

COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S 2008 BUDGET

DEPT: MILWAUKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

UNIT NO. 1908
FUND: General - 0001

OPERATING AUTHORITY & PURPOSE

Pursuant to Section 59.56(5) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the County Board may appropriate money to any historical society located in the County and incorporated under Section 44.03 for the purpose of collecting and preserving the records and salient historical features of the County. This unit maintains the historical exhibits of the Milwaukee County Historical Society and assists with other phases of

the program. Funds provided to subsidize the operation of the Society are used to employ a director and associate staff. The Society acts as custodian for non-current County records. The County appropriates funds for use by the Society pursuant to an agreement approved by the County Board of Supervisors on December 14, 1965 and renewed on May 16, 1988.

BUDGET SUMMARY			
	2006 Actual	2007 Budget	2008 Budget
County Historical Society	\$ 242,550	\$ 242,550	\$ 242,550

OVERVIEW OF OPERATION

The Historical Society's total operating budget for 2008 amounts to \$703,550, with \$461,000 coming from non-County funds. Sources include gifts, grants, membership fees (individual and corporate), bequests, investments, sales and receipts from public programs.

Following are examples of some of the Historical Society's program activities.

1. Accessibility Initiative: During 2006, the Historical Society began Phase II of its Capital Restoration Project with the goal of making the Historical Center more accessible to all visitors. Work included the installation of a full-service elevator, the upgrading of restrooms to meet ADA requirements, the relocation of the main staircase, the installation of a new reception desk and gift shop, and the restoration of one section of the ornamental plaster ceiling. All components of the project were completed by June, 2007.
2. Outcomes: The Historical Society experienced substantial increases in several areas of operation during 2006. Most notably, visits to the Historical Society's website increased for the third consecutive year, rising 134% from 101,991 in 2005 to 239,335 in 2006. General visitation to the Historical Center, Trimborn Farm and the Society's Period Homes also increased during 2006 by a margin of 25%, although tour group attendance dipped slightly. Visitation to the Society during Summer River Rhythms

Concerts in Pere Marquette Park declined considerably, from 5,453 to 1,538, due to ongoing construction during July and August. However, overall participation in all public programming offered by the Historical Society increased from 33,783 in 2005 to 36,692 in 2006. Inquiries to the Research Library, for example, increased by 12% in 2006, rebounding from the slump during 2005 that resulted from the library being closed for construction for more than two months.

3. Diversity: For the third consecutive year, the Historical Society was especially successful in bringing exhibitions and programs highlighting cultural diversity to Milwaukee County. In April 2006, the Society collaborated with the Watrous Gallery of the Overture Center in Madison to bring the exhibition *Miss Annie Mae's Hats: Church Hats from the Black Community* to Milwaukee. In July, the Historical Society organized the exhibition *All for One and One for All: The Story of the League of Latin American Citizens*. The exhibition opened in conjunction with the national convention of LULAC which was held in Milwaukee.
4. Collections: The Historical Society acquired several significant new collections during 2006. These included an extensive collection of paintings from Blessed Lady of Pompeii Church in Milwaukee's Italian community, as well as papers and photographs from the estates of

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Cyril and Gretchen Colnik. The primary focus of the collections staff during 2006 was the re-shelving of artifacts and documents in storage to permit Phase II accessibility construction, and the conversion of collection records to the Past Perfect software system.

5. Publications. During 2006, the Historical Society released a Third Edition of John Gurda's *The Making of Milwaukee* in conjunction with the premiere of Milwaukee Public Television's five-hour series based on the book. Of the 5,500 copies of the book reprinted, nearly 3,500 were sold during the last quarter of 2006, generating total sales for the volume in excess of 20,000 copies since 1999.
6. Public Programming: The Society and its Friends organization continue to sponsor public programs on a variety of topics. During 2006, the Society hosted its 53rd Anniversary Recognition Banquet at the Wisconsin Club, drawing nearly 250 people and presenting awards to a record 31 individuals and groups.

