

2025-2027 Proposed Budget

City Council Questions / Administrative Responses

General Budget Questions:

Q: *Throughout the budget document there is “No significant changes...” however the personnel costs went up. What are the causes - inflation, % salary increases, insurance increases...?*

A: General Personnel annual cost of living adjustments (COLA) are projected to increase by +2.75% per year for FY 2025-2027. As well, certain staff members not yet at the top step within their respective pay grade are projected to reach the next step(s) of their pay grade in each of the successive future years.

Medical costs have come in very favorable to the City over the past few years, but per discussions with the City’s Health Care Broker they have recommended budgeting a +6.0% annual increase as eventually Health Insurance costs will go up.

Disability Insurance costs have increased Citywide due to recent disability claim trends. The City is exploring the root cause(s) of this increase, with a significant proportion of the claims related to employees who are nearing the retirement age and are undergoing various knee, shoulder, hip, etc... treatments while still on City Healthcare. [Snyder]

Q: ***P104 – Millage forecast – “The City proposes to maintain the 10.8473 millage rate for FY 2026 and beyond, unless changed by the City’s voters”. The millage rate should drop to 10.8198 in 2026 as the Debt Millage will drop off at that time. Is the City preparing to ask the City’s voters for a tax increase for 2026? Or are you expecting City Council to authorize an increase in the millage as allowed under Headlee?***

A: The last year of the Chapter 20 Drain Debt millage is in FY 2025, where 0.0275 mill will be needed to generate approximately \$128,000 of millage revenue combined with the anticipated remaining Chapter 20 Drain Debt Fund Balance of approximately \$100,000 to service the final \$228,000 of Debt Service on this final Government Debt issue.

The City has had discussions regarding (A) potentially bringing the expiring 0.0275 mill forward to City voters as a millage repurpose to other causes, or to (B) simply ‘roll’ the small 0.0275 mill into the General levy beginning in FY 2026, or to (C) simply let the millage expire and minimally reduce the overall City millage rate.

After internal evaluations of all options, it was determined to propose option (B) ‘roll’ the small 0.0275 mill towards the General Fund as the General Fund has a great deal of flexibility as the 2.6872 mill proposed is well below the Headlee cap of 3.6851 (i.e. nearly +1.0 mill could be levied). Also any additional funding collected into the General Fund will per the City’s Fund Balance Policy be transferred into the Capital Improvement Fund to fund capital projects Citywide.

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Due to the relatively small amount of the expiring Drain Debt millage of 0.0275 mill which would generate approximately \$128,000 per year, and due to the cost of voter education including postage and mailing of approximately \$25,000, it was determined that Administration recommends for City Council to simply 'roll' the existing and expiring 0.0275 Drain Debt millage into the General levy starting in FY 2026.

Q: *P60 – Professional services- when OCSO is subtracted we are close to \$34 million on professional services. When does it become more cost effective for the city to bring these costs in house and hire staff? I know I have asked this question before, however this is a almost 50% of personnel costs.*

A: Of the \$41 million in proposed FY 2025 Professional Services, the OCSO contract is proposed at \$12.7 million, leaving approximately \$28.3 million remaining.

Of the \$28.3 million in Professional Services after the OCSO contract, approximately \$16.7 million is for various Interfund Charges to City cost centers, departments, and funds for services provided by the City's Internal Service Funds including the Facilities, MIS, Fleet, and Insurance Funds. This leaves approximately \$11.6 million remaining.

The remaining \$11.6 million is spread Citywide for a variety of various Professional and Contractual Services conducted and overseen by various City Departments including Tree Maintenance, Professional Studies, Industry Specific Consultants (Environmental, Fire Suppression, Master Plan), Legal Counsel, Election Voting Equipment Testing, City Auditor, Fee Appraisals, Document Imaging Services, Employee Medical Testing, Banking Services, Monument & Marker Sales, Lawn & Weed Mowing, Festival of the Hills contractors, Pavement Striping, Gravel Road Dust Control, Fire Department staff training, EMS Medical Billing, Fire Equipment Testing, Dispatching, Green Space Stewardship, W&S Billing Software Maintenance, Water Cross-Connection Services, SCADA System Maintenance, HVAC and Fire Suppression System Maintenance, Janitorial Services, Snow Removal, On-Call Architect, IT Security Monitoring, IT Backup Services, Network Support, and Cybersecurity Services to name a few.

