

MEMBER

- Community and Economic Development Committee
- Judiciary and Legislation Committee



TONY ZIELINSKI
ALDERMAN, 14TH DISTRICT

Streetcar expansion plans irresponsible in light of Mayor Barrett's proposed 2020 budget

Statement of Alderman Tony Zielinski August 16, 2019

City of Milwaukee leaders are facing some hard choices when we review and deliberate the 2020 budget next month.

Mayor Tom Barrett's proposed budget calls for a jump in the city's contribution to its pension fund, not only for 2020 but going forward into 2023. Currently, the city pays approximately \$70 million per budget year into the fund to meet its obligation to current and future city retirees. The proposed extra contribution, or "jump", for 2020 is \$10 million, with additional funds forecasted for more jumps in the 2021 and 2022 budgets.

To be clear, I am in total support of funding the city's pension fund at 100%. A fully-funded pension for our retirees is the promise that we keep to our hard-working, dedicated city employees who, after a lifetime of work on behalf of our fellow city residents, are counting on these funds as they move into retirement. This applies to **ALL** our city employees including public works staff, librarians, neighborhood services inspectors, and public health nurses, as well as our police officers and firefighters.

But with this latest budgetary challenge and the limited resources that we have to run the city, the mayor's plans to expand the streetcar are irresponsible. I believe that our dollars should be used to keep our residents safe and our roads in good condition, to continue to clean up the lead in our built environment, and provide educational and vocational opportunities to ensure that **everyone** has the chance for a good, family-supporting job and the best quality of life.

I will work with my Common Council colleagues to make sure that Milwaukee's 2020 budget meets the obligations to our residents and employees, and that it is a fair budget for all.

Contact Ald. Zielinski: (414) 405-1483