The Friends of the Milwaukee County Historical Society continued their expanded programming schedule during 2006, presenting a number of special events. Among these were tours of Miller Park and of Lake Park, a Native American Ethnic Dinner at Potawatomi Bingo and Casino, and a program devoted to the recently restored Ambassador Hotel. For the fifth consecutive year, the Friends donated more than \$10,000 in program revenue to the Society.

7. County Landmarks: Since 1976, the Historical Society has operated, under County ordinance, a landmark recognition program for areas of Milwaukee County outside the City of Milwaukee. Nearly 100 sites have been designated as landmarks throughout the history of the program. During 2006, the Landmark Committee added four properties to its list of County Landmarks including the Mary Nohl House and the Friedlander House in Fox Point, Lake Park in Milwaukee, and the Finan-Gabel-Bodamer Log Cabin in Greenfield.
8. Museum Houses: In addition to all three of the period homes operated by the Historical Society

being open to the public during 2006, the Society offered expanded programming at Trimborn Farm in Greendale. A community Development Block Grant from Milwaukee County, as well as additional support from the Reiman Foundation and the Wisconsin Arts Board, enabled the Society to attract significant numbers of school children, adults, and seniors for guided tours. Especially successful were the new Folk Art Show and Sale which attracted 750 visitors, the 2nd Annual Vintage Base Ball Tournament, which drew a similar crowd, the 24th Annual Harvest of Arts and Crafts, which brought in over 4,000 visitors, and the 3rd Annual Civil War Encampment which attracted roughly 125 re-enactors and an audience of over 1,000 guests.

MISSION

The Milwaukee County Historical Society was founded in 1935 to collect, preserve and make available materials relating to the history of Milwaukee County. Through a broad program, the Society seeks to promote a greater appreciation of the community's rich heritage and a better understanding of present-day challenges and advantages. The Society's library and museum collections, exhibitions and activities serve a variety of constituencies including scholars, students, genealogists, local businesses and organizations and Milwaukee County residents and visitors.

OBJECTIVES

- The Milwaukee County Historical Society will develop and utilize various alternative strategies in order to continue providing researchers with access to archival resources and the general public with an active program of exhibitions and special events during completion of Phase III of the Society's Building Restoration.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2008 contribution to the Historical Society remains at the 2007 level of \$242,550.
- In order to remain at the current level of County support, the Historical Society has balanced increases in Supply and Materials costs with decreases in Building Operation expenses. Some of the Building Operation cost reductions

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result from the anticipated closing of the building for six months during capital construction in 2008. However, some costs have been

transferred to the General Fund (Private) Budget to maintain a constant level of service.

The County Historical Society spends the County's contribution as follows:

	2006 Actual	2007 Budget	2008 Budget
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Personal Services	\$ 183,250	\$ 191,227	\$ 191,227
Space and Utilities	56,765	48,788	46,288
Office and Administrative Supplies	2,535	2,535	5,035
Total Expenditures	\$ 242,550	\$ 242,550	\$ 242,550

ACTIVITY AND STATISTICAL SUMMARY				
	2005 <u>Actual</u>	2006 <u>Actual</u>	2007 <u>Budget</u>	2008 <u>Budget</u>
Meetings/Public Programs	7	13	12	12
Organizational Members	1,421	1,337	1,600	1,700
Research Requests:	3,631	4,083	4,500	4,000
Library - In Person	1,053	1,337	1,500	1,333
Telephone	1,444	1,514	1,500	1,333
Mail/E-mail	1,134	1,232	1,500	1,334
Public Attendance	33,783	36,692	20,000	20,000
Guided Tours:				
Historical Center	51	68	100	40
Period Homes	88	56	100	100
Accessions:				
Library	98	122	130	130
Museum	39	35	60	60
Pages of Publication	131	542	150	150
Staff Program Presentations	23	30	45	50
Slide Shows/Media Appearances	8	12	15	15
Website Visits	101,991	239,335	135,000	300,000