The City continually reviews and analyzes each contract to see if the services could be better or less costly provided in-house versus through a paid contractor. Very often due to the unique and specific nature of the services contracted for, the City does not have the staff expertise to provide the level of service at the cost which is competitively procured. Often with most services contracted for, it is not an individual rather a team of expert service providers providing the service and very often they are trained, certified, and insured for the services they provide. [Snyder]

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Mayor's Office Budget Questions:

Q: *P189 – City Events – which events are covered under this expense other than Festival of the Hills and Light the Village. I thought the city did a lot of fundraising to cover these events. What are the Professional Services for?*

A: The Professional Services are almost exclusively for the service providers procured for the delivery of the Festival of the Hills and the Light the Village events including fireworks, stage & sound, entertainment, and portable toilets, etc... Other activities budgeted in this cost center are for the PaddlePalooza and Brooklands strong events.

The City (particularly the Mayor's Office) does a lot of the fundraising to cover the vast majority of the costs for these events. Revenue funding comes into the General Fund (account # 101.675002 = Contributions for Fireworks) from donations made to the Community Foundation of Greater Rochester, which the City submits reimbursement requests after the event is concluded and the final invoices are received. [Snyder]

Q: *P137 - Mayor's office - Significant Notes summary indicates the Mayor's Dept has an increase due to Hills Herald printing, however there is no increase on P137 or 139. Where is this printing increase covered?*

A: In the Line-Item Budget Report for FY 2025, under account # 171.900000 / Mayor's Office – Printing & Publishing proposes +12.5% or +\$9,530 increase for the printing of the Hills Herald. Also included in the Line-Item Budget report under account # 171.801000 / Mayor's Office – Professional Services proposes a decrease of (43%) or (\$126,400) primarily due to the completion of the Budget Software System and Contract Management Software System Implementation both in FY 2024.

In the Budget Plan Book, these two (2) accounts along with all of the other 'Professional Service' type activity accounts are combined into a Professional Services subtotal which shows a net decrease (due to the new software implementation costs incurred in FY 2024). [Snyder]

Q: *P148 - Legal Services - the Significant Notes summary indicates there may be an increase in the hourly rate for legal services, yet the Legal Services budget is lower in 2025 and 2026. Where is this increase covered?*

A: In the Line-Item Budget Report for FY 2025, under account # 210.805001 / Legal Services – City Attorney proposes a +4.0% or +\$10,000 increase for City Attorney services. Also included in the Line-Item Budget Report of FY 2025, under account # 210.805002 / Legal Services – Labor & Other proposes a (55%) or (\$25,000) decrease due to an anticipated

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reduction in Legal Labor Counsel related to the Union Contract Negotiations occurring in FY 2024 for the FY 2025-2027 Union Contracts. [Snyder]

Q: *P198 - Community Programs indicates No Significant Changes yet the Significant Notes summary talks about 3 OLSHA Senior Chore Grant and the budget changes by \$60k. What is the OLSHA Senior Chore Grant and who will manage it?*

A: The OLSHA Senior Chore Grant is a grant submitted and ultimately awarded to the City for administering. This grant is a 3-year grant and will be administered through the City's CDBG office in close coordination with the Older Person's Commission (OPC). Up to \$100,000 of funding has been awarded which will go to assist the City's low-income senior citizen population with a variety of Home Chores including Spring & Fall Clean-ups, Snow Plowing, and Lawn Mowing.

The City has experience administering these programs, as historically the City used to fund these same programs through the annual CDBG funding allocation. Recently HUD and Oakland County CDBG allocation requirements have grown stricter whereas more funding needs to be allocated towards Minor Home Repair type activities and away from other traditional CDBG service programs including Home Chore Services and Not-for-Profit Assistance programs.

