

# Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Nicholson: Finance Committee unanimously recommends Nicholson, Sumner amendment funding paratransit and parks

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MILWAUKEE – Today the County Board’s Finance Committee unanimously recommended for adoption an [amendment](#) authored by Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson and Supervisor Liz Sumner to restore funding for paratransit taxi service, invest \$1.3 million in parks, direct Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) to work with stakeholders on a plan to revive festival bus service, and reduce the tax levy by \$125,539.

*“This amendment makes a real investment in our vision of achieving equity and our mission of enhancing quality of life services,” said Chairwoman Nicholson. “We heard loud and clear from our neighbors that paratransit taxi service is vital to accessibility in Milwaukee County and discontinuation would be detrimental to riders. We also know that our beloved parks are in dire need of investment and care. I was happy to put forward a proposal to address both needs and thank the Finance Committee for their unanimous support.”*

*“I am thankful for everyone who came to the Finance Committee public hearing to share their stories related to paratransit,” said Supervisor Sumner. “Your testimony brought to light just how essential this service is to our community. This investment in transportation and parks will make Milwaukee County stronger while*

*simultaneously lowering our tax levy.”*

In the 2023 Recommended Budget, paratransit taxi service was slated to be discontinued after May 2023. The amendment, which was informed by engagement with impacted communities, would continue funding the paratransit taxi service and direct MCTS to provide a report to the County Board on new or extended contract details by April.

The amendment also includes a \$1.3 million allocation for the Parks Department to address mission critical needs including opening and staffing pools, improving Mitchell Park and Kosciuzsko Community Center, seasonal staff to maintain parks and staff major events, and community engagement. The Parks Department would be directed to provide a report to the County Board by February on the exact use of those funds. \$32,000 is provided to hire seasonal staff to supervise roller skating at Red Arrow Park.

MCTS is directed to work with stakeholders including Milwaukee World Festival LLC, intergovernmental partners, and community organizations to explore reviving the Summerfest and other festival bus service.

The amendment is funded through updated employee fringe benefit projections provided by the county's healthcare provider's actuary and confirmed by the Office of the Comptroller.

The County Board's Finance Committee will continue considering budget amendments from Supervisors on Thursday, October 27 and Friday, November 4. The County Board will hold its [annual public hearing](#) on the budget on Tuesday, November 1 and will adopt the annual budget on Thursday, November 10.