

ALDERMAN ASHANTI HAMILTON

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AUTUMN 15

Dear Neighbor,

In the weeks ahead, the Common Council will tackle the biggest job that we face on an annual basis—debating and amending the mayor’s proposed \$1.55 billion budget for the 2016 year ahead. In recent budgets, the city has maintained services without significantly raising taxes, even in the face of cuts to our funding by the state government and the devastating effects of the foreclosure crisis. Your input is critical as we determine which programs and projects to prioritize heading into 2016.

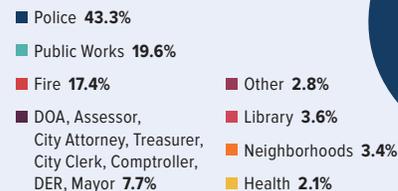
Members of the Finance and Personnel Committee will pore over every line item, scrutinizing departments’ spending plans and recommending changes that they feel will better serve the community. This process culminates with a meeting of the full Common Council on November 3, during which amendments face their final approval before members have to cast a final up or down vote on the proposed budget. In the spirit of transparency, every minute of this process is broadcast live on the City Channel (Ch. 25 or 97.25 for Time Warner subscribers, Ch. 99 for AT&T U-Verse subscribers) and online at milwaukee.gov/citychannel.

As proposed by the mayor, the budget would hold steady on the city’s tax levy, while the tax rate would drop 12 cents, from \$10.71 per \$1,000 of assessed value to \$10.59. As a result, a median-valued home worth \$104,000 would pay \$1,101 in city taxes, a decrease of \$13 from last year.

Some items worth noting from the mayor’s proposed budget include:

- \$880,000 to equip all police officers with body-worn video cameras
- Ending the cost-saving requirement for police officers to take three unpaid furlough days per year
- Requiring police to contribute to their pensions, as other city employees already do
- Maintaining the police department’s sworn strength at 1,880
- Maintaining hours of operation at local libraries
- Moving forward with plans to replace Forest Home and Mill Road Libraries

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.

- Continuing the new trauma-informed care effort, which matches victims of and witnesses to violent crime with the mental health services they need
- Adding two Health Department positions to coordinate efforts to address youth violence
- Quickly re-surfacing 22 miles of streets through the city’s high-impact paving program
- Replacing 15 miles of streets using traditional methods
- Directing \$10.9 million toward neighborhood revitalization and stabilization efforts to combat the effects of the foreclosure crisis

Citizens weighed in with their opinions at a public hearing on the evening of **October 5**, but it’s not too late to make your voice heard on these and other important matters. Please contact my office with any input you would like to offer to the budget process by calling **(414) 286-2228** or emailing ahamil@milwaukee.gov.

Thanks,

Ashanti Hamilton
Alderman, 1st District



New Playground Equipment Planned for Long Island & Custer ➤

A popular park at N. Long Island Drive and W. Custer Avenue will benefit from the citywide MKE Plays initiative to replace deteriorating or outdated playground equipment. Plans are in the works to install new equipment there, using crucial input and participation from residents in the area.

“The spirit of giving back that is driving this initiative is truly inspiring,” Alderman Hamilton said. “I’m grateful for the opportunity to rejuvenate this play space for our children while operating in a spirit of inclusive collaboration that brings the neighborhood closer together.”

Adopted by a unanimous vote of the Common Council, the MKE Plays Initiative aims to create a “bottom-up approach” to replacing aging or obsolete equipment in city-owned play areas. The initiative seeks both to raise up to \$1 million in private funding and to drive playground replacement with input from ad hoc committees selected from the local community.

As part of the initiative, the Department of Public Works assessed dozens of city-owned parks and play areas, selecting 12 that were in the direst need of replacement. Now, the city is seeking private donors to finance the improvements while assembling local committees to determine what sort of amenities to provide. A generous donation from the Zilber Family Foundation laid the groundwork for this process.

Alderman Hamilton said other crucial partners include the Eastbrook Church and the managers and residents of Meaux Park Apartments.

To learn more, visit milwaukee.gov/MKEplays. ■



Twelve playgrounds are slated to be reconstructed through the MKE Plays initiative:

- 67th & Spokane
- Long Island & Custer
- 21st & Keefe
- 5th & Randolph
- Snail's Crossing
- Buffum & Center
- DeBack Park
- 17th & Vine
- Foundation Park
- 34th & Mt. Vernon
- Arlington Heights
- Trowbridge Square

New Development Planned Along Silver Spring ➤

A former Coca-Cola bottling plant that has sat vacant for more than 20 years at the corner of W. Silver Spring Drive and N. 27th Street will soon be demolished to make way for new development.

“For too long, this patch of land has stagnated as an eyesore at what could otherwise be an active intersection between two major streets,” Alderman Hamilton said. “I’ve talked to the neighbors in the area, and most are glad to see these development plans moving forward.”

The Common Council has approved a change in zoning from General Planned Development to Commercial Service for redevelopment of the parcel located at 2727 W. Silver Spring Drive. The developer, who bought the property out of foreclosure, first plans to demolish the dilapidated structures on the property and build self-storage units in the first phase of the development.



The next phase of the project would involve the construction of mixed-use commercial space along Silver Spring Drive.

“In a couple years’ time, I hope to see the corner of Silver Spring and 27th transformed into a productive commercial hub,” Alderman Hamilton said. ■



New Bucks Arena Means More Jobs for Milwaukeeans >

A \$500 million construction project to build a new arena for the Milwaukee Bucks will have far-reaching benefits for unemployed and underemployed residents in the City of Milwaukee.

