



Rochester Hills

Minutes - Draft

City Council Special Meeting

1000 Rochester Hills Dr
Rochester Hills, MI 48309
(248) 656-4600
Home Page:
rochesterhills.org

*David J. Blair, Jason Carlock, Bradley Limberg, Diana Mannino, Theresa Mungoli,
Marvie Neubauer and Mark Skelcy*

Vision Statement: *The Community of Choice for Families and Business*

Mission Statement: *"Our mission is to sustain the City of Rochester Hills as the premier community of choice to live, work and raise a family by enhancing our vibrant residential character complemented by an attractive business community."*

Monday, August 17, 2026

5:30 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

In accordance with the provisions of Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended, the Open Meetings Act, notice was given that a Special Rochester Hills City Council Meeting would commence at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, August 17, 2026, to discuss the proposed 2027-2029 Budget.

CALL TO ORDER

President Carlock called the Special Rochester Hills City Council Meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. Michigan Time.

ROLL CALL

Present 7 - David Blair, Jason Carlock, Theresa Mungoli, Marvie Neubauer, Bradley Limberg, Diana Mannino and Mark Skelcy

Others Present:

*Dennis Andrews, Deputy Parks & Natural Resources Director
Tracey Balint, Public Services Director/City Engineer
Bryan Barnett, Mayor
Chris Benedict, Information Systems Administrator II
Sheila Brown, Deputy City Clerk
Bill Cooke, Deputy Fire Chief
Nicole Davenport, Building Tech - Permits
Ann Echols, Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal
Matt Einheuser, Natural Resources Manager
Ken Elwert, Parks & Natural Resources Director
Todd Gary, Fire Chief/Emergency Services Director
Lori Hamilton, Administrative Services Supervisor
Tim Hollis, Deputy Building/Ordinance/Facilities Director
Debby Hoyle, Senior Financial Analyst
Angela Hysinger, Public Utilities Engineering Manager
Brooke Insana, Human Resources Director
Leon Luedeman, Water & Sewer Operations Manager
Rochelle Lyon, Information Systems Director
Celeste Mansour, Human Resources Coordinator*

Kelly McBride, Parks Manager
Christina McCaskey, Human Resources Manager
Denise McDoniel, Financial Analyst
Pat McKay, Museum Manager
Harrison Porter, Information Systems Administrator I
Sue Rehse, Human Resources Associate
Sara Roediger, Planning & Economic Development Director
Jeff Schultz, Manager of Inspection Services
Leanne Scott, City Clerk
Chris Shepard, Field Services Manager
Shannon Smith, Administrative Specialist - Human Resources
Joe Snyder, Chief Financial Officer
Karen Somerville, Deputy Assessing Director
Erin Sudrovec, Chief of Staff
Laurie Taylor, Assessing Director
Nick Watterson, Fleet Manager
Jodi Welch, Manager of Ordinance Services
Captain Paul Workman, Oakland County Sheriff's Office
Pam Valentik, Economic Development Manager
Mike Viazanko, Building/Ordinance/Facilities Director

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Mungioli, seconded by Neubauer, that the Agenda be Approved as Presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Blair, Carlock, Mungioli, Neubauer, Limberg, Mannino and Skelcy

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

LEGISLATIVE & ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS

Mayor Barnett thanked everyone who came out to the Brooklands Block Party, noting that the event was a major success. He continued by remarking that tonight is a big night for the City team, and voiced his appreciation for the relationship and trust between the administration and City Council. He expressed his belief that they will see a budget that has delivered and a budget that is both forward-thinking and responsive moving forward. He also acknowledged that the budget process is grueling at times, and recognized Joe Snyder, Chief Financial Officer; Debby Hoyle, Senior Financial Analyst; and Denise McDoniel, Financial Analyst. He noted that Rochester Hills has a reputation of being one of the best-run cities not only in the County or State, but in the country, and the City staff members are the reason why.

2026-0344

Request for Acknowledgment of Receipt of the Older Persons' Commission (OPC) Social & Activity Center FY 2027 Adopted Budget

Attachments: [081726 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[OPC FY 2027 Adopted Budget.pdf](#)
[Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)

Joe Snyder, Chief Financial Officer, stated that tonight, the City is going to present the Proposed 2027 and Projected 2028-2029 Three-Year Budgets for the Older Persons' Commission (OPC), the Rochester Avon Recreation Authority (RARA), and the City of Rochester Hills. He shared that both the OPC and the RARA Boards held Public Hearings prior to adopting their respective budgets, and following each of the RARA and OPC budget presentations, City Council will have the opportunity to formally acknowledge their receipts.

He introduced **Renee Cortright**, Executive Director for the Older Persons Commission (OPC), and **Mandy Mullins**, Deputy Director for the OPC.

Ms. Cortright recognized the Rochester Hills Representatives on the OPC Governing Board, Theresa Mungoli and Diana Mannino, as well as the Senior Representatives, Micheline Sommers and Carol Morlan. She commented that the OPC is very appreciative of their support. She then provided the following information regarding the OPC's programming and services over the past year:

- Supportive Services

- 59 participants and their families benefited from Adult Day care
- 55,631 rides were completed, covering 474,844 miles
- 104,000 meals prepared, served, and delivered
- Over 5,500 units of support provided
- 482 volunteers provided over 36,000 hours, equaling over \$1,000,000

saved

- Program and Arts

- 3,778 people participated 43,833 times in Program and Arts events

offered

- Fitness and Aquatics

- One new yoga/Pilates studio
- 5,128 people participated 168,679 times in Fitness and Aquatics events

offered

Ms. Mullins discussed the following FY 2027-2029 budget highlights:

- Transportation Fund Revenues = \$4.1 million

- Total operating expenditures budgeted at \$3,777,500
- Capital expenditures budgeted at \$350,000
- Funded by the County's transit millage, rider fees, grants, and donations

- General Fund Revenues = \$5.0 million

- Total operating expenditures budgeted at \$4,534,050
- Capital expenditures budgeted at \$1,771,500

- Total Budget = \$9.1 million

- Four percent general salary adjustment

- Revenue and Expenditures

- Operating revenues projected to exceed annual operating expenditures by \$851,550

- Excess funds to be utilized for the Capital Improvement Plan

She also shared the following capital improvement highlights slated for this year:

- Dehumidification Unit Replacement
- UV Sanitation Replacement
- Elevator Modernization x2

Council Discussion:

President Carlock commented that the OPC's numbers are impressive and indicate many people being helped, served, and provided with activities every day of the year. He thanked Ms. Cortright and Ms. Mullins for all the work they do.

Vice President Mungoli thanked Ms. Cortright and Ms. Mullins for their work. She referenced the City's debt-free status, and pointed out how impressive it is that the OPC can do so much within their operating budget. She voiced her gratitude to be able to serve on the OPC Board with Ms. Mannino and have the opportunity to ask questions and educate the community.

Mr. Blair expressed his appreciation for all that Ms. Cortright and Ms. Mullins do. He shared that he cannot wait to start using the OPC, noting that it is admired for miles in every direction for its wide variety of programming and amazing facilities. He stated that he is happy to see that they are on top of their Capital Projects, and inquired about the meaning of "unit of care."

Ms. Cortright explained that a unit of care refers to a participant they have served throughout the year through their Adult Day Service.

A motion was made by Mungoli, seconded by Blair, that this matter be Adopted by Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Blair, Carlock, Mungoli, Neubauer, Limberg, Mannino and Skelcy

Enactment No: RES0218-2026

Whereas, at its August 17, 2026 meeting the Rochester Hills City Council acknowledged receipt of the Fiscal Year 2027 Older Persons' Commission (OPC) Social & Activity Center Budget;

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby acknowledges receipt of the Fiscal Year 2027 Older Persons' Commission (OPC) Social & Activity Center Budget for the amounts of \$8,311,550 in operating expenditures and \$2,121,500 in one-time capital expenditures.