The Final Budget's Significant Notes will be updated to more accurately describe the 3-year OLSHA Senior Home Chore Program. [Snyder]

Q: *P260 – ARPA – can we get a report on the ARPA grants the city provided to local community groups? They are supposed to be completed by the end of this year.*

A: The Non-Profit Assistance Grant is progressing well. Thus far through mid-August over 61% of the funds have been requested and reimbursed, or over \$185,500 of the \$300,000 program. Only two (2) of the eighteen (18) organizations have not yet submitted funding requests, but the City has been in contact with each and every agency and those reimbursement requests will be forthcoming in the near future (i.e. Library Reading Room Enhancements, etc... which is not fully complete yet). Five (5) agencies have received their full grant allotment.

All funds are required to be expended/reimbursed within FY 2024, and the City has set a suggested deadline to submit reimbursement requests by the end of November 2024.

The City plans to present the results and outcomes of the Non-Profit Assistance Grant likely at one of the December 2024 City Council meetings. [Snyder]

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Q: P348 – Resolution – it mentions lights for Christian Hills and Denison as a special light levy. Which budget item is this covered under?

A: The expenditure side of the SAD Street Lighting is covered by the Special Street Lighting cost center within the General Fund (Cost Center # 448). You can find this cost center on page #179 of the Budget Plan Book or page #40 of the Line-Item Detail budget Report.

Rates are set so that the City electrical utility costs of operating the neighborhood street lights are offset by the Special levy in an effort to breakeven. The offsetting Street Lighting revenue is received into the General Fund under account # 101.437000 / Taxes – Special Assessment Street Lighting. [Snyder]

PED Budget Questions:

Q: P 35 - Aging population – 30+% of our population is over 55. What is the city doing to adapt to our aging population? Types of housing, businesses, length of Walk light at intersections, etc.?

A: We have been planning for our aging population for many years and have included recommendations in the Master Plan to provide for more housing options desirable to seniors and to address their mobility needs. We have modified zoning to allow for flexibility in the locations and types of residential options in the city at key locations including the R-5 Single Family Zoning, Flex Business Overlay, and Mixed Residential Overlay Districts to provide for senior housing, attached housing, and smaller homes and lots to allow people to age in place.

In addition to our continued attention to improving the pedestrian access throughout the city, the recent addition of the SMART bussing system and their collaboration with the OPC will surely increase the ability for people to more easily get around the city. SMART is proposing the addition of the SMART Flex program in Rochester Hills, which functions like an Uber/Lyft service that provides individual rides within the city at a fraction of the cost that private services cost. [Roediger]

Q: P175 - Planning - Costs reduced due to Master Plan completion. When will City Council see the new Master Plan proposal?

A: The Planning Commission is working with staff and the City's consultants Giffels Webster to develop the draft land use recommendations through scenario planning. Different draft scenarios will be presented in the fall and we will be holding a joint meeting with Council later this year or early next year to review the scenarios and their implications. The final plan is anticipated to be adopted by summer of 2025. [Roediger]

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Clerk's Office Budget Questions:

Q: *P140 – Elections – The 2025 budget is significantly higher than the 2023 budget with the same number of elections. Why the \$200k increase?*

A: In 2023 we did not have a Primary Election; therefore, the 2023 actual budget would not include the expenses associated with a primary election, such as salaries, training, testing, and the overall expenses associated with conducting an election. [Scott]

MIS Budget Questions:

Q: *P305 – MIS – what is the status of the IT master plan?*

A: The IT Master Plan was written and accepted by administration at the end of 2023.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information in the plan, in regards to our infrastructure and data systems, we are not sharing this plan publicly, however the City has begun implementing various components of the IT Master Plan through enhancements in IT Security Monitoring, Backup Services, Network Support, and Cybersecurity Services. [Lyon]

Building Department / Facilities Budget Questions:

Q: *P165 – Building - No significant changes however \$300k increase in personnel costs. What is this attributed to?*

