

Interview: Tackling Milwaukee's budget challenges, curbing crime Donovan's top priorities

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Providing strong leadership, addressing public safety issues and improving on Milwaukee's fiscal challenges would be former Ald. Bob Donovan's top priorities if he's elected the city's next mayor.

The 66 year-old who served as alderman for the 8th district on the city's near south side from 2000 to 2020 is widely viewed as the conservative candidate in the field of seven.

Increasing the number of police officers, monitoring Milwaukee County DA John Chisholm's office and local judges, as well as revising the juvenile justice system would help ensure criminals are held accountable, he said in a WisPolitics.com interview.

Donovan added reforming the juvenile justice system would also help curb the city's spike in car thefts. Milwaukee saw nearly as many stolen cars in 2021 as Chicago despite having less a quarter the population.

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"I strongly believe that every peace- and law-abiding citizen in Milwaukee, or in any community, expects that criminals are going to be held accountable for their criminal behavior," he said. "As we have seen time and time again in this community, a situation where individuals have been apprehended, for heinous crimes I might add, have records a mile long and shouldn't be out on the street to begin with."

Donovan said working on public safety would also help address racial disparities in

the city.

“Just by doing our job of ensuring safety on our streets and providing quality education for our young people, that will go a long way in addressing racial disparities not only here, but in the larger great Milwaukee area,” he said.

Addressing those issues, he said, could reduce the number of people leaving the city for its surrounding suburbs.

While Donovan in the past has been a staunch opponent of the city’s street car, he said he’s open to keeping it running since Milwaukee would be on the hook for millions of dollars with the federal government if the city abandoned the system.

Regardless, he wants to see a referendum if anyone proposes expanding it.

Whether the future of Milwaukee features a street car or not, Donovan said he wants to see it become a thriving community and “the best city in America.”

“We have a great cultural scene, we have professional athletics,” he said. “We have a lot of great amenities here that we need to accentuate, and then we need to work towards eliminating the negatives. So I would want to see a community that has great schools; the best schools in America, where every child has an opportunity to grow and learn and become a productive citizen.”

Listen to the interview [here](#).

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