2026-0343 Request for Acknowledgment of Receipt of the Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) FY 2027 Adopted Budget

Attachments: [081726 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Budget Detail.pdf](#)
[Board Resolution.pdf](#)
[Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)

Joe Snyder, Chief Financial Officer, stated that tonight, the City is going to present the Proposed 2027 and Projected 2028-2029 Three-Year Budgets for the Older

Persons' Commission (OPC), the Rochester Avon Recreation Authority (RARA), and the City of Rochester Hills. He shared that both the OPC and the RARA Boards held Public Hearings prior to adopting their respective budgets, and following each of the RARA and OPC budget presentations, City Council will have the opportunity to formally acknowledge their receipts.

*He introduced **Dave Word**, Executive Recreation Director for Rochester Avon Recreation Authority (RARA), and **Sam Lunt**, Assistant Recreation Director for RARA.*

***Mr. Word** stated that they are excited to present RARA's 2027 budget and share the progress they have been making across the community. He noted that progress starts with a clear strategic plan, and provided the following highlights:*

- 2027 Budget and Strategic Plan
 - 2027 Balanced Operating Budget: \$4,050,180
 - Directly aligned with 2026-2030 Strategic Recreation Master Plan, which was completed in 2025
 - Able to put in sweep fund going into Capital Improvement Plan, which was completed this year
 - Benchmarking by the National Recreation and Park Association showed that RARA runs seven times more efficiently than the national average while offering 50 percent more programs
- Participation Trajectory and 2027 Forecast
 - On track to reach nearly 12,000 registered participants by 2027
 - Kids under 14 constitute nearly 75 percent of patrons
- 2026 Community Event Participation and Attendance
 - In 2026, RARA reached over 10,000 participants through two dozen local events, plus another 1,300 people at Movies in the Park and Bites and Beats
 - Switching from rental vehicles to an owned fleet will make it simple to bring even more active play programs to the community in 2027
- Rec Center Participation and Forecast
 - Forecasting over 135,000 visits in 2027
 - Winter and spring are the busiest times, accounting for nearly 40 percent of total visits
- Grants, Fundraising, Sponsorship, and Expense Offsets
 - Grants, fundraising, and sponsorships bring in over \$255,000 in taxpayer savings, covering a third of RARA's adaptive programs and a quarter of camp costs
 - The RARA millage covers about a quarter of the total budget; user fees cover the rest
- Facility and Mobile Rec Enhancements
 - 2027 Upgrades:
 - Addition of retractable batting cages in the fieldhouse
 - Replacement of camp tents
 - Addition of mobile assets
 - Audit of HVAC units, which were installed back in 2011, to plan for future upkeep
- Capital Improvement Plan: Facilities
 - Two main facility projects totaling over \$250,000

- Turf Fieldhouse Overhaul
- Front Parking Lot Replacement
- Both projects are 100 percent cash funded with zero debt
- Capital Improvement Plan: Fleet and Reserves
 - Investing over \$125,000 for two vehicles in 2027
 - Box truck to the lift gate for mobile rec gear
 - Four by four truck to tow existing trailer
- This mobile setup is projected to save money and avoid snowy delays
- Reserves stay safely above required 20 percent minimum

He voiced RARA's appreciation for their strong partnership with Rochester and Rochester Hills, and noted that they will continue their mission of strengthening the community through play.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock shared his belief that everyone on Council acknowledges that RARA is a vital asset to the City. He emphasized his gratitude for all that RARA does for both resident and non-resident participants.

Vice President Mungioli stated that she is the City Council Representative on the RARA Board, and thanked Mr. Word and Mr. Lunt for the work they do in putting together their monthly metrics regarding their budget and participant levels. She noted that Mr. Word and Mr. Lunt have been instrumental in changing many of the policies and procedures at RARA and that the improvements they have made in the six and a half years she has served on the RARA Board have been incredible. She detailed that seven years ago, they had to stop their dance program, but they have since been able to reintroduce it and exceed their previous revenue and participant levels. She mentioned that she believes RARA is one of seven recreation authorities in the State with two CPREs.

Mr. Word voiced his belief that RARA is the only recreation authority in the country with two CPREs, and added his hope that their entire staff will be CPRP-certified by the end of the year.

Vice President Mungioli commented that it is amazing to see RARA's investment in staff development.

Ms. Mannino shared that she and her kids and grandkids use RARA, and it is very well-run. She inquired about the reason for the increase in the professional services cost, which has risen from \$30,000-50,000 to nearly \$200,000.

Mr. Lunt stated that the large increase is attributable to merchant fees and credit card fees. He explained that fees have increased significantly in the past few years, noting that the fees were around 1.89 percent when they first started with their current contract but are now averaging around 4 percent. He noted that some credit cards have additional fees. He also shared that he and Mr. Word spent a lot of time negotiating different rates. He revealed that many providers were going to charge five or six percent, but they renegotiated terms and got that level down to just under 4 percent. He added that RARA has raised their fees internally to capture a lot

of those increases, but they cannot charge more than they are getting charged.

Ms. Mannino sought clarification on whether they are passing that cost through.

Mr. Lunt clarified that they pass a lot of the cost through but that they cannot pass through more than they are being charged. He specified that if they are being charged 3.8 percent, they try to stay at 3.5 percent with their charge to account for monthly variance.

Mr. Word added that due to an amendment, they switched recreation software and had to start charging those fees. He explained that those fees were a pass-through in the old company that they never had to put in their budget, but those now impact their budget. He shared that RARA has two different accounts: a revenue account and an expense account.

Ms. Neubauer thanked Mr. Word and Mr. Lunt for everything they do for the community, commenting that she does not know of any kid in the Rochester/Rochester Hills area who has not participated in a RARA program at some point in time. She also voiced her appreciation for other programs, such as bike groups, that RARA has supported.

Mayor Barnett shared that the City truly values the partnerships they have with the OPC and RARA, noting that these organizations are an extension of people's experience in the City. He underscored his appreciation for all that the OPC and RARA do to make Rochester Hills the seventh best place to live in the country.

A motion was made by Mungoli, seconded by Neubauer, that this matter be Adopted by Resolution. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 7 - Blair, Carlock, Mungoli, Neubauer, Limberg, Mannino and Skelcy

Enactment No: RES0219-2026

Whereas, at its August 17, 2026 meeting the Rochester Hills City Council acknowledged receipt of the Fiscal Year 2027 Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) Budget;

Resolved, that the Rochester Hills City Council hereby acknowledges receipt of the Fiscal Year 2027 Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) Budget in the amount of \$4,050,179.

PROPOSED 2027 BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

2026-0341 General Budget Overview - 2027-2029

Attachments: [092826 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[091426 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Public Hearing Notice.pdf](#)
[081726 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)
[081026 Agenda Summary.pdf](#)
[081026 Resolution.pdf](#)
[Resolution \(Draft\).pdf](#)
[SUPPL 2027-2029 = CC Budget Questions + Admin Responses.pdf](#)

Joe Snyder, Chief Financial Officer, and **Denise McDoniel**, Financial Analyst, were present.

Mr. Snyder introduced Ms. McDoniel and Debby Hoyle, Senior Financial Analyst, who represent the City's Fiscal team.

He stated that the components in developing the City of Rochester Hills 2027-2029 Proposed Budget include the following:

- The City of Rochester Hills three-year adopted Budget Plan, which includes Fiscal Years 2026-2028
- The City of Rochester Hills Capital Improvement Plan for 2027-2032
- The City of Rochester Hills Seven-Year Financial Forecast for 2027-2033
- The Rochester Hills City Council Strategic Planning Technical Review Committee
 - Fiscal Year 2027 Goals and Objectives
 - Governmental Fund Balance Reserve Policy

He shared that this is the 17th consecutive year the City has presented a three-year budget plan, and noted that the overview of the Proposed 2027-2029 Budget includes the following:

- Continuing to present a three-year budget
- Budgets presented based on best estimates and projections for the future
- Conservative estimates of both revenues and expenditures
 - Ensures that the service levels proposed in the budget can be delivered

He discussed the 2027 Budget/Proposed Expenditures, and noted the following:

- A total budget of \$213,839,720 in expenditures, which represents a 12.8 percent decrease as compared to the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, comprised largely of:
 - Public Service at 29 percent of the budget expenditures
 - Capital Outlay at 19 percent of the budget expenditures
 - Public Safety at 19 percent of the budget expenditures
 - General Government at 14 percent of the budget expenditures
 - Transfers-Out at 12 percent of the budget expenditures
 - Parks & Recreation at five percent of the budget expenditures
 - Economic Development at two percent of the budget expenditures
 - Debt Service at one percent of the budget expenditures
- Capital Outlay Proposed Projects for 2027 total \$40,320,350, and are largely made up of the following:
 - Roads, Streets, and Pathways constitute 38 percent combined

