



# COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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## **Kreuser's 2019 State of the County affirms commitment to law enforcement, roads, quality of place**

KENOSHA – Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser presented his 2019 State of the County address to the County Board on Tuesday night, elaborating on the county's work to take care of its infrastructure, and its citizens.

“The state of Kenosha County is strong – ahead of the curve on our infrastructure plan, and an innovator in many areas, especially when it comes to providing cost-effective services for our most vulnerable residents,” Kreuser said.

Quality highways and solid public safety are at the heart of county government, Kreuser said, forecasting increased support for the Sheriff's Department in the 2020 budget.

Kreuser noted that 72 percent of the county's 2019 capital improvement bonding went to two departments: sheriff and highways.

“One could argue that law enforcement is infrastructure also,” Kreuser said. “Keeping the public safe and secure is the backbone of any community.”

“We need to support our deputies with good equipment and vehicles – and we have. But it doesn't end there,” Kreuser added. “We need to keep up with salary and benefits to be competitive as our county grows and becomes even busier.”

As for highways, Kreuser said Kenosha County is planning and building for anticipated growth in strategic areas, so that citizens and businesses do not end up in the perpetual traffic gridlock that plagues communities across the Illinois state line.

“Traffic congestion, the pension fund mess, education, public safety and quality of place are key reasons Illinois companies continue to choose Kenosha County,” Kreuser said.

Kreuser praised the work of the County Board and the county's economic development partner, the Kenosha Area Business Alliance, in continuing a strong wave of economic development.

Among the projects currently in development or recently completed, he noted:

- A flagship distribution center for the Germany-based global health care company Fresenius Kabi.
- A new Froedtert South outpatient surgical wing and medical office building.
- An Advocate Aurora Health Care ambulatory surgery center in Pleasant Prairie.
- A variety of housing developments across the county, including the Market Square Apartments in Somers, the Breeze Terrace Apartments in Pleasant Prairie, the Springs at Kenosha and The Apartments at the Falls at Pike Creek in Kenosha.

“We’re a beacon for businesses – from across our southern border to across the oceans – as we are attracting international companies,” Kreuser said.

As efforts continue to further improve the quality of life for new and longtime residents, Kreuser hailed the strong public-private partnerships in which the county is engaging.

These partnerships, Kreuser said, include Kenosha County Parks’ relationship with the operators of the Petrifying Springs Biergarten and with Boundless Adventures, the entity that will soon open a state-of-the-art, unique-to-the-Midwest, aerial adventure park within Bristol Woods Park.

The county executive also praised a long-time partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Kenosha, Community Impact Programs and numerous private businesses: The Summer Youth Employment Program, which continues to provide opportunities and guidance to at-risk youth in the community.

Kreuser noted that all of this work is being done as the county maintains its fiscal strength.

Kenosha County continues to hold a AA+ bond rating, putting it among Wisconsin’s most fiscally strong counties, while its unassigned general fund balance is at its highest-ever amount and the county’s equalized value is at a record \$15.6 billion (including tax incremental districts).

Kreuser concluded: “Kenosha County is strong because of our commitment to fiscal strength, efficient budgeting and cost-effective programs.

“We are helping people work in Kenosha County as we are planning for and maintaining our highways; we are committed to strong and effective law enforcement and public safety efforts; and we are looking ahead at where our economic growth opportunities are and will be.

“Citizens can play and raise a family in Kenosha County because we find ways to give them a cost-effective park system and educational opportunities in our parks.

“In 2019, the State of Kenosha County is strong!”

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