



# *Milwaukee County*

Supervisor Toni M. Clark, 2<sup>nd</sup> District

Chair, Economic & Community Development Committee

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For Immediate Release

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## **NEW COUNTY-OWNED BUILDING EMERGES AS PREFERRED OPTION FOR MILWAUKEE COUNTY'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIVISION**

*Long-term lease of former St. Michael's hospital rejected as site for new mental health complex*

**Milwaukee, WI** – The Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors voted 11-8 Thursday to pursue building a new Behavioral Health Division facility on County-owned land on the Milwaukee County Grounds in Wauwatosa, rejecting a proposal to purchase or lease the former St. Michael hospital site.

County Supervisor Toni M. Clark, Chairperson of the County Board's Economic & Community Development Committee, led many of her colleagues to support the concept of building a new facility, rather than a long-term lease. Supervisor Clark said she supported a new building on the County Grounds for three key reasons:

- **Taxpayers:** "The St. Michael site just didn't make good business or economic sense. Milwaukee County taxpayers should not be stuck with a building that has attracted no other interested buyers or lessees. Should the mental health care model change in future years, a new County-owned facility in the County Grounds gives us much more flexibility. A long-term lease at St. Mike's could have backed taxpayers into a corner down the road."
- **Location:** "It makes sense to build a new facility in a central location, especially one that is in close proximity to the critical mass of major medical institutions in the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center. We should ensure that our mental health patients are able to get additional care quickly and easily."
- **Cost:** "Despite the County Executive's inflated figures, I still believe a new County-owned facility on the County Grounds is the most cost-effective option when all things are considered. We will have the ability to construct a new facility to meet our needs and develop property that will have lasting value. We do not want to be left with a building that has no buyers."

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