- Dedicated funding for transportation networks of Major Roads, Local Streets, and Pathways
 - Water & Sewer System consists of 31 percent
 - Investment for clean water delivery, reliability, and system capacity
 - City Facilities and Parks consist of 18 percent
 - Crucial facility maintenance along with park upgrades
 - Other Projects consist of 12 percent
 - Investments in storm water, election tabulators, IT enhancements, and scheduled replacements for City Fleet as well as life-saving Fire equipment

He highlighted the following proposed Capital Projects for 2027:

- Major Road Projects:
 - The MDOT-led Rochester Road Reconstruction (M-59 - Tienken)
- Local Street Projects:
 - Citywide Local Street Rehabilitation Program
- Pathway Projects:
 - Citywide Pathway Rehabilitation Program
 - Seven Grant-Funded Pedestrian Safety Crossings:
 - Tienken at Medinah Mid-Block Crossing
 - Tienken at Falcon Mid-Block Crossing
 - Hamlin HAWK Signal at Hamlin Elementary
 - Hamlin HAWK Signal at Clinton River Trail
 - John R HAWK Signals:
 - Near Spencer Park
 - Holy Family School
 - Near Borden Park
- Water & Sewer Infrastructure Projects:
 - Spencer Park: Sanitary Sewer Lead
 - Rochester Road: Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation
 - Rochester Road: Water Main Replacement (Hamlin - Avon)
 - PRV No. 20 Replacement
 - RC-01 Improvements (South at Livernois)
 - RC-02 Improvements (Walton)
 - Booster Station No. 1: Improvements
- Facility and Parks Projects:
 - DPS Garage: Fuel Island Replacement
 - Innovation Hills: Drainage Improvements
 - Beekeeper Property: Concept Plan
 - Veterans Memorial Pointe: Improvements
 - Cemetery: Columbarium
 - City Hall: Carpet and Flooring Replacement
 - City Hall: Electrical and HVAC System Replacements
 - Parks: Vehicle Counter Replacement
 - Bloomer Park: Playground Replacement

He stated that the City Budget is proposing \$181,800,990 in revenue, with major sources of proposed revenue consisting of the following:

- Service Charges bringing in 39 percent
 - Includes fee-for-service activities like Water & Sewer usage and Building

permits

- City Taxes bringing in 31 percent

- Per the voter-approved 0.5 mill Fire increase, a total City millage rate of 11.7753 mills is proposed, maintaining Rochester Hills as the third lowest millage rate for any city over 5,000 population in Oakland County

- Intergovernmental Revenue bringing in 13 percent

- Combines State and federal funding

- Offsetting a State sales tax shift, the City's Act 51 Gasoline Tax revenue is increasing

- Directly powers pathway expansion plan

- Transfers-In bringing in 13 percent

- Investments and Other Revenues bringing in four percent

He stated that the General Fund is proposed at \$37 million, and noted the following:

- This upcoming year concludes the City's planned three-year transition from an 80 percent target reserve level down to Council's sustainable 35 percent target reserve level (or approximately \$10 million) in FY 2027.

- It is proposed to add one Full-Time Park Ranger and eight Part-Time Seasonal staff for Nowicki Park's grand opening next year and ongoing operations.

- All revenues or reserves realized above the policy target are transferred directly out to the Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) to finance future Citywide infrastructure.

He shared that the Capital Improvement Fund is proposed at \$6 million, and discussed the following:

- Because Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) candidate projects will always exceed available CIF funding, if funding is not there, the City defers the project. The City only makes investments within actual financial capacity.

- The City now has a gauge of actual financial capacity due to:

- SAVER Reserve: Formally established with Council earlier this year, the \$2.5 million SAVER Reserve mitigates risks from construction market volatility, supply chain inflation, and unforeseen site conditions. It is topped off annually using prior-year savings.

- Thus far in FY 2026, with the vast majority of projects already awarded, the City has drawn \$507,000 from the \$2.5 million SAVER Reserve for the construction of Nowicki Park.

- If there are no other draws this year, the first \$507,000 from General Fund savings will top off the SAVER Reserve back to \$2.5 million, with all remaining General Fund savings available for future Capital Projects.

- The City's strategy is to maintain a minimum CIF balance equal to twice the SAVER Reserve, keeping at least \$5 million in reserve to allow some level of flexibility for the City to pursue advantageous projects as they may come up throughout the years.

He stated that the Major Road Fund is proposed at \$12 million, and pointed out the following:

- For FY 2027, Major Road projects include the MDOT-led full reconstruction of

Rochester Road from M-59 to Tienken.

- Plans for a Major Pathway Expansion:

- While the City's 74 percent voter-approved renewal of the Pathway Millage secures core Pathway maintenance and operations for the City's 100-mile Pathway network, along with approximately \$400,000 (which covers approximately one mile) annual rehabilitation baseline, the increase in State Act 51 Gasoline Tax revenues allows the City to quadruple that program.

- The City is proposing to move from a \$400,000 (or one mile) per year annual Pathway Rehabilitation Program (a 100-year full network replacement cycle) to a \$1.6 million annual Pathway Rehabilitation Program, with the intent to rehabilitate four miles of pathways per year to establish a sustainable 25-year full network replacement cycle.

- Planned Major Road fund balance reserve draws over the next few years are to support back-to-back-to-back major projects, including:

- MDOT-led Rochester Road Project (2027)

- Hampton Circle (2028)

- John R Rd (2029, grant secured)

- Nawakwa/Drexelgate (2030)

- Adams Road (2033, on financial radar)

He provided the following information regarding the City's Local Street Fund, focusing squarely on residential subdivisions:

- Proposed Budget Total: Set at \$12 million for FY 2027.

- This proposed FY 2027 Budget features a \$6 million Annual Local Street Rehabilitation Program to repave neighborhood roads.

- The City is proposing an intentional multi-year reduction in fund balance to bring the fund in line with Council's 25 percent target level by 2033.

- The City is proposing a conservative upside. Projecting Act 51 revenues conservatively ensures that any positive upside (above conservative projections) may allow the City to expand paving beyond the \$6 million baseline over time.

Regarding the Fire Operating Fund, he explained the following:

- Thanks to Rochester Hills voters approving a 0.5 mill increase to the Fire Millage with a 71 percent approval rate, the FY 2027 Fire Operating Fund budget is proposed at \$19 million.

- The FY 2027 Budget proposes strategic public safety staffing: of 12 additional Full-Time Firefighter/Paramedics.

- This provides for one additional fully staffed ambulance in the City 24/7 and generates an improved funding baseline for future Fire capital replacements.

- Similar to the General Fund, any funding above the Fire Operating Fund's 25 percent fund balance target reserve is transferred out to the Fire Capital Fund for future Fire Capital replacements.

- Proactively addressing the Fire Department safeguards both the City's first responders and taxpayers well out into the future.

He stated that the Fire Capital Fund is proposed at \$1 million, and noted the following:

- Remaining capital priorities include scheduled heart monitor replacements (\$247,000) and preliminary engineering for Fire Station parking lot paving (\$215,000).
- Upcoming apparatus replacements include three ambulances in 2028 and five additional ambulances out to 2033.
- While this fund was projected to go negative by 2033 in the recent July forecast, it is very positive that the City currently has the funding projected in FY 2033 to replace the five ambulances that have not yet been ordered in the current FY 2026 Budget.
- The City will continue to focus on running efficiently, prioritizing equipment replacements, and leveraging any and all grant opportunities that arise.

He shared that the Police Fund is proposed at \$16 million, and discussed the following:

- FY 2027 marks the final year of the 2025-2027 OCSO agreement, incorporating a scheduled nine percent rate increase.
- The City's current Police millage rate is projected to fully sustain this fund through the next contract cycle (2028-2030), assuming approved OCSO rate increases average 5.5 percent annually.
- This same millage maintains operations through 2032, where fund balance aligns with Council's 25 percent target level.

