



Office of the County Executive

Bob Ziegelbauer, County Executive

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Accountability • Respect • Customer Service

“Continue our Progress”

October 8, 2024

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Manitowoc County Board,

Each year at this time we share with you and the public our financial goals and priorities as we look to plan the Manitowoc County budget for next year. The mission remains to keep delivering high quality services, efficiently, taking as little from the taxpayers as we can.

You have heard me talking about Manitowoc County’s long term financial goals and priorities many times. They continue to be to:

- Hold the line on property taxes while delivering high quality services
- Keep our debt low – less than 10% of the statutory maximum limit
- Continue with a robust capital improvement program
- Maintain our facilities, County Trunk roads, and equipment.

The Manitowoc County Board should be proud of the way we have held the line on county property taxes since 2006. Compare the history of the county property taxes on any property in Manitowoc County and you will find we have held the line on county property taxes year after year. (See page 34.)

In 2025 we are going to be adding revenues from the local option county sales tax of .5% for the first time. We’ve been able to hold off on going to the local sale tax for a long time, but now we have to join the overwhelming majority of counties in Wisconsin with that revenue source because of growing inflation and human service costs. We will conservatively estimate the local Sales tax revenue to be at \$7,500,000 million dollars in 2025.

In spite of this our financial plan is working well. In the past few years Manitowoc County held the line on property taxes, and controlled our debt to where it is about 7 % of the statutory maximum limit. We also have had aggressive highway maintenance plans and a robust capital improvement program.

Inflation is the cruelest tax. It affects us all, the most with low and fixed incomes. Inflation affects local governments too, as government revenues don’t keep up with the increased expenses as we deliver services. In 2025 we will again hold the line on county property taxes, so that the typical Manitowoc County taxpayer will pay a bit less than last year in county property taxes.

The Manitowoc County 2025 budget that I am proposing today, calls for a tax levy for operations of \$33,021,884.03 to support total spending of \$108,457,460. The levy will increase .67% but this will result in a **slight tax decrease for the typical taxpayer in county property taxes**, reduced because of the net new construction increase in the equalized property values measured an increase of 1.47% from last year. This is continued good news for property taxpayers.

Please look at the charts I've attached to this memo. They were prepared by the Finance Director and show our history on distribution of the tax levy, capital spending, and debt.

Notice how we have maintained our debt at very low levels in the past, usually less than 10% of our statutory debt limit. It's 7% now and we can reasonably project that we will keep it below 10% into the future. (See more on Manitowoc County's debt load on pages 39-43.).

We have been working together with the County Board to make decisions that hold to two important long term objectives: continuing to hold the line on property taxes while delivering high quality services. We have kept government affordable, modernized daily operations, while always staying focused on the future.

“Priorities”

Our priorities for 2025 fall into three main categories:

1. Combating inflation with an investment in our employees by raising salaries up 2% in all cells on the pay scale and proceeding with a 8% increase in the health insurance premiums. To compensate for the insurance increase we will continue to offer new benefits and incentives in the health care program; (See more on pages 23-32.)
2. Getting control of the expenses of the Human Services department to continue to make progress on mental health, child welfare, and the opioid crisis;
3. Continuing this year with an aggressive highway maintenance program with 19 miles of road re-surfacing and projects of more than \$6,300,000. (Look for more on pages 46-49.)

“Proposals for 2025”

My budget proposal for 2025 contains several key items that I would like to specifically draw to your attention to:

1. I propose the levy to be \$33,021,884.03. This provides the typical county property taxpayer with a **slight tax decrease** from last year, when combined with the 1.47% net new construction growth in the equalized property valuation in 2024.