A: Increase due to reallocation of +1.55 FTE of Building Department staff to the 371 – Building Department cost center with a corresponding decrease from the 372 – Ordinance Compliance Division cost center (1.40) FTE and from the 535 – Weed Control cost center (0.15) FTE. This reallocation of staff was based upon how Building / Ordinance / Weed Control staff are actually spending their time. [Snyder]

Q: *P170 – Building – “Looking to adopt the International Property Management Code”. What does this bring to Rochester Hills without bringing excessive global requirements?*

A: The IPMC was adopted in 2023 with amendments. The State allows the local government to amend this code unlike any construction code per PA 230. We continue to assess current

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issues that the Ordinance team is challenged with and will provide any amendments if we feel it's necessary. [Viazanko]

Q: *City Hall First Floor Automatic Door Opener: Have there been resident or staff complaints about the ease of access?*

A: There have not been any complaints from our residents. Providing easier access for anyone with a disability is the primary concern. Since these restrooms are utilized by the public that is attending meetings or activities in the Auditorium, we want to be proactive so that no one begins to complain in the future. [Viazanko]

Q: *OCSD Car Ports - Are there any benefits of scale if we pull this ahead to this coming year alongside the remodel?*

A: Since this project came to our attention after the interior alteration design work had begun, we kept it separated from interior work. Looking at the schedule, the timing should work out so that we will actually be doing the carports while the interior work is being done. The carport project will be overseen by Facilities staff and we won't need to hire a Construction Manager. This will save money and minimize risk of delaying the interior work. [Viazanko]

DPS Budget Questions:

Q: *Brewster Road Rehabilitation (Walton to Dutton): What's the PACER score for this road section? Just drove this today and wondering why it's being rehabbed in less than two years.*

A: Brewster Road is rated as Poor in the 2023 PASER Rating as is nearing the point where the existing roadway can be rehabilitated versus reconstructed (which is much more costly). As well, this project is tied to the replacement of the Brewster Road Water Main Replacement (WS-05C) which is approximately 50-years old and is 16-inch concrete transmission water main which is causing more maintenance and reliability issues due to its age and material. As the water main is in poor shape and the roadway is nearing the point of replacement, the City proposes to construct both projects in the same year to minimize the inconvenience to residents and only "tear up" the impacted area one time. [Snyder]

Q: *P205 – Roads – where will the Traffic Calming Projects be conducted on Major (MR12) and Local (LS12) roads?*

A: Traffic Calming typically coincides with the neighborhoods identified for Major Road and Local Street rehabilitation work. DPS is evaluating the specific neighborhoods and/or

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neighborhood segments for the FY 2025 Major Road and Local Street Rehabilitation programs. [Snyder]

Q: P221 – Local Streets – I would like to find out how we can fund a pedestrian crosswalk across from the Brooklands Splashpad. Safety there is extremely important and drivers don't slow down enough to make the striped crosswalk effective

A: A pedestrian crossing on Auburn near the Splashpad has been suggested and is being considered and evaluated for future construction. [Fritz]

Q: Pathways - We've added a lot of pathways recently with more underway. How much new pathway is slated to be built in 2025? I recall being told the budget for pathway is in thirds - construction, rehabilitation and repair. Are we reaching a point where we need to spend more on either retaliation and repair are making this formula lopsided? Are we able to keep up with the maintenance on existing pathways?

A: There are no new Pathway segments proposed for FY 2025. For FY 2025 the City is proposing a \$500,000 per year annual Pathway Rehabilitation Program (PW-01), which will provide the funding to rehabilitate approximately 1.0 miles of existing City Pathway. The City is proposing \$292,500 for the existing Pedestrian Bridge and Structure Repair Program (PW-16) a program to repair and rehabilitate City-owned pedestrian bridges throughout the City.