He provided the following key takeaways defining this budget plan:

- Conservative Projections
- Structural Operating Surplus
- Fund Balances Maintained
- Third Lowest Millage Rate in Oakland County
- Staffing Proposed
 - 12 Firefighters
 - One Park Ranger - Nowicki Park
- \$40 Million in Capital Projects Proposed
- No Debt Proposed

He thanked City Council for their early leadership in establishing their FY 2027 Goals and Objectives, and noted that the administration has refined this three-year plan to serve as an actionable blueprint for that vision. He stated that it is a point of tremendous professional pride to present this Proposed 2027 Budget, a plan that builds directly upon Rochester Hills' achievement of being completely debt-free. He noted that that milestone is the result of a decades-long partnership rooted in disciplined financial management. He emphasized that the job of the Finance Department, which includes Fiscal, Purchasing, Accounting, and Treasury, is to equip City Council with transparent data so they can make the best decisions for the residents. He noted that far beyond the numbers on the page, this budget allows the City of Rochester Hills to continue to set the gold standard for municipal excellence. He thanked City Council for their active engagement and thoughtful question submissions, adding that those questions have been fully answered and will be logged into the public legislative file. He concluded by requesting City Council's formal support and approval of this Proposed 2027 Budget Plan.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock thanked the Fiscal team for such a detailed report, pointing out that it is important for City Council to know where the money is being spent. He added that it was eye-opening to see how many projects the City can undertake with a relatively limited budget.

Vice President Mungioli commented that her favorite quote is “no taxation without representation” and that as an elected representative on City Council, it is important for her to understand where the money is being spent so that she can answer the questions of the residents who elected her into this role. She thanked the City staff members who responded to her 95 questions regarding the budget. She also requested confirmation that in 2027, the City will be spending more than they will be taking in.

Mr. Snyder confirmed Vice President Mungioli’s statement, explaining that it is primarily due to the proposed Capital Program. He noted that they are running in the black operationally, but they are proposing \$40 million worth of Capital Projects.

Vice President Mungioli sought confirmation that the \$40 million will be taken from savings.

Mr. Snyder confirmed Vice President Mungioli’s understanding.

Vice President Mungioli pointed out that the Charter Mill was 2.7416 for 2026 and is 2.7654 for 2027. She requested confirmation that the millage rate is increasing even though the City will be spending more than they will be taking in.

Mr. Snyder stated that the Charter Millage rate is essentially set to maintain the same bottom-line millage. He shared that the millage rate that is proposed in this budget is 0.5 mill higher than last year’s 11.27 mill. He specified that the 0.5 mill will go directly to the Fire Department for the 12 new Firefighters. He continued that every year, Headlee rolls back millages that are at their Headlee cap. He noted that the General Levy, the Fire Levy, and the Police Levy are far below their cap but that the City has several other levies that are at their cap. He emphasized that the City’s goal is to maintain the same bottom-line millage, and explained that the General Levy has rolled up slightly to maintain the same bottom-line.

Vice President Mungioli noted that the City is not projecting the Charter Mill to increase every year between now and 2033.

Mr. Snyder responded that he does not know what Headlee will be from year to year, explaining that factors like inflation play a role. He reiterated that he would like to project a bottom-line rate, which is what the City is trying to maintain.

Vice President Mungioli requested confirmation that the City has not yet encumbered any money for the Adams Road project.

Mr. Snyder explained that they will not encumber any money for that project until City Council approves the 2027 Budget. He noted that if you do not have a budget, you cannot spend a dime. He underscored that that is why the City aims to adopt the budget three months before the end of the fiscal year.

Vice President Mungoli pointed out that if City Council were to approve a contract for something like salt with a contract through 2028, they would have already encumbered the money through 2028. She sought confirmation that if they were to deny the 2027 Budget or that specific line item, then that contract would be null and void for the next year.

Mr. Snyder confirmed Vice President Mungoli's understanding, adding that they could pay for services up until December 31st.

Vice President Mungoli requested confirmation that the 2027 extension to multi-year contracts they have approved will not be valid until they approve the budget in September.

Mr. Snyder responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Mannino voiced her confusion over the difference between the Total Project Cost and the City Cost in the Capital Improvement Plan Summary. She noted that it appears they are carrying the full project cost.

Mr. Snyder shared that they are carrying the full project cost for most of the projects; however, this is not the case for the MDOT-led rehabilitation of Rochester Road. He explained that this will likely be a \$40-50 million project but that the City's share is ten percent. He noted that when the contract comes before Council, it will be only for the City's share.

Ms. Mannino expressed her understanding that the Total Project Cost listed for the Rochester Road Project does not cover the full scope of the project from an MDOT perspective.

Mr. Snyder responded that the City has known for over a decade that this project is coming. He shared that they have had discussions with MDOT regarding the City's need to replace a water main and a sewer main along Rochester Road, and they will be able to incorporate these into the larger project to achieve some economies of scale.

Ms. Mannino pointed out that Rochester Road Rehabilitation (M-59 to Avon) Project shows the Total Project Cost as \$2.5 million and the City Cost as \$310,000. She questioned why the City is not including their cost in their Capital Outlay, noting that it seems like they are overstating their capital spend if they are going to incur only the City Cost amount.

Mr. Snyder explained that they will incur only the City Cost for the road and that they will have to pay 100 percent of the costs for the water main and the sewer main.

Ms. Mannino noted that there are several projects in the Capital Improvement Plan Summary that are showing two different costs for the Total Project Cost and the City Cost, and the City appears to be pulling in the Total Project Cost, not the City Cost, into their capital. She specified that there are examples of this on page 82 of the Budget Book.

Mayor Barnett stated that they can look into this matter and get an answer before the end of the meeting.

Ms. Mannino brought up the fact that the City's revenues are less than their expenses for 2027 but that after making the adjustments for non-cash and adding back in the capital, they run at a structural surplus. She noted that the surplus amount is less than their capital outlay for the year and that they are running a surplus and will spend the money but will need to draw down on the fund balances. She shared that she refers to the balances as cash, and questioned whether they are the same thing.

Mr. Snyder responded in the affirmative, adding that they are drawing down areas, such as the Major Road Fund and the Water & Sewer Capital Fund, to promote various significant projects. He noted that not every fund is getting drawn down and that many funds, such as the Fire Operating Fund, are on a steady track. He explained that the City saves up for a project and then draws cash down for that particular project, similar to how a homeowner might save up for a new roof, draw down cash to pay for the replacement, and then start saving for the next home improvement.

Ms. Mannino requested confirmation that the target fund balance level is between 25 and 30 percent.

Mr. Snyder shared that the target for most of the funds is 25 percent, which is the equivalent of three months of operating expenses. He noted that the City prefers to carry the General Fund slightly higher because they have several funds that heavily rely on the General Fund, as it is the only fund that can supplement any fund Citywide. He detailed that they have been dedicating the majority of the General Fund surplus toward Parks and Facilities.

Discussed: General Budget Overview.

2026-0364 Discussion - General Fund (100's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0341 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: GENERAL FUND REVENUE; MAYOR'S DEPARTMENT: Mayor's Department, Accounting, Legal Services, Treasury, Media Division, Street Lighting, Community Development Block Grant, Community Events, Community Programs; **GENERAL FUND TRANSFER-OUT.**

2026-0367 Discussion - Capital Funds (400's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0341 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Capital Improvement Fund.

2026-0368 Discussion - Water and Sewer Funds (500's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0341 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Solid Waste Fund.

2026-0369 Discussion - Internal Service Funds (600's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0341 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Insurance Fund.

2026-0370 Discussion - Trust and Agency Funds (700's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0341 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Retiree Healthcare Trust Fund.

2026-0364 Discussion - General Fund (100's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

Assessing Department:

Laurie Taylor, Assessing Director, and **Karen Somerville**, Deputy Assessing Director, were in attendance to review the Assessing Department.

Ms. Taylor stated that the Assessing Department works to ensure that their assessment rolls follow the guidelines of the State Tax Commission, and added that all of their team members are certified by the State of Michigan, a rare distinction for an Assessing Department. She shared that their conservative approach to budgeting has paid off, as they had projected a modest 2.75 percent increase in taxable value for Budget Year 2027 but witnessed a 4.2 percent increase instead. She emphasized that this is great news in that it helps fund all the budgets that are sustained by a millage. She noted that they are projecting a 2.75 percent increase in taxable value for 2028 and a 2.5 percent increase for 2029.