2. Our employees are important partners in delivering quality services. To combat the inflationary pressure on them and compete in the hiring market I am recommending that we increase the salary cells on our non-bargaining pay plan by 2%.
3. Health Insurance costs are crucial too. As a result of our good experience with our self-funded self-directed high deductible health plan there were no changes in health care premiums for eight of the last ten years. However inflation hits health care costs too. I am recommending that we raise the premium on our health care plan by 8% on both the employer and employee share. (See page 60 for more on our health insurance plan.)
4. County Trunk Highway road maintenance continues to be a high priority. In 2025 I am recommending that we appropriate \$6,331,000 for highway projects with 19 miles of road resurfacing. Manitowoc County has an aggressive 17 year rotational plan for County Trunk road maintenance. With this appropriation we will maintain our five year plan for road maintenance and construction. I recommend that we borrow \$3,250,000 to finance these highway projects. (See the five year plan for bridges and highways on pages 46 – 49.).
5. Manitowoc County has increased needs in the Human Services Department. In the past we have been expanding to provide services for families and their children. We have robust workloads in our children and families division, child protective services, foster children and the clinical services division. I am recommending that we appropriate nearly \$4.7 million dollars more to the Human Service Department to compensate for the \$2.6 million dollar 2024 deficit and inflationary increases in 2025.
6. I am recommending that we allocate \$500,000 in the Opioid Legal Settlement payments that we have received to the Human Services Department because the needs in Child Protection and Mental Health are greatly affected by the opioid drug problem.
7. We annually appropriate a minimum of \$300,000 for maintenance projects. We have many examples of failed maintenance in other local government entities. I am recommending that we appropriate \$875,000 for the Public Works Department to fund major maintenance of our equipment and facilities for our continuous five year program. (See pages 50-57.)
8. Inflation affects law enforcement too. Nearly a million dollars more will be needed in the Sheriff's Department. I am recommending that we also allocate \$100,000 from the Opioid Settlement funds to defer Metro Drug Unit expenses.
9. Because of the inflationary constraints on our budget I will NOT be recommending any additional positions in Manitowoc County for 2025.
10. Manitowoc County Expo had a successful year with another record attendance of the Manitowoc County Fair. I am recommending that \$130,000 be appropriated from the Expo reserve for capital projects that the Expo Board and the Public Works Committee unanimously recommended. (See page 58.)

11. The Information Technology Division of the Public Works Department will have increased costs due to added initiatives for internet security and increased costs of licensing. These costs will be allocated to the various departments as they use our IT services.
12. The Parks Department was busy in the past three years building the Maribel Caves, Cato Fall's, and Walla Hi parks' pavilions; and boat launching projects on English, Wilke, and Pigeon lakes. In 2025 I am recommending that we begin to offer camping in the Walla Hi Park and a variety of parks projects listed on page 59.
13. I recommend all the changes in reclassifications listed on page 32. For all changes in the personnel allocations see page 23-32.
14. I am NOT recommending that any funds be appropriated from the General Fund Reserve for this budget.
15. The Courthouse Dome Renovation project is NOT part of this budget. The first phase, replacing the windows and the HVAC system is continuing in 2025. The county saved almost a million dollars from the initial estimate on those bids. We bought some time with the "band-aid" repairs on the dome façade in 2024. But this project won't go away. In the long run there is no realistic alternative to rehabilitating the dome on the Courthouse. As we wait the costs will go up and up. We can learn a lot from other government entities who have neglected maintenance and upkeep for their facilities and will be paying an awesome price.

This is a conservative budget that is holding the line on taxes; continues our low debt profile; has an aggressive highway maintenance plan; while having a robust capital spending program. We spend the taxpayers' money as efficiently as possible. It's paid off, in our services and the quality of our operations countywide.

I am grateful to the County Board for their willingness to join me in making decisions that have allowed us to be successful. We have made good decisions in the past which will keep county government affordable for years to come.

I want to draw your attention to the back section of the budget booklet which re-states and summarizes appropriations on a department by department basis. This section provides important information on the mission, resources, staffing, and tax levy necessary for each department; making for an easier understanding of its impact. We've included our revised 5 year plans for major departments. Other information included in the miscellaneous section is important to help a reader get a better understanding of specific new proposals for 2025 and how they fit into the entire Manitowoc County budget plan.

