many abandoned homes, weather damage and decay leave the city with no other option but demolition.

But in cases where it has been established that the home is abandoned, new legislation sponsored by Alderman Bauman allows the city to carry out the "in rem" foreclosure process in as little as a year.

"When we lose these properties to vandalism or damage, we are losing our tax base and creating vacant lots that may not be redeveloped for decades," Alderman Bauman said. "Working together with neighbors, we can get these homes into the city's possession quickly enough to preserve them for future buyers."

**To learn more, visit [milwaukee.gov/treasurer](http://milwaukee.gov/treasurer). To report an abandoned home in your neighborhood, call Alderman Bauman's office at 286-2886. ■**

## Housing Infrastructure Preservation Fund Program >

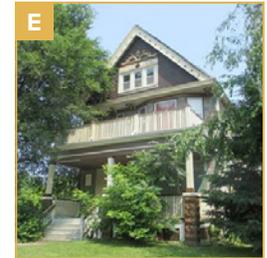
Since the program’s inception in 2011, these properties have been repaired and sold in the 4th Aldermanic District.

3320-22 W. St. Paul Avenue  
805 N. 28th Street

3402 W. St. Paul Avenue  
2325 W. McKinley Avenue

2742 W. State Street  
3229 W. McKinley Boulevard

832 N. 29th Street



- A 964 N. 35th Street:** Clay tile roof repairs in progress
- B 3024 W. Juneau Ave:** New roof and gutters
- C 2844 W. Kilbourn:** New roof, siding rebuilt front porch

- D 3316 W. McKinley:** New roof, siding, rebuilt front porch
- E 3030 W. McKinley Blvd.:** New roof, siding, rebuilt front porch

## Vacant Lots Get New Life >

A program that sells vacant city-owned lots to adjacent, neighboring homeowners for \$1 will be expanded citywide, Alderman Bauman said, after meeting with success in a north side pilot initiative.

The pilot program launched last year to address the litter that accumulates on vacant properties, and the expense the city faces in maintaining them. Many of these empty lots are left over from foreclosed properties where the city was forced to demolish deteriorating homes, and Alderman Bauman said that the lots are better off in the possession of neighbors who can maintain them at no cost to the city.

Since 2014, 96 homeowners in the 15th Aldermanic District have purchased empty lots for \$1, saving the city tens of thousands of dollars in upkeep costs. City leaders are so pleased with the results of the pilot that they plan to offer the same deal to owner-occupants citywide.

“The dollar lot initiative in the 15th District was a tremendous success for the city and property owners in the district,” Alderman Bauman said. “I’m pleased that we have been able to make this program available to every part of the city.”

[You can learn more at milwaukee.gov/VacantLots.](http://milwaukee.gov/VacantLots) ■

## Near West Side Apartment Building Declared a Public Nuisance >

Thanks to the actions of Alderman Bauman, a troubled 15-unit apartment building located at **2408 W. Kilbourn Ave** on Milwaukee’s near west side has been declared a public nuisance and placed in receivership.

Alderman Bauman took immediate action in the summer of 2014 when the property was reopened and began renting to tenants after several years of being vacant. Neighborhood complaints began flowing in regarding drug dealing, loitering, prostitution, fighting and robberies. The alderman requested the Department of Neighborhood Services and MPD to closely monitor the property, and that resulted in numerous orders to correct violations and police calls for service. Eventually the property was declared a chronic

nuisance under city code 80-10 and the City Attorney initiated a lawsuit to have the property declared a public nuisance.

Alderman Bauman testified in person at the hearing on the public nuisance lawsuit before Judge DiMotto on August 27, 2015. After that hearing, the court declared the property a public nuisance and appointed a receiver to mitigate the problems at the property.

“The property at 2408 W. Kilbourn Ave. has been a detriment to our community and to its occupants,” Alderman Bauman said. “I am pressing for the ultimate demolition of the building given its long history of problems and blight.” ■



## Lakefront Gateway Plaza Winning Design ➤

Graef, a Milwaukee-based design, engineering and planning firm, submitted the winning entry in the Lakefront Gateway Plaza design competition. Graef's winning entry – announced October 27 – envisions a welcoming public plaza for the prime lakefront area near Discovery World, Maier Festival Park and other key new and future nearby developments.

The park-like plaza would replace about an acre of vacant green space on the east side of Lincoln Memorial Drive, just west of Discovery World and would be across the street from the planned Couture development and possible future Johnson Controls Inc. downtown tower. It would include a fountain area that would be used as a winter ice-skating venue, and would also include trees, shrubs, benches and paths. A pedestrian span would connect it to the west side of Lincoln Memorial Drive.