Ms. Somerville shared that residential properties make up 80 percent of the assessment roll. She added that assessments represent 50 percent of market

value and that the City continues to experience a strong residential real estate market. She detailed that the average sale of a single home has now surpassed over \$500,000. She also shared that the spread between assessed value and taxable value continues to grow, and is currently at nearly \$2 billion. She added that the average 42 percent margin between individual taxable value and assessed value secures the City against a market downturn. She concluded by sharing that they have welcomed their Sister City, Rochester, to the Assessing family, as they took jurisdiction over their assessing responsibilities last month. She expressed the Assessing Department's belief that this joint venture will prove beneficial for both communities.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock called attention to the 42 percent buffer between individual taxable value and assessed value, noting that it gives the City the ability to absorb some of the impact of a market downturn should there be one. He added that it is not the most ideal time to move right now given that home prices continue to increase but that the City is comfortable with a 2.75 increase in taxable value.

Mr. Blair reiterated how amazing the 42 percent figure is, pointing out that many municipalities would love to have that sort of cushion from a market downturn. He added that it is great to see the increase in property values, and explained that although people looking to move into the City may not appreciate this reality, property owners in the City are happy to see this. He voiced his gratitude for the fantastic work of the Assessing Department.

Planning & Economic Development Department:

Sara Roediger, Planning & Economic Development Director, and **Pam Valentik**, Economic Development Manager, were in attendance to review the Planning & Economic Development Department.

Ms. Roediger and **Ms. Valentik** presented a video showcasing the Planning & Economic Development Department, with the following highlights:

- Ten-Year Anniversary of the Brooklands
 - The Gerald
 - Mixed-use creation with housing above and business below
 - Melting pot of culinary delights
 - Expanded park
 - State-of-the-art playscape
 - Areas for thoughtful reflection
 - Interactive water features
 - Murals by local artists
- Planning Successes
 - Master Plan
 - Blueprint 4 Innovation Survey
- Economic Development Initiatives
 - Successful programs to elevate local businesses
 - Extended the plans to attract infrastructure and new businesses and jobs

for LDFA District

- Connections with hundreds of companies annually to ensure their satisfaction within the City
- Rochester Hills is one of the best places to live for engineers
- Through strategy with the Parks & Natural Resources Department, the Building Department, and the Department of Public Services, the Planning & Economic Development Department has managed to reduce their budget this year

Ms. Roediger stated that the Planning & Economic Development Department has a status quo budget request this year. She voiced the Department's appreciation for City Council's partnership and thoughtful consideration of their items, and emphasized that the Department works every day to ensure that Rochester Hills remains the preeminent place to live, work, and raise your family, not just for today, but for future generations.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock commented that he did not realize it had already been ten years since the revitalization of the Brooklands, adding that that part of town continues to grow. He stated that the Planning & Economic Development Department is doing a great job of attracting businesses to the City and that residents and City Council appreciate their efforts.

Vice President Mungioli voiced her desire for the City to televise their Planning Commission meetings, and noted that based on the administrative response to her preliminary question, it does not sound like this would necessitate a large increase to the budget. She questioned whether she should ask this question as a straw poll.

Mr. Snyder responded that a straw poll would be a great first step, adding that the administration would likely need to do some work to redirect resources and determine what the additional costs might be.

Vice President Mungioli stated that she will send Clerk Scott a straw poll question on this topic. She also commented that she has been requesting for six and a half years that the City extend their 300-foot notice to 600 feet with regard to advising neighboring property owners of nearby developments. She explained that this would allow for more people to be aware of development happening in their community. She questioned how she should go about addressing this matter.

Mayor Barnett noted that it is ultimately a Council decision and that they may want to engage in more discussion with Attorney Christ and allow the administration to gather the pertinent data.

Vice President Mungioli mentioned that she went back and found an email from former City Attorney John Staran, who had explained that the MCL dictates that notice must be provided to residents within at least 300 feet, but it does not state that municipalities cannot add more distance.

Mayor Barnett expressed his belief that there are two communities, Ann Arbor and Ferndale, that require 500 feet. He acknowledged that there is a wide variety of choices, and emphasized that this is a Council decision and that the administration can work to provide relevant research.

Vice President Mungoli questioned whether City Council would need to put this item under Any Other Business during one of their Regular Meetings. She voiced her belief that 300 feet is not an adequate distance given the fact that in some cases, the neighboring properties are commercial. She added that the next nearest resident may be a rental home or a group home. She recognized the budget implications of extending the requirement, noting that there would be more mailing and postage required.

Mayor Barnett noted that the reason this matter should be a sidebar conversation is because it is likely not budgetary in nature. He reiterated that there is some thoughtful discussion that should occur and that the administration will do whatever Council would like to do. He added that it is difficult to ascertain what the budgetary impact will be until Council provides direction, and mentioned that the City is finding more success reaching people through electronic communication than snail mail.

Vice President Mungoli brought up the fact that although the number of RHConnect! subscribers increased during the City's water issue a few months ago, not everyone is tech-savvy or wants to receive additional emails. She underscored her desire to place physical signage where development, not improvement, is going to happen.

Ms. Neubauer praised the video presentation, and echoed that she did not realize ten years had passed since the efforts to rejuvenate the Brooklands. She voiced how wonderful it has been to see the changes in that area and to see how strong it bounced back after the tragic splash pad shooting a couple of years ago. Regarding resident communication, she shared that she received an email from a resident who suggested that the City post on social media about their developments and other projects that will create a significant footprint. She explained that this might be an accessible, cost-efficient way to provide Planning & Economic Development updates, adding that it would be cool to highlight the ten-year anniversary of the Brooklands and the changes that have been made in such a short time.

Ms. Mannino shared that she loved the video. She brought up her comments from the last Council Meeting regarding professional services related to data center policy, and sought confirmation that the Planning & Economic Development Department is confident they have budgeted appropriately to obtain the best services.

Ms. Roediger emphasized that she feels very comfortable with the amount they have budgeted, detailing that they have a line item for the Planning Department's professional services and have also spoken with and have a separate budget for ASTI, their environmental consultants. She added that she spoke with Oakland University, who is offering to have discussions with the City regarding everything they have learned as part of their experiences with data centers.

Mr. Skelcy expressed his belief that the Planning & Economic Development Department set the bar with their video. He shared that this year was his first year attending the Brooklands Block Party, and commented that it was impressive, making particular mention of the number of kids who brought their great ideas to the RHising Market. He inquired whether the City tracks the number of people utilizing the Brooklands area.

Ms. Valentik responded that they are excited to highlight that it has been ten years since they came before Council to request support for studying and redeveloping this corridor. She shared that they have investigated a couple different tools that would allow for activity tracking in an area. She specified that one of the programs that she and Ken Elwert, Parks & Natural Resources Director, have looked at is Placer.ai. She explained that tools like this track visitors based on their cell phone activity and that you can identify where visitors have come from most recently, where their home area is, where they travel after they leave the corridor, and where they visit within the corridor. She revealed that when they initially considered Placer.ai a couple of years ago, they observed a huge spike in visitors coming to the Brooklands area and found that Johnny Blacks was the number one place for visitors. She noted that these tracking companies scrub out employees.

Vice President Mungoli cautioned against using cell phones to track people's activity, referencing residents' existing concerns over flock cameras. She emphasized that the City needs to find a non-invasive method that does not jeopardize people's privacy, such as asking Johnny Blacks to count how many heads come into the building.

Ms. Valentik clarified that the City would not collect that data and that there are companies that would scrub specific details and simply provide general information.

Vice President Mungoli noted that the issue is that somebody has the data, and reiterated that she would like the City to ensure they are being very careful and to identify alternatives that do not require data collection via cell phone. She acknowledged that these metrics are important to understand, but underscored her concern over the comments she has heard from residents regarding data collection.