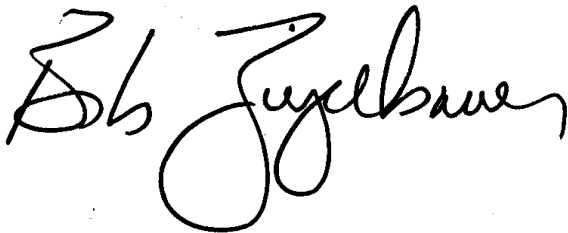
Thanks to the Finance Director, J.J. Gutman, for his help in putting this budget together and to all of the employees of Manitowoc County for the good work they do.

Thanks to the support of the County Board, and the citizens of our county, Manitowoc County government is not only more effective, but also more sustainable, nimble, and better able to adjust to change in the future.

I believe that this is a good plan for Manitowoc County. I look forward to your deliberations over the next few weeks and would appreciate your support of these proposals. I invite you to meet with me as needed, informally or at the committee level, to help answer your questions and understand details in this budget as you prepare to pass it in November.

As is always the case please don't hesitate to call on me if I can ever be of assistance to you on this or any other issue of importance to you. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Ziegelbauer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B" and "Z".

Bob Ziegelbauer
Manitowoc County Executive

Manitowoc County, Wisconsin
2025 Vs. 2024 Budget Levy Comparison for Budgets Entered Into The System

