

Milwaukee County Board approves sales tax increase

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The Milwaukee County Board today 15-3 approved boosting its sales tax by 0.4 cents, which leaders say will help avoid fiscal catastrophe.

Under the shared revenue bill Gov. Tony Evers signed into law, approving the 0.4 percent tax required a two-thirds vote. The move comes after the city of Milwaukee earlier this month approved a 2 percent sales tax through a council vote.

The county currently levies a 0.5 percent tax. The increase brings the levy to 0.9 percent and is expected to generate \$80 million per year in new revenue.

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley praised the vote in a statement.

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“Today, the County Board of Supervisors shaped the future of the Milwaukee County for years to come by avoiding a devastating fiscal cliff that posed to threaten irreparable harm to our community, he said. “After years of advocacy, Milwaukee County finally has the additional revenue needed to avert financial disaster.”

The Board also approved Board Chairwoman Marcia Nicholson’s amendment that calls on Crowley to reduce the property tax levy, increase funding for parks, transit and other county services and provide a report detailing how the county will spend the new revenue.

The amendment also requires Crowley and his administration provide a plan on how the county will preserve its existing reserves and use them to reduce the property tax levy and fund capital infrastructure needs.

“We can either go into financial crisis and deny ourselves local dollars that provide

critical services our constituents rely on, or we can take advantage of a once in a generation opportunity to invest in our communities,” she said.

See Crowley’s statement [here](#).