Mayor Barnett shared that the City has won several awards for transparency, explaining that the Development Projects Explorer on the City's website allows people to see every application any Planning Commissioner or City employee has ever received. He also expressed the City's pride in the Brooklands project, and noted that SEMCOG has gathered information regarding activity in the past. He highlighted that the property values in the Brooklands have risen faster on average than in the rest of the City and that residents are happy with the improvements. He emphasized the role of a good Planning & Economic Development Department and supporting City departments.

Discussed: **ASSESSING:** Assessing, Board of Review; **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Planning Commission, Planning Department, Zoning Board of Appeals.

2026-0371 Discussion - Component Units (800's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0364 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Historic Districts Commission, EGLE Grant Fund, Brownfield Revolving Fund, BRA / Legacy Fund, BRA / Rochester @ Avon Fund, Local Development Finance Authority.

2026-0364 Discussion - General Fund (100's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

Clerk's Department:

Leanne Scott, City Clerk, and **Sheila Brown**, Deputy City Clerk, were in attendance to review the Clerk's Department.

Clerk Scott stated that as the nation celebrates its 250th anniversary, they have the opportunity to not only look back at where they have been, but also to think about the responsibility they have to carry that legacy forward. She shared that in many ways, that is exactly what the Clerk's Office does, as they preserve the past, serve the present, and help prepare the community for the future.

Ms. Brown provided the following highlights regarding the Clerk's Office:

- *Preserving the Past*
 - Decreased physical storage by 30 percent
 - Audited paper records to identify and securely destroy outdated files
 - Began digital transition of files
- *Serving the Present*
 - Over 600 passport applications processed
 - Over 90 notary customers served
 - 152 Board, Commission, and Committee Members supported
 - Over 2,300 birth certificates issued
 - Over 1,400 death certificates processed
- *Supporting City Council*
 - Preparing agendas, maintaining the official record, documenting actions and decisions, and helping ensure that the business of City government moves forward accurately and efficiently
- *Preparing the Next Generation*
 - Introducing the next generation to public service, civic engagement, leadership, and local government
- *Protecting Democracy*
 - Over 5,000 voter registration touch points
 - "A" rating on audits for five consecutive years
 - Over 65 hours of election training provided

Clerk Scott shared that this budget begins an important investment in new voting equipment. She explained that their voting equipment is the infrastructure through which residents exercise one of their most fundamental rights, and underscored the need to ensure the equipment supporting that democracy is dependable, secure, and efficient.

She also highlighted the importance of preserving the City's cemeteries, and detailed the following updates:

- This year, they completed a Cemetery Master Plan, providing a clear roadmap for the future of the Cemetery.
- Section Two Improvements
 - Focus includes a proposed columbarium, above-ground individual cremation plots, and memorial benches
- Section Nine Improvements
 - Additional above-ground cremation spaces, cremation benches, and amenities for reflection and remembrance
- Section Seven Improvements
 - Largest expansion, featuring variations of above-ground cremation spaces, wall niches, benches, and a dedicated cenotaph wall

She concluded by thanking City Council and requesting that they support their budget.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock brought up election safety and security, and thanked the Clerk's Department for ensuring that the City's elections are fair and safe for the residents.

Ms. Neubauer commented that she does not think she has ever been in the Clerk's Office after 5:00 p.m. and not found somebody still working, and added that there have been times she has gotten out of meetings as late as 10:00 p.m. and members of the Clerk's Office are still there. She emphasized that she is grateful for this reality. She highlighted the City's investment in the next generation, noting that she loves working with the kids. She also shared that it is disappointing that the State will not be providing funding for the new election equipment, but echoed sentiments that safe elections are necessary and that she is thankful for the Clerk's Office's integrity, precision, and preparation for elections.

Vice President Mungoli thanked Clerk Scott for the answers to her preliminary questions. She reiterated the importance of election security, and thanked the Clerk's Department for ensuring they have sound equipment. She continued by stating that she looks forward to seeing the Cemetery Master Plan in October, and sought confirmation that the requested budget is based on this Master Plan, which Council has not seen yet. She also inquired how they created the 1700s-themed pictures of their team members in their presentation.

Clerk Scott responded that the budget they are requesting includes a

columbarium but does not cover the whole Master Plan. She shared that they used AI to create the pictures of their team members.

Mr. Skelcy inquired about the status of the City's election equipment and how they plan to fund the replacements. He also inquired about the age of the oldest headstone in the Cemetery.

Clerk Scott explained that all municipalities are required to replace their equipment, and noted that the City will have to fund the replacements. She added that although they were hopeful they would receive some assistance from the State, they have done their due diligence with Joe Snyder, Chief Financial Officer, to budget for those replacements. She shared that the City has two historic cemeteries but that she does not know offhand who the oldest headstone belongs to.

Pat McKay, Museum Manager, stated that the oldest headstone is from 1825 and belongs to a Revolutionary War soldier named Michael Van Wagner.

Discussed: CLERKS OFFICE: City Council, Elections, Clerk's Department, Cemetery.

2026-0370 Discussion - Trust and Agency Funds (700's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0364 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: VHJSC Cemetery Perpetual Care Trust.

2026-0369 Discussion - Internal Service Funds (600's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

MIS Department:

Rochelle Lyon, Information Systems Director, and **Harrison Porter**, Information Systems Administrator I, were in attendance to review the MIS Department.

Ms. Lyon introduced herself, as well as Mr. Porter, the MIS Department's newest Information Systems Administrator. She stated that as the nation celebrates 250 years of American history, the City has a living landmark taking part in that legacy: the historic Bebb oak tree, standing tall for over two centuries. She continued that at City Hall, MIS is celebrating their own milestone of building Rochester Hills' digital foundation. She explained that just like the Bebb oak, modern IT infrastructure does not appear overnight; rather, it grows layer by layer, ring by ring, into a resilient canopy. She noted that tonight, she will be walking through how the City's digital growth rings were built, how they protect the City today, and how they will shelter the community for decades to come.

She provided the following highlights regarding the MIS Department:

- Mid-1990s: The Seedling
 - Data Processing Unit
 - Mainframe and Standalone PCs
 - Limited Internet Access
 - Basic Antivirus
- Today: The Root System
 - Independent MIS Department
 - Cloud and Comprehensive Systems
 - Robust Digital Front Door
 - Multi-layer Defense
- Sheltering the Community
 - Six-person team of Harrison, Margaret, Chris, Christy, Sarah, and Rochelle supports every single City department
 - 46,000 Monthly Website Visitors (25 Percent Surge)
 - Over 2,500 Inquiries Solved by AI "Digital Scout"
- The Protective Bark
 - 53 Terabytes Securely Routed □ 26 Million Printed Books
 - Over 2,000 Threats Neutralized in 30 Days □ 70 Locked-Door Break-Ins
- Daily
 - New Growth Rings
 - Fine-tuning Network
 - Fortifying Defenses
 - Frictionless Support

She shared that tonight marks a deeply personal milestone for her, as her time spent leading the MIS team is coming to a close. She voiced that she is incredibly proud of everything they have accomplished, and noted that the exceptional team of Harrison, Margaret, Chris, Christy and Sarah is the future of the MIS Department. She thanked Mayor Barnett for believing in her and granting her the honor of serving as the City's MIS Director. She also thanked City Council for their years of ongoing support, and requested support of this budget.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock commented that Ms. Lyon's leadership has been crucial to the MIS Department. He thanked her for all the work she has done for the residents, referencing the security of the City's website when people go to pay their taxes or take care of other business.

Vice President Mungioli stated that it has been phenomenal to watch Ms. Lyon's leadership grow over the years. She emphasized Ms. Lyon's work in keeping the City safe from an IT perspective, thanking her specifically for reaching out to residents to test the new website. She commented that the next MIS Director will have some big shoes to fill, and inquired when Ms. Lyon will be leaving the City.

Ms. Lyon responded that she will be gone by February 2nd.

Vice President Mungioli questioned whether Ms. Lyon will be part of the

conference room improvements. She also requested confirmation that the MIS Department continually updates their policies and procedures.

Ms. Lyon shared that her successor will likely be overseeing the conference room improvements but that she is helping to set up on the back end what they will be doing moving forward. She also confirmed that the MIS Department continually updates their policies and procedures, explaining that this is necessary due to the breakneck speed of everything IT and they must maintain compliance.