Represents new item(s) since last update or Areas to Revisit



Completed & in Computer



	Adopted 2022 Levy for 2023 Budget	Adopted 2023 Levy for 2024 Budget *	Proposed 2024 Levy for 2025 Budget	2025 VS 2024 Variance	Completed & in Computer	Notes:
Aging Resources - ADRC	\$26,000.00	\$30,650.00	\$30,650.00	\$0.00	✓	Inc due to slight decrease in revenues from grants, also offset with dec in exps in programs
Airport	\$255,905.00	\$296,688.44	\$297,724.00	\$1,035.56	✓	Inc due to tree cutting
Child Support	\$121,187.00	\$165,130.00	\$221,640.00	\$56,510.00	✓	Inc due to Sal \$32K, HLTH Ins \$16K, Ext Hire \$7K, remain is misc area inc
Clerk of Court	\$772,363.99	\$757,953.00	\$790,968.00	\$33,015.00	✓	Inc due to Interpreter fees \$45k offset with reductions in other expenses.
Comptroller (Includes General Insurance)	\$875,749.00	\$873,598.00	\$963,104.00	\$89,506.00	✓	Inc due to IS chg's \$50 K, Insurance \$20 K
Coroner	\$280,955.00	\$316,033.00	\$334,134.00	\$18,101.00	✓	Body bag price inc 4k, and inc in diagnostics of 10%
Corporation Counsel	\$489,473.97	\$523,848.00	\$536,565.00	\$12,717.00	✓	Inc due to Sal, however, IS charges decreased
County Board	\$158,486.00	\$160,782.00	\$170,843.00	\$10,061.00	✓	Inc due to IS chg's
County Clerk	\$466,759.75	\$453,305.00	\$475,967.00	\$22,662.00	✓	Inc due to sal & change in HLTH ins election with reductions in misc expend areas
District Attorney	\$500,613.00	\$538,820.00	\$534,452.00	(\$4,368.00)	✓	Inc due primarily due to Res. Deputy position as extra hire wages
Emergency Management	\$131,207.00	\$104,496.00	\$85,263.00	(\$19,233.00)	✓	Dec due to new employees at lower rates than previous employees
Executive	\$142,389.00	\$157,036.00	\$156,593.00	(\$443.00)	✓	Dec due to drop in IS charges offset by salary inc
Family Court Commissioner	\$101,106.00	\$86,459.00	\$88,339.00	\$1,880.00	✓	Inc due to sal but offset by increase in revenues
Health Department	\$688,119.60	\$902,190.00	\$1,078,440.00	\$176,250.00	✓	Inc due to ARPA and Cares/Covid money all spent.
Highway Department	\$4,442,983.21	\$4,228,810.00	\$4,235,798.00	\$6,988.00	✓	Borrow \$3.25 M for \$6.3 M Projects
Highway Bridge Aid Petitions	\$135,933.00	\$453,247.00	\$30,230.00	(\$423,017.00)	✓	
Human Services Department	\$5,792,729.47	\$5,708,018.00	\$10,407,052.00	\$4,699,034.00	✓	Deficit \$2.6 M in 2024
Information Systems (D)	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$209,151.00)	(\$209,151.00)	✓	Charging more this year in revenue than exp's for future Nutanix upgrade
Joint Dispatch Center	\$1,950,671.85	\$2,004,442.00	\$2,151,557.00	\$147,115.00	✓	Inc due to Sal and \$30K in overtime
Communications Activity	\$1,069,019.00	\$1,155,995.00	\$1,186,026.00	\$30,031.00	✓	UPS tower replacement at Tower sites inc \$30k
Personnel	\$311,331.00	\$348,005.00	\$418,238.00	\$70,233.00	✓	Inc due to change in HLTH Ins and \$50K for labor relations added to budget
Planning & Zoning	\$717,752.00	\$821,917.00	\$747,534.00	(\$74,383.00)	✓	Inc due to Sal and HLTH Ins election of \$45K also \$10K equip
Parks	\$347,595.00	\$214,721.00	\$533,858.00	\$319,137.00	✓	Inc due to capital projects included in budget see parks outlay sheet for info.
Public Works	\$3,422,055.00	\$3,118,688.00	\$3,247,165.00	\$128,477.00	✓	See PWKS worksheet for support and reason for Inc
Register in Probate	\$274,552.00	\$299,529.00	\$303,367.00	\$3,838.00	✓	Dec due to new employee at lower salary and decrease in IS charges
Register of Deeds	(\$326,332.00)	(\$288,645.00)	(\$119,957.00)	\$168,688.00	✓	Inc due to Sal and brunt of inc is IS chg for \$127K due to land records database storage
Sheriff's Department	\$12,652,759.83	\$13,281,817.00	\$14,184,493.00	\$902,676.00	✓	See email handout for detail on increases
Soil & Water	\$379,366.00	\$378,522.00	\$415,733.00	\$37,211.00	✓	Inc due to sal and IS chg
Treasurer	(\$627,999.00)	(\$1,053,631.00)	(\$884,045.00)	\$169,586.00	✓	Inc due to \$100k int in taxes, and \$15k in sal/hlth ins, 10K other exp
UW-Extension	\$290,151.00	\$278,238.00	\$286,204.00	\$7,966.00	✓	Inc due to IS charges
Veterans	\$306,149.00	\$329,026.00	\$302,236.00	(\$26,790.00)	✓	Dec due to chg in HLTH ins and salaries and IS chg
Non-Department	(\$8,108,006.00)	(\$7,957,751.60)	(\$15,132,675.21)	(\$7,174,923.61)	✓	\$7.5 M Sales Tax Revenue
Library	\$936,497.00	\$952,679.00	\$1,039,703.00	\$87,024.00	✓	Based on contracted usage for libraries
Debt Service Fund	\$2,822,002.00	\$2,521,584.00	\$3,403,006.00	\$881,422.00	✓	agrees to debt schedules
Expo	\$0.00	(\$4,472.00)	(\$4,472.00)	\$0.00	✓	Dec due to increased revenues
Recycling	\$539,986.00	\$539,986.00	\$589,986.00	\$50,000.00	✓	\$50K for contracted services
Solid Waste Disposal	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	✓	No change
Solid Waste Disposal GF	\$94,632.00	\$91,830.00	\$87,155.00	(\$4,675.00)	✓	
Board of Adj	\$15,041.00	\$22,836.00	\$22,831.00	(\$5.00)	✓	
ARPA	\$0.00	(\$19,328.00)	\$0.00	\$19,328.00	✓	
Illegal Real Estate Tax Chg. Bk.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,330.24	\$5,330.24	✓	
Total All Levies	\$32,459,182.67	\$32,803,050.84	\$33,021,884.03	\$218,833.19	←	Total Levy needs to be \$33,285,255.84 or less. Less \$10,000 or \$33,275,255.84
Total All Levies				(\$263,371.81)	Over (Under) estimated Target.	
					↕	Difference needs to be \$XXX,XXX or less to meet goal of no-tax levy increase