Alderman Bauman said he looks forward to the proposal moving ahead, once a mix of private and public funding sources can be secured. "I believe the gateway plaza will provide an attractive and welcoming connection point to better link the two sides of Lincoln Memorial Drive, and make it easier for pedestrians to access the Milwaukee Art Museum and Milwaukee County War Memorial Center, as well as the expanding Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. headquarters and the 833 East office building — both now under construction," he said.

The Graef team was among four design teams that submitted proposals. A group of downtown stakeholders served as the "jury" that selected the Graef proposal. The city's representative on the jury was Greg Patin of the Department of City Development. ■





## Sign Up for Snow Emergency Alerts >

The City of Milwaukee offers a text message system, Snow Mobile - Winter Text Alert, to residents and businesses looking to be informed when the city declares a snow emergency or when the 4-inch rule is in effect.

The message will state the date and time the emergency is in effect and would provide the same when it is lifted. The primary purpose of declaring a snow emergency is to make sure the streets are cleared to keep the city open for business.

On your computer web browser, enter the link below to sign up for snow emergency alerts.

[milwaukee.gov/enotify](http://milwaukee.gov/enotify) ■

## Winter Parking Regulations >

The city's strictly enforced winter parking regulations are in effect from December 1 to March 1.

The most important thing motorists can do to avoid problems is to carefully read the parking signs on their block. It is the responsibility of anyone parking a vehicle to read and understand posted city parking regulations. If you need parking information, please call the city's parking enforcement desk at **286-CITY**, or go to the pertinent city web page at [milwaukee.gov/parkingregulations](http://milwaukee.gov/parkingregulations).

The single biggest problem during major snowstorms is parked and abandoned vehicles. The plows try to get as close to the curb as they can but those "snowbirds" get in the way and prevent them from completing the job. Alderman Bauman asks that you move your vehicles so plows can clear the streets curb to curb. ■

## Shovel Your Sidewalk, It's the Law >

Remember that residential and commercial property owners and occupants are required to clear sidewalks abutting their property of snow or ice within 24 hours after a storm. If violations are reported, a 24-hour notice is issued. If the sidewalks still are not cleared, a sanitation crew will clear a path and put the charge on the property tax bill. *Note: the city does not plow alleys.*

If you have older or disabled neighbors who need help with shoveling – please help them out when you can. And make our city safer by shoveling out the fire hydrants near your home. "Adopting" a fire hydrant will ensure maximum visibility for firefighters in the event of an emergency.

To report an unshoveled sidewalk, call **286-CITY** ■

DISTRICT 4

# ALDERMAN ROBERT J. BAUMAN



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Alderman, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
200 E. Wells Street  
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Alderman Bauman joined more than 200 volunteers, including partners from Marquette University High School and the Merrill Park Neighborhood Association, in working to replace playground equipment at Merrill Park, at the corner of N. 35th St. and W. Michigan Ave. The project was made possible by Let's Play, a partnership between Dr. Pepper Snapple Group and KaBOOM! Although located just outside the 4th District, the park and the playground are used daily by many district residents.

## Need Assistance or Have a Question? ➤

Efficient delivery of the hundreds of services provided by city government is only a phone call or a computer click away – in the full-color **Call for Action** telephone directory. The popular directory is arranged alphabetically by specific problems and topics, and also includes helpful web addresses and additional information about community attractions.

Remember that in addition to contacting Alderman Bauman's office for help with your concerns, there is one number – **286-2489** (286-CITY) – that can put you in touch with the right department for any questions or concerns about city services.

To save postage and staff costs, please download or print your own copy of the new Call for Action booklet by going to Alderman Bauman's web page at [milwaukee.gov/district4](http://milwaukee.gov/district4). If you need to have a copy mailed to your home, please e-mail a request to [nfowle@milwaukee.gov](mailto:nfowle@milwaukee.gov).

## What to do with Electronics Items? ➤

Wisconsin state law bans TVs, computers, and many other electronics items from landfills, and it applies not just to businesses, but to everybody. The Department of Public Works Self Help Centers accept for recycling (at no charge) all of the items that fall under the law.

To learn more about recycling your electronics items, please call the city's United Call Center (286-CITY) at **286-2489**, or go to the DPW city webpage here: [milwaukee.gov/electronics](http://milwaukee.gov/electronics)