Mr. Blair thanked Ms. Lyon for all her hard work. He pointed out that IT is often a thankless job, and stated that he believes now is a great time to get out of it.

Ms. Lyon revealed that she agrees.

Mr. Blair shared that he has been in the IT business for over 25 years and longs for the days when hacking and spear-phishing were not common and you could still purchase software. He praised the way Ms. Lyon has balanced all the different available options and put the City in a position where they are ready for anything the industry might present. He concluded by welcoming Mr. Porter to the team.

Mr. Limberg commended the great presentation. He acknowledged that the MIS Department has been granted tools to protect the City and all of their IT infrastructure, and questioned whether there are any other existing tools they wish they had looking into the future.

Ms. Lyon explained that they evaluate different tools on a rolling basis, given that technology is always changing. She shared that the MIS Department employs strong, layerable tools, and emphasized the frequency with which they investigate what is out there to ensure they are protecting the environment and keeping the City staff, residents, and data safe. She added that if the Department had a need, she would appear back before Council to explain why she believes they need it.

Ms. Neubauer thanked Ms. Lyon for everything she has done for the City. She brought up an instance in which she called Ms. Lyon a couple of minutes before 5:00 p.m. on a Friday regarding an unpleasant email she had received, and Ms. Lyon took her call and worked through the situation with patience. She also discussed a time a couple of years ago when the City was in the headlines for a different matter, and noted that the City's walls were high and they were protected due to the efforts of the MIS Department.

Ms. Lyon thanked City Council for their support, recognizing that that support allows the MIS Department to build those walls and keep the City as safe they can.

Discussed: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (MIS) DEPARTMENT: MIS Fund.

(RECESS 7:47 p.m. to 8:23 p.m.)

2026-0364 Discussion - General Fund (100's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

Human Resources Department:

Brooke Insana, Human Resources Director, and **Christina McCaskey**, Human Resources Manager, were in attendance to review the Human Resources Department.

Ms. Insana shared that the 2027 Human Resources' budget is themed "We the People," explaining that just as the Constitution anchors the nation, the City's workforce anchors the City. She added that joining her tonight is Ms. McCaskey, the City's new HR Manager. She stated that the HR team works to build the City's internal culture, ensuring the state of the City workforce remains strong, compliant, and forward-thinking.

Ms. McCaskey provided the following highlights:

- Reviewing 1,716 applicants
- Hiring the top one percent
- 11 employees promoted from July 1st, 2025 to June 30th, 2026

Ms. Insana discussed the following information:

- Four retirees, representing 66 years of institutional knowledge and dedicated service
 - To protect this legacy, their budget strategy prioritizes robust succession planning
- Effective labor relations rely on mutual trust and collaboration
 - 2027 strategy includes entering contract negotiations with two of the City's largest employee union groups, GELC 1984 and IAFF 3472

Ms. McCaskey shared that at the heart of their success is the City culture, which emphasizes a community built on connection and shared goals. She detailed that from team-building events to celebrating the nation's 250th anniversary, they strive to ensure every employee feels valued and included.

Ms. Insana concluded with the following information:

- This year's budget prioritized DISC training, a targeted communication initiative providing staff with a shared framework to adapt styles, minimize conflict, and collaborate effectively
- A gratitude campaign generated 197 handwritten thank-you cards
- These low-cost investments build trust and deliver a massive return on employee morale

She noted that at its core, the HR budget is a strategic reinvestment in the people who keep the City moving. On behalf of the entire workforce, she asked for City Council's continued support for the City's most valuable asset, the people.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock noted that it is always interesting to see all the things that HR does, pointing out that those in corporate America tend to see HR only as the “hiring and firing arm” but that HR extends to many different aspects of business. He thanked Ms. Insana for everything that she and her team do.

Mr. Blair commented that seven years ago, when he began to get to know City Council Members and City staff and was ultimately elected to serve on Council, he was shocked at just how high quality the team was. He explained that team members are responsive, do high-quality work, and genuinely love what they do. He also brought up the fact that at the City’s annual Christmas party, numerous team members receive pins for 25, 30, and 35 years of service. He stated that this is unheard of in other workplaces, and praised the HR team for cultivating such an amazing culture.

Vice President Mungoli thanked Ms. Insana for the answers to her preliminary questions. She questioned how the City’s health insurance policy covers mental health, emphasizing that mental health issues are not always resolved as quickly as physical health issues but are just as significant.

Ms. Insana responded that there are three different avenues an individual could pursue depending on his or her needs. She outlined the following:

- The City offers four health insurance plans: two PPOs and two HMOs. An employee seeking mental health assistance would explore a plan that offers the most robust coverage.
- The City has an Employee Assistance Program that they promote on a regular basis, especially within the Fire Department, where mental health challenges are more common.
- The City offers short-term disability, which is a leave benefit that is available for all employees.

Vice President Mungoli questioned whether the different types of health issues differ with regard to how employees qualify to return to work.

Ms. Insana explained that an employee typically needs only a doctor’s note to return from leave, whether the issue be physical or mental. She added that contractually, there are other layers involved depending on which union an employee is affiliated with.

Vice President Mungoli requested confirmation that non-union staff have the same access to these options.

Ms. Insana confirmed Vice President Mungoli’s statement.

Vice President Mungoli expressed her desire for the City to ensure they are providing top-notch healthcare to staff while keeping the cost at an affordable level. She noted that she would like them to keep this in mind with the upcoming

union contract negotiations.

Ms. Insana shared that health insurance is typically one of the top discussion items in any negotiation, and underscored that the City offers very competitive health insurance plan options, one of which has a zero cost share to the employee. She noted that in the fall, she will once again be requesting Council's approval to opt out of PA 152, which allows the City to keep the cost affordable for employees.

Ms. Mannino questioned whether the wage and benefit study is covered in the 2027 Budget and whether the City will be using Mercer for the study.

Ms. Insana confirmed that the wage and benefit study is in the 2027 Budget, adding that they are currently evaluating RFP proposals and plan to bring forth the selected vendor to Council in October. She stated that Mercer may or may not be the selected vendor.

Ms. Mannino requested further information regarding the timeline for hiring the 12 new Firefighters.

Ms. Insana acknowledged that 12 is a large number and that it is a tough market for firefighters, but shared that they have a strategy and have been discussing the job description. She explained that they would like to create a visually eye-catching flyer that will highlight the unique benefits afforded to the City's Firefighters, and they will be able to post this upon the approval of the budget in September. She continued that they would like to hire the Firefighters in phases, but noted that they will be ready to pivot depending on who comes their way. She specified that if there are eight qualified candidates, they will interview and hire eight individuals; if there are two qualified candidates, they will interview and hire two individuals. She added that Ms. McCaskey will help lead the recruitment process.

Ms. Mannino questioned whether the 12 new Firefighters will be hired by January 1st, 2027, or whether they will be phased in throughout 2027.

Ms. Insana clarified that they will be hired by January 1st, 2027.

Building/Ordinance/Facilities Department:

Mike Viazanko, Building/Ordinance/Facilities Director, **Tim Hollis**, Deputy Building/Ordinance/Facilities Director, **Jeff Schultz**, Manager of Inspection Services, and **Jodi Welch**, Manager of Ordinance Services, were in attendance to review the Building/Ordinance/Facilities Department.

Mr. Schultz provided the following Building Division statistics:

- 17,000 Inspections
- 4,000 Plan Reviews
- 2,500 Permits Closed
- Improved plan review turnaround time by 50 percent over the past three years

Ms. Welch discussed the following information regarding the Ordinance Division:

- 1,223 Door Tags Issued
- 4,494 Total Inspections
- 81 Percent Proactive Inspections

Mr. Hollis shared the following updates on behalf of the Facilities Division:

- 3,300 Service Requests
- Have successfully completed vital landmark projects, including the Fire Training Tower, Fire Station One Locker Rooms, and the Borden Park Baseball Field Light Repair
- 2027 Projects:
 - City Hall Carpet Replacement
 - Veterans Memorial Pointe Pathway
 - New Columbarium at Van Hoosen Jones Cemetery

Mr. Viazanko announced that the Rochester Hills Building Department has successfully secured the renewal of their International Accreditation Service (IAS) accreditation, making them the sole Building Department in the State of Michigan, and one of 35 nationally, to hold this distinction. He expressed his pride in the Building Department team and their outstanding achievements, and thanked City Council for their continued support.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock called attention to the inherent difficulty the Building Department faces, given that they typically get involved in a situation only if there is a problem. He thanked the Department for all the services they offer the community to ensure that residents have safe places to live.