The City is also proposing \$30,000 in Preliminary Design Engineering for a mid-block crossing of Tienken Road in the area of Medinah which is proposed to include the construction of a mid-block pedestrian crossing at Tienken Road near Medinah Drive to allow a safe route to Adams High School from the west side of the Adams Road and Tienken Road intersection. The segment of Tienken Road west of Adams Road to Falcon Drive would be studied first to find the best location for the crossing. The crossing proposes the installation of two (2) solar powered push-button rapid flasher beacons (RFBs), one (1) steel pole and mast arm with overhead signage and two (2) light poles, along with installation of ADA compliant ramps, landings, and refuge island.

The on-going Pathway millage funding of approximately \$800,000 per year is adequate to provide for annual Pathway Maintenance of approximately \$400,000 per year (from the 214 – Pathway Maintenance Fund) along with an annual Pathway Rehabilitation Program of approximately \$400,000 per year (from the 403 – Pathway Construction Fund). So currently this is proposed as more of a 50/50 mix between maintenance/repair and rehabilitation, with little left over for new construction.

We are nearing a point where we will not be able to keep up with the ongoing rehabilitation of the existing Pathway system as the \$400,000 in Pathway Rehabilitation is currently the

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City is able to rehabilitate only 1.0 miles per year of a 100-mile City Pathway system. This will be an item of discussion in FY 2025 with the City Council and Public Safety & Infrastructure Committee as the existing Pathway millage is in place through FY 2026, before a potential new Pathway millage is proposed for FY 2027+. [Snyder]

Q: *P250 & P279 – Pathways – we need to preserve what we have before we build new. Many of the bike paths/pathways are in need of repair yet the overall budget for pathways is lower in 2025 than 2024. If we are looking to renew the pathway millage in 2026, we should make sure the paths are well maintained.*

A: The on-going Pathway millage funding of approximately \$800,000 per year is adequate to provide for annual Pathway Maintenance of approximately \$400,000 per year (from the 214 – Pathway Maintenance Fund) along with an annual Pathway Rehabilitation Program of approximately \$400,000 per year (from the 403 – Pathway Construction Fund). So currently this is proposed as more of a 50/50 mix between maintenance/repair and rehabilitation, with little left over for new construction.

We are nearing a point where we will not be able to keep up with the ongoing rehabilitation of the existing Pathway system as the \$400,000 in Pathway Rehabilitation is currently the City is able to rehabilitate only 1.0 miles per year of a 100-mile City Pathway system. This will be an item of discussion in FY 2025 with the City Council and Public Safety & Infrastructure Committee as the existing Pathway millage is in place through FY 2026, before a potential new Pathway millage is proposed for FY 2027+. [Snyder]

Q: *Why does this pathway budget item include the Clinton River Path? Shouldn't that be under Parks?*

A: In the voter approved Pathway millage passed in November of 2006 the millage language read that the Pathway millage would be used to establish, construct, maintain, and repair pathways and surfaces for use by bicycles, non-motorized vehicles, and pedestrians along main, arterial, and collector roads, on the Clinton River Trail, and to create linkages to pathways and schools in the City. The maintenance and upkeep of the Clinton River Trail is an eligible use of Pathway millage dollars. [Snyder]

Q: *P85 – Mid Block crossing at Medinah – why? Medinah is staggered with Bridgewood Farms entrance. Where would this crossing be placed? What data do we have to support this crossing? And how is it different than a crossing by the Brooklands Splashpad?*

A: Per the approved CIP, this crossing is warranted to allow a safe route to Adams High School from the west side of the Adams Road and Tienken Road intersection. The segment of Tienken Road west of Adams Road to Falcon Drive would be studied first to find the best location for the crossing. A pedestrian crossing on Auburn near the Splashpad has been

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suggested and is being evaluated. The two are not mutually exclusive. Each location is evaluated on its own needs and merits. [Fritz]

Q: *P255 – Water Resources Fund – What does “aggressively evaluate its role in storm water management”? There are storm water drains that were labeled wet lands. Are we reviewing how those are maintained? And what about houses that are built on high water tables and impacting the storm water culverts?*

A: In this context, “aggressively evaluate its role in storm water management” refers to the City’s role in proper maintenance of private stormwater facilities management, with emphasis on retention/detention ponds in neighborhoods and on commercial properties. [Fritz]

