

## Recommendations to the Waste, Fraud and Abuse Commission

Many of the activities and services that are under the jurisdiction of the City of Milwaukee are ultimately governed, regulated, and provided for through state statute. The City has identified several areas of state government and state statute that in their current form promote inefficiency and are not conducive to a high level of service delivery that our residents deserve. Therefore, below is a list of changes to state government and statute that have the potential to greatly improve the delivery of services for residents of Milwaukee.

- DOT Harbor Assistance Program
  - Expand eligibility to include dock equipment and cranes.
  - Add additional flexibilities to the long term use and change of use guarantees for grant funded projects.
- Petroleum tank inspections
  - Currently, annual periodic inspections of petroleum tanks located in the City of Milwaukee are performed by state inspectors. There are 552 tanks located at non-retail facilities and 663 tanks located at retail facilities.
  - The City of Milwaukee could provide the required annual inspections of petroleum tanks located in the City as a Local Program Operator (LPO) under contract.
  - The Department of Neighborhood Services has 3 building construction inspectors who hold the required certification to conduct the inspections.
  - This arrangement has the potential to save money for the state and create a more efficient inspection process.
- Manufacturing Assessments
  - Currently, the City pays \$80,000 annually to the state for manufacturing assessments. The City Assessor's Office currently has enough capacity to perform the assessments in house at a lower cost to Milwaukee taxpayers.
  - The state often does not meet the statutory requirement for one inspection every five years. The City has the ability to meet all statutory manufacturing assessment requirements.
- Elevator inspections
  - Currently, annual periodic inspections of elevators located in state owned buildings within Milwaukee are performed by state inspectors. There are 199 elevators located in buildings under the state jurisdiction within Milwaukee.
  - The City of Milwaukee could provide the required annual inspections of elevators located at state owned facilities in Milwaukee.
  - The Department of Neighborhood Services has 4 elevator inspectors who hold the required certifications to conduct the inspections. Milwaukee staff currently conduct the annual inspections of more than 3,600 elevators in Milwaukee and can handle the increase workload.
  - This arrangement has the potential to save money for the state and create a more efficient inspection process.
- Variances
  - Currently, variances for one and two family dwellings under the Uniform Dwelling Code are required to be granted by the state.
  - The City currently grants variances for commercial buildings and has the capacity to take over the granting of variances for one and two family dwellings under the Uniform Dwelling Code from the state.

- Agent agreements for enforcement of specific state statutes
  - Currently, the City has agent agreements with the state for enforcement of hotel/motel licensing, mobile home parks, dry cleaners, swimming pools, etc.
  - The City has the capacity to enter into additional agreements with the state in appropriate areas including salvage operations, motor vehicle dealer licensing, and group home, day care and other occupancies where city regulations overlap with state law.
  - This would allow the City to enforce regulations from state statute that may not be fully enforced by the state due to staffing levels. This could also potentially eliminate duplication of services.
- Recommend changes to Comm Chapter 61 to redefine the size and nature of construction projects that require the use of a design professional
  - Currently, a design professional is required for any changes in a building with a volume greater than 50,000 cubic feet.
  - The City recommends that this requirement be revised to make it more risk based utilizing the use and occupant load of the building or tenant space as governing criteria.
- Certified pesticide applicators
  - Currently, DATCAP licenses certified pesticide applicators on an annual basis, and requires an initial certification exam and a recertifying exam every five years. The recertifying exam is seen by many as not the best way to ensure competency and as an exercise in recitation of material.
  - It may be beneficial to forego the exam every five years and replace it with bi-annual training sessions. DATCAP could charge a fee for attendance. This new process could increase knowledge while maintaining proficiency in the profession.
- Require income and expense information to be submitted to the Board of Assessors
  - Taxpayers must submit income and expense information at the Board of Review if they proceed with an assessment review after it has been heard by the Board of Assessors.
  - Agents of taxpayers often delay the submittal of this information to increase the potential interest on remissions.
  - If income and expense were required to be submitted during the first stage at the Board of Assessors, this would potentially save taxpayers the added expense of interest on remissions of taxes and would significantly reduce the amount of time cases are held at the Board of Review.
- Establish presumption in municipal court that a parking ticket is presumptive evidence of the facts stated in the citation
  - Currently, parking checkers and police officers must testify when parking violations are contested in municipal court.
  - In certain situations, these employees may spend large portions of their day in court, while still being paid their regular salaries and not be available to perform their duties.
  - This change would end the need for live testimony from parking checkers and police offices to prove a violation occurred and would free them to continue their daily duties.
- Allow Public Debt Amortization Funds to invest in obligations of the state
  - Currently, PDAF's do not have the authority to invest in bonds that are the general obligations of the State of Wisconsin.
  - This change would provide another tool for the potential realization of additional interest income for 1<sup>st</sup> class cities.
- Keep property being marketed for redevelopment purposes out of the TID base
  - Currently, city and redevelopment authority owned vacant lots and improved properties are assigned a taxable value when the Department of Revenue establishes the base value for a TID. For future reporting, these properties are treated as exempt properties, which immediately causes the TID to experience a decline in value.

- This current unanticipated penalty may have the effect of causing districts that have large amounts of municipally owned property to not recoup their cost within statutory guidelines.
  - This change will allow a TID to maintain its original value and allow the district to receive the correct amount of increment that was proposed in the TID project plan.
- Provide that veteran applicants for civil service positions with the same test score be treated equally
  - Current employment law treats veterans with identical tests scores differently if the number of veterans at or above the lowest test score exceeds the number of non-veterans certified for a specific position.
  - Changing §63.39 (2m) would conform this statute concerning municipal employment of veterans to other recent changes in §63.39. It would allow, in cases of tie scores on municipal tests, more veterans to be referred to departments for potential employment with the city.
- Give parking enforcers the same authority of traffic officers
  - Current law allows traffic officers to have an illegally parked vehicle towed to a storage lot.
  - When a parking enforcer discovers an illegally parked vehicle, they must request the assistance of a traffic/police officer to have the vehicle removed. This process may remove an officer from service for an extended period of time.
  - Allowing parking enforcers to authorize the towing of illegally parked vehicles would be a more efficient way to enforce parking violations and would free up the police department to allocate their resources in a more efficient manner.
- Parking Citation Adjudication
  - Currently, individuals who receive parking citations have 7 years to contest the parking citation in court.
  - A change in statute is necessary to allow default judgments to be taken against individuals who fail to arrange to contest their parking citations within 180 days of issuance, and individuals who fail to appear after having timely scheduled appointments to contest their parking citations.
  - This would allow the City to collect on millions of dollars of outstand debt from unpaid citations.
  - In addition, with the lengthy time frame under current law, the City may have experienced turnover in parking and police staff which may make the officer or parking employee unavailable to be a witness during court proceedings.
- Recognize Milwaukee Public Library's Central Library as the state resource library
  - The Milwaukee Public Library has many collections of statewide interest and as the largest public library in the State, the Central Library includes a breadth and depth of subject matter not found in any other public library.