Manitowoc County Principal Indebtedness

Year	Principal Beginning Balance January 1,	Principal (Retired)/Added During The Year	Principal Ending Balance December 31,	Per-cent of Maximum Debt
2020	\$28,665,000	(\$1,039,296)	\$27,625,704	10.2%
June 30, 2020	\$29,270,000	(\$3,240,000)	\$26,030,000	8.2%
2021	\$26,030,000	(\$1,710,000)	\$24,320,000	7.6%
2022	\$24,320,000	(\$2,000,000)	\$22,320,000	7.0%
2023	\$22,770,000	\$390,000	\$23,160,000	6.0%
2024	\$23,160,000	\$6,180,000	\$29,340,000	7.0% *
2025	\$29,340,000	\$665,000	\$30,005,000	7.2% **
2026	\$30,005,000	(\$2,835,000)	\$27,170,000	
2027	\$27,170,000	(\$2,655,000)	\$24,515,000	
2028	\$24,515,000	(\$2,745,000)	\$21,770,000	
2029	\$21,770,000	(\$2,850,000)	\$18,920,000	
2030	\$18,920,000	(\$2,960,000)	\$15,960,000	
2031	\$15,960,000	(\$2,495,000)	\$13,465,000	
2032	\$13,465,000	(\$1,910,000)	\$11,555,000	
2033	\$11,555,000	(\$1,965,000)	\$9,590,000	
2034	\$9,590,000	(\$1,730,000)	\$7,860,000	
2035	\$7,860,000	(\$1,275,000)	\$6,585,000	
2036	\$6,585,000	(\$1,320,000)	\$5,265,000	

Long-Term Financial Goal:

Keep debt below 10% of the State Maximum

* Includes borrowing of \$8.275 million in principal paid off column

**Includes borrowing of \$3.25 million in principal paid off column

Manitowoc County General Fixed Assets Spending 2006 - 2025

	Land & Land Improvements	Buildings & Building Improvements	Infrastructure	Equipment, Vehicles, & Miscellaneous	Total	Debt Borrowed
2006	\$2,815,171	\$525,931	\$861,445	\$1,443,086	\$5,645,633	
2007	926,568	191,695	1,808,627	719,276	3,646,166	
2008	614,081	163,819	1,141,372	1,087,123	3,006,395	
2009	24,100	157,536	1,306,334	895,319	2,383,289	
2010	-	7,914,746	1,160,521	481,878	9,557,145	15,740,000
2011	79,950	466,411	1,786,908	8,797,382	11,130,651	
2012	46,500	1,370,895	1,189,668	3,802,224	6,409,287	
2013	29,093	1,394,147	319,427	840,951	2,583,618	1,900,000
2014	-	339,753	2,078,517	1,016,669	3,434,939	
2015	18,975	173,420	1,612,876	1,491,970	3,297,241	
2016	87,022	949,868	1,157,617	1,547,035	3,741,542	
2017	498,900	5,936,765	694,840	1,627,913	8,758,418	7,110,000
2018	-	2,064,983	2,777,234	924,535	5,766,752	1,500,000
2019	533,700	1,767,600	8,290,000	1,967,542	12,558,842	6,505,000
2020	272,220	994,000	2,318,000	565,500	4,149,720	1,275,000
2021	265,200	465,000	2,732,484	746,750	4,209,434	1,000,000
2022	227,000	525,000	3,138,420	6,230,000	10,120,420	-
2023	327,200	2,112,000	5,497,428	760,339	8,696,967	2,500,000
2024	140,200	1,082,495	7,589,733	635,684	9,448,112	8,275,000
2025	268,000	930,000	6,300,000	1,206,385	8,704,385	3,250,000
Total	\$7,173,880	\$29,526,064	\$53,761,451	\$34,945,492	\$109,096,459	\$49,055,000