Q: *Sump Pump Discharge Inspection Program: I keep hearing about issues with sump discharges, how are the candidates for inspection determined, can we start with suspected problem areas?*

A: “Candidates” are determined by requests and/or complaints from residents, and on an as-needed basis. [Fritz]

Q: *P289 – Water & Sanitary Sewer – there appears to be staff changes and I don’t see an explanation. Please help me understand the changes.*

A: For the Water & Sewer Fund, a net reallocation of +1.0 Full-Time Employee (Laborer) to the W&S Fund is included in the FY 2025 Proposed Budget. The net +1.0 Full-Time Laborer is to the W&S Fund reclassified with corresponding decreases from the Major Road – Winter Maintenance (482) cost center (0.05 FTE), the Local Street – Preservation (464) cost center (0.80 FTE), and the Local Street – Winter Maintenance (484) cost center (0.15 FTE). No net DPS staff is proposed to be added for FY 2025, simply a reallocation based upon staff’s actual work performed.

In addition, we are working through some set up issues with the new Budget Software system regarding position titles which are in some cases more specific than the prior more generic position titles which has historically been used in the past Budgets. This has caused some changes in the titles of certain positions on the Personnel Summary table. [Snyder]

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Parks & Natural Features Budget Questions:

Q: *P182 – Parks – what is the role of the PNR Deputy Director? What data do we have to support this new position?*

A: This position will address an unsustainable workload, increase revenue and cost recovery, provide support for \$30M of new park projects, improve internal management and allow the pursuit of a best-in-class operation in the Midwest.

The PNR Department has been growing 60+% in visitation and number of projects for the last 7 years. Every division and front-line operation in PNR has added some labor to adjust to this increased workload except the management team. Every comparable P & R operation in the state has at least one Deputy (Farmington Hills has two, but they have a large community center). Most Rochester Hills Departments have a Deputy. Increasing administrative capacity was also recognized as an important goal and need in the PNR Strategic Plan approved by Council in 2023. This new position will allow us to pursue excellence. This would allow the Director & Deputy Director to focus on much needed programs such as:

- 1) Develop a cost recovery strategy getting us to 30% (currently 22%), potentially securing 150k+ a year in revenue
- 2) Provide assistance with pursuing grants and project management for \$30M+ of new park projects
- 3) Develop new partnerships in the community and provide support for expanding partnerships with Oakland County, RARA and others
- 4) Develop a stronger Forestry code of ordinances that will allow us to better enforce tree clearing violations under the changed Michigan laws that have weakened our authority
- 5) Development of a systematic volunteer program for the Museum, Natural Resources Citizen Science, and Park Improvement projects
- 6) Develop a consistent customer feedback and improvement process and metrics. [Elwert]

Q: *Parks – where do we stand on the execution of the Master Plan? – Splashpad park, Nowicki Park – what is next? Can we get the priority list status?*

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- A: Please see attached status of action items in PNR Master Plan and Strategic plan (we update this about every six months). Brooklands Plaza is expected to come to Council for construction approval early fall 2024, Nowicki Park is requested to start design work for early 2025 with a 2026 build. [Elwert]
- Q: *P186 – Grounds - When will City Council see the Grounds Maintenance Study? Short term goals sound great however I would like to see the plan.***
- A: The intention is to bring the bids to Council sometime this fall, with completion next year. We are meeting internally next week with other Departments this may affect to get the process started. The plan will be presented to Council when complete. [Elwert]
- Q: *P194 – Van Hoosen Museum – what is the Big Barn concept? Where can I find more information on this? What is the Calf Barn Multi Media equipment enhancements?***
- A: The "Big Barn" is what this structure was called historically, it was located next to Runyon Rd where there is still a little concrete footprint and historical equipment is displayed. Pursuit of this structure, including fundraising to support building it are in the Museum Operations Plan, attached (pgs 28-36 address the site layout). The Calf Barn Multimedia enhancements include an additional screen and projector to allow all attendees at an event to view the screens. [Elwert]
- Q: *Nowicki Park Architectural Design: Can we pull the design ahead to 2024 or 2025 to better align with demand for this park?***
- A: This is a large project that will require some significant review and coordination effort. Our administration team is currently bogged down with completing active projects. It may be possible to dive into this in late 2024 depending on our workload for current projects. [Elwert]
- Q: *I see the projected 95% decrease in investment earnings for the green space fund, but the green space perpetual care trust doesn't show anywhere near that kind of drop off, what's the reason for this?***
- A: The Green Space Operating Fund (Fund #299) Investment Revenue is proposed to decrease in FY 2025 by (95%) or from \$6,000 to \$320 primarily due to very conservative revenue estimates for investment earnings in FY 2025, due to discussions on the Federal Reserve Board lowering interest rates in the near future.
- The Green Space Perpetual Care Fund (Fund #761) is still healthy and is maintaining the predetermined level of \$5.7M of principal to provide adequate interest revenue generation