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. Team officials had said they would consider moving the team to a different city if a deal couldn't be reached, but the agreement will allow the city to continue to benefit from the NBA franchise's presence.

The city will not spend any property tax money to help the Bucks finance the arena.

In negotiations over the project, the city convinced the Bucks to agree that at least 40 percent 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.

"Our deal with the Milwaukee Bucks lets us build even more momentum in the city's development boom, putting Milwaukeeans who need jobs to work and giving them the skills to keep it in the years ahead," Alderman Hamilton said.

The deal 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 NWM 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. ■

Fatherhood Summit Marks One Decade Milestone >

Aimed at giving Milwaukee fathers the tools they need and providing some dads with a much-needed second chance, the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative Summit celebrated its 10th year in action this fall.

Founded by Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and supported by Alderman Hamilton, this year's summit took place October 16 and 17 at the Destiny Youth Plaza. Conference admission is always free and includes all workshops, resource materials, parking and a light breakfast and lunch.

"A community with strong, responsible fathers in it is a strong community," said Alderman Hamilton, a speaker, guest and participant at the summit. "By providing dads with the information and resources they need to be good role models for their kids, we are empowering them to transform the next generation of Milwaukee citizens."

This year's summit focused on providing Milwaukee men with access to employment resources, legal services and driver's license recovery assistance. Participants were presented with opportunities to learn more about training and jobs in the skilled trades.

There was also the usual assortment of free health screenings, employers seeking job applicants, and housing, education, job training, personal development and financial education programs and services.

To learn more about the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative or the summit, visit MilwaukeeFatherhood.com. ■

Safe Zones Initiative Creates Positive Change ➤

Milwaukee has been marred by senseless violence affecting residents in our most vulnerable communities. There have been more than 118 homicides through the end of September—97 of them shooting deaths. While alarming, these statistics are not reason to lose hope, but a call to embrace our roles in improving them.

The idea of personal accountability is the foundation of the Safe Zones initiative, a pilot program sponsored by Alderman Hamilton that launched this summer to reduce violence and crime while building stronger communities. The Garden Homes neighborhood was selected for the initiative, and individuals from the community were chosen to be program ambassadors after a thorough screening process in May and early June. Participants were then trained in several areas, including civil rights and dispute resolution.

The Safe Zones ambassadors began working in the community on June 30th by introducing themselves to residents. They went door-to-door polling residents on their neighborhood concerns and accepting recommendations for improvement. In the weeks following, the Safe Zones ambassadors achieved the following accomplishments:

- Reduced loitering throughout the community
- Hosted four neighborhood clean-up events
- Resolved five conflicts
- Reduced illegal activity in public spaces, like gambling and prostitution
- Created and circulated a petition to have speed bumps installed in the neighborhood

A New Approach to Violent Crime ➤

Beyond every police-taped scene of a violent crime, there are shattered lives and unspoken traumas that will haunt their victims for decades to come. But a new city program championed by Alderman Hamilton hopes to treat the psychological wounds that are left when all the questions are answered and the echoes of sirens have faded away.

As part of the 2015 budget, Alderman Hamilton created within the Milwaukee Health Department a pilot program to house rapid crisis response teams of trauma informed care specialists in the Police Districts which have the highest rates of violent crime. The idea is to dispatch these specialists to the scenes of violent crimes to provide crucial counseling services to the victims of and witnesses to violent crimes.

“Focusing on the root causes of crime should, dollar for dollar, have a more efficient and far-reaching impact than just con-



In addition to these feats, the Safe Zones ambassadors also hosted two block parties and meetings with community residents and stakeholders. Their work has greatly improved relations within the neighborhood, as it has created opportunities for community engagement and has helped create a more secure environment for residents.

Alderman Hamilton saluted the Safe Zones ambassadors: “I am extremely proud of the bravery and dedication the ambassadors have displayed in working to improve our district. We are fortunate to have leaders willing to affect positive change right here in their home neighborhood, and their efforts prove that when we all work together, we truly can make an impact within our community.” ■

tinuing to spend more money on police,” Alderman Hamilton said. “The people in my district know firsthand how traumatizing violence can be, especially for young children.

“Too often, the same children who witness violence one year commit it the next,” Alderman Hamilton said. “We need to get in the middle of that cycle and change the expectations on our streets.”

A team at Milwaukee Police Department District 7 is implementing the trauma response pilot project to connect children who have witnessed violence in their home or community to the County Mobile Urgent Treatment Team. When an officer responds to a call, they can refer a child to the mobile team, and the team of clinicians then connects with the family to provide support and access to services. The team has so far responded to more than 50 calls. ■

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AUTUMN 15

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH
Spring Primary

TUESDAY, APRIL 5TH
Spring General

TUESDAY, AUGUST 9TH
Fall Primary

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH
Fall Presidential Election



If you have any questions, please contact the Election Commission at 414-286-3491 or milwaukee.gov/election.



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City Now Hiring Election Workers >

Do you support fair, transparent and accurate elections? If so, the City of Milwaukee Election Commission needs your help.

The Election Commission is hiring election workers for the 2016 elections (February 16th, April 5th, August 9th, and November 8th). Earn some extra money, work at a voting site close to home, and serve as a role model of civic responsibility to your friends, family and neighbors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit milwaukee.gov/election and click on the Election Workers tab, where you will also find the application (either an application to print and mail or one to complete and submit on-line). You may also pick up an application at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St., Room 501 or call the Election Worker Coordinator **Dan Puhek** at **414-286-3491** and request an application by mail. ■

