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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Milwaukee County Submits Proposal and Renderings for New SRCCCY

Proposal signifies a step forward for Milwaukee County in Project Rise movement to reform youthjustice system

MILWAUKEE (March 29, 2019) – As part of Milwaukee County's movement to reform the youth justice system, known as Project Rise, the County submitted a proposal for \$41.14 million of state funding to support the construction of a new Secure Residential Care Center for Children and Youth (SRCCCY) as well as renovations at Vel R. Phillips Juvenile Justice Center.

The submission meets the state's deadline of March 31, 2019, for proposals tied to Wisconsin Act 185. The legislation requires Lincoln Hills School for Boys and Copper Lake School for Girls to close in 2021 and provides funding for counties to build new youth secure care centers.

Milwaukee County has been working to reform its youth justice system since 2011. Through Project Rise, the county is changing its focus from punishment to rehabilitation and creating positive outcomes for youth.

"Project Rise is moving Milwaukee County's youth justice system to a model of restorative justice and reunification of youth with their families and communities," said Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele. "This new center is one step in Milwaukee County's commitment to bring our kids closer to home and provide effective programming, trauma-informed care, and community partnerships that will help change the future for our kids."

Milwaukee County's proposal for \$41.14 million includes funding to aid in the construction of the new SRCCCY. The proposed center will have the capacity for 40 beds; a health clinic; educational, vocational and training programs; and an aesthetically-pleasing, secure perimeter. The rendering from Continuum Architects and Planners, S.C. and Dewberry shows the new center and campus will have a school-like appearance with large windows that allow for natural light, colorful paintings created by the youth and interior- and exterior-facing landscaping. The proposal also includes funding to remodel areas of the Milwaukee County Accountability Program (MCAP) at Vel R. Phillips Juvenile Justice Center on Watertown Plank Road, which includes 22 existing beds. Today, 57 Milwaukee-area youth are at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake and 20 youth are involved in MCAP.

"Ultimately, Milwaukee County's goal is to reduce the number of youth entering the justice system," said Mary Jo Meyers, director of the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services. "We believe our system needs a complete redesign. This will require making changes in Milwaukee

County to reduce recidivism and racial disparities and create a system of healing and a path that leads to better futures for our young people."

Milwaukee County's response to Act 185 moves forward at the same time the State of Wisconsin confirms its plans to build a separate, state-operated Type 1 facility in Milwaukee for youth who are part of the Serious Juvenile Offenders (SJO) program.

Milwaukee County is working with the City of Milwaukee to identify a site for the SRCCCY and is holding community listening sessions to gather feedback.

[Click here](#) to download a picture of Milwaukee County's proposed SRCCCY rendering.

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