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for long term Green Space stewardship funded through the Green Space Operating Fund (Fund #299). [Snyder]

Q: P264 – Green Spaces – what is the status of the Beekeeper property and the possible grant?

A: The grant project agreement (which will come before Council) is expected any day according to communication last week from our DNR Grant Coordinator. Assuming final Council approval we expect the property to be purchased this Fall. [Elwert]

Fire Budget Questions:

Q: P227 – Fire – with our aging population, how has the number of EMT calls increased and are we adequately staffed to cover this increase? What will the Administrative Associative PTE to FTE bring to the Fire department?

A: So far this year our call volume has increased by 6.8%. The addition of the ten Firefighters this year has helped us keep up with this demand. Typically, we staff five ambulances and two fire apparatus with ALS capabilities. Unfortunately, there are still times that we have no units available. So far this year there have been 50 times that we were out of units. During these times we had no units available to respond to calls for assistance in our community and would have to rely on mutual aid if another call for service was received.

With the additional staffing this year, we are evaluating staffing a sixth ambulance. This would help with the volume of EMS calls but would limit our fire coverage and again we would have to rely on mutual aid.

In response to the increase in call volume we have submitted a SAFER grant to hire an additional eight (8) Firefighters.

Our strategic plan currently calls for an additional six firefighters to be hired in 2027 and another six in 2028. Our strategic plan was adopted in 2019 and we are currently re-evaluating and updating this plan, including the staffing model. [Gary]

Q: What will the Administrative Associative PTE to FTE bring to the Fire department?

A: The request to convert the part-time Administrative Associate position to full-time is driven by the expanding needs in the Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Division. As our community grows, so do the responsibilities of the CRR Division. Currently, our inspection cycle and invoicing process requires inspectors to handle administrative tasks, reducing their time to accomplish their core duties. Transitioning this role to full-time will alleviate those

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administrative tasks from our inspectors, enabling them to concentrate on important tasks that align with our strategic plan. Additionally, the seven members of the CRR Division currently manage their own administrative tasks due to the part-time nature of this position. A full-time role would enhance the efficiency of the division and provide much needed administrative support. [Cooke / Gary]

Police Budget Questions:

Q: ***P241 – Sheriff Department – what will the new staff be doing? What data do we have to support these 2 new staff members?***

A: Within the last year, there has been an increase in several crime categories that we would like to address. Recently, the South American Theft Group has committed multiple home invasions in Rochester Hills and the surrounding communities, and this continues to be a concern.

The Felony Lane Gang makes a living by breaking into vehicles, with intent of stealing credit cards, cash and identification. The Felony Lane Gang continues to commit increased crime crimes in the metro Detroit area.

Both of these examples demonstrate how organized crime can deeply affect our community, impacting public safety and the overall quality of life in Rochester Hills.

Part A crimes have increased by 13 % in 2023 and some of the more serious crimes have been trending upward as well.

Additionally, calls for service have been on the rise since COVID, as we continue to grow aa a community they will also continue to increase. In 2023 calls for service increased approximately by +4,000 calls to over 43,000 calls for service. [Yeiser]