Mr. Blair commended the Building Department's outstanding work, and thanked Ms. Welch for taking all of his calls and staying so positive amidst resident complaints. He also praised the Facilities Division, noting that the work they do is integral to setting the scene for interactions with residents. He inquired about the status of the restoration of the electric feeder at City Hall, which was planned for 2026, and requested more information regarding the planned architectural improvements for City Hall.

Mr. Viazanko responded that DTE confirmed within the last 60 days that they restored the line. He also shared that City Hall underwent a renovation 23 years ago but now needs improvements such as counter replacements and workspace renovations in the Engineering Department. He explained that instead of doing one massive overhaul, they are trying to allocate monies in the budget to work through the list of projects by priority. He noted that this will have less impact on the budget.

Mr. Blair commented that when he hears "architectural," he thinks of things like façades; however, the planned improvements sound more like wear-and-tear items.

Mr. Viazanko concurred with Mr. Blair's statement.

Vice President Mungioli thanked the Building Department for their work, specifically applauding Ms. Welch for handling resident complaints so diplomatically. She questioned how the carpet replacement at City Hall will occur without removing cubicles, and whether this project will be taking place over a weekend.

Mr. Viazanko explained that depending on the type of carpet, they may be able to raise the cubicles so that the carpet can be put down. He shared that many of the offices have carpet squares, so they will not be removing traditional 12-foot rolls of product. Regarding the day of the week the carpet replacement will be taking place, he noted that they will see what the best practice is and then schedule accordingly.

Vice President Mungioli voiced her desire to have standards that give the City the authority to enforce ordinances.

Mr. Viazanko shared that they have a process in place for all developments, both residential and commercial. He detailed that if there are special conditions for a site plan approval, then one of the first steps of the review upon receiving the construction drawings is comparing the drawings to the submitted site plan. He continued that they cannot issue an occupancy permit until all the other departments have signed off and approved. He added that for requests for a final inspection to occupy a building, they have changed the workflow to notify the right departments that they need an inspection. He also shared that they are continually looking at the ordinances to see which ones need to be updated.

Vice President Mungioli emphasized that she wants to ensure they have all the necessary tools to hold a developer accountable. She encouraged the Department to let City Council know if they need more money in the budget for training or anything else.

Mr. Viazanko stated that they will look into it but that he believes they have a process in place that has been successful. He added that they have provisions in the construction codes that they can use as an enforcement mechanism.

Vice President Mungioli commented that there have been numerous complaints on social media regarding fiber companies that have gone through a gas line or dug up lawns. She shared that while they cannot stop these companies from working, she would like to receive notice that these companies are coming. She questioned what the City can do to require fiber companies to notify residents, whether by door tags or another method of communication. She concluded by emphasizing the Building Department's fantastic work and the fact that City Council would like to provide them with the resources they need.

Mr. Blair voiced his understanding that the City has roughly ten FTEs with regard to Inspectors.

Mr. Viazanko clarified that they have eight full-time Inspectors and a number of

part-time on-call Inspectors.

Mr. Blair noted that the Building Department is hitting 98 to 99 percent of inspections completed within 24 hours, and questioned how much the City is calling on neighboring communities to help.

Mr. Viazanko shared that they have interlocal inspection agreements with West Bloomfield, Shelby Township, and Sterling Heights. He noted that they occasionally use West Bloomfield and Shelby Township, and cover for those communities when they are short as well.

Mr. Blair stated that he wants to ensure that Rochester Hills is not maintaining high numbers at the expense of pulling Inspectors from other cities.

Mr. Viazanko emphasized that the interlocal agreements are effective and a great way to continue customer service.

Mr. Blair pointed out that in 2022, the Building Department was at 76 percent for having the first full plan review completed within 15 days, and as June 2026, they are at 97 percent. He noted that the Department has implemented electronic plan review since 2022, and questioned whether there are other factors that have contributed to the improved service.

Mr. Viazanko credited the team for carrying out the things that the leadership has planned. He shared that aside from implementing electronic plan review, they have introduced a two-day turnaround on the review of all submitted documents. He explained that they previously utilized a 15-day review process, during which they would sometimes discover that items were missing, requiring them to start the process all over again.

Ms. Neubauer voiced her desire for the City to address the e-bike issue with an ordinance, noting that the Planning Department has been working on this matter and that the City of Rochester has created their own guidelines. She referenced the uptick in kids getting hurt while riding e-bikes, and brought up the question of how they can regulate children to ensure their safety. Regarding data centers, she underscored that the City is currently under a moratorium, has no active applications, and is working toward drafting an appropriate and restrictive ordinance. She concluded by thanking Ms. Welch for her responsiveness and work with the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Discussed: HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT: Human Resources Department.

Discussed: BUILDING/ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE/FACILITIES DEPARTMENT: Building Department, Ordinance Compliance, Weed Control, Facilities Fund.

Parks & Natural Resources Department:

Ken Elwert, Parks & Natural Resources Director, **Dennis Andrews**, Deputy Parks & Natural Resources Director, **Kelly McBride**, Parks Manager, **Darrin Dobbs**, Grounds Maintenance Manager, **Matt Einheuser**, Natural Resources Manager, and **Pat McKay**, Museum Manager, were in attendance to review the Parks & Natural Resources Department.

Mr. Elwert stated that in honor of America's 250th anniversary, they are going back to their roots. He highlighted the following information:

- The outdoors have played a crucial part in the continent's history. Mastodons once roamed the lands, and the City's Museum has proof that they were found right here in Rochester Hills near the Clinton River Trail.
- This area was originally inhabited by the Council of Three Fires: the Ojibwe, the Ottawa, and the Potawatomi. They utilized the local waterways, including the Clinton River and the Paint Creek, for fishing, traveling, and farming.
- Current modes of transportation are more wheel-based, so the Parks & Natural Resources Department is requesting to move forward with a rebuilt and expanded parking lot at the Museum, with design requested in 2027 and construction in 2028.
- Rivers are still crucial to society, providing the backbone that feeds the lakes, where drinking water often comes from.
- Next year, the Department is requesting a coordinated river plan to actively prioritize restoration projects.
- The Eagle's Landing Project was a reactive project done to protect Livernois and an electric pole. The project moved the river, adjusted flows, and hardened the banks with natural materials.
- Avon Township was established in 1835 with a population of 1,630. The City has grown and prospered and is now at a population of 78,000.
- The City's park system has expanded to keep up with the changing recreation needs and now hosts over 1.7 million visits every year.
- The Paint Creek Trail was originally established as the Detroit and Bay City Railway in 1872 and eventually became Michigan's first rail trail with the formation of the Paint Creek Trail Commission in 1981. The original Michigan Air Line Railway was built in 1880 and eventually became the Clinton River Trail through the effort of several communities along the trail.
- This fall, DPS is coordinating repairs that will extend the useful life of bridges on the trails.
- The Parks & Natural Resources Department will be looking at resurfacing options in the coming years.
- The installation of a new playground at Avondale Park began today. The playgrounds at Bloomer Park are slated to be replaced in 2027.
- The Department has developed a larger, renovated fishing pier at Spencer Park.
- This year's Festival of the Hills featured the City's first-ever drone show to celebrate America 250. Including this event, Borden Park had 480,000 visits last year.
- Nowicki Park will feature an active dog park, intense playground use, rentals in the new community room and pavilion, and a trail system.
- The Department is requesting one full-time Ranger and associated seasonal team members to cover park operations.

He concluded by noting that City Council has allowed the Parks & Natural Resources team to be an integral part of building the community. He thanked City Council, and requested their support as they take a step into the outdoor future.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock shared that one of the things that drew him to the City when he moved here back in 2013 was the parks. He commented that the number of people who utilize the parks is impressive, and added that it is exciting to sit up at the dais and see all the upcoming projects. He thanked the Parks team for the work they do.

Vice President Mungoli thanked Mr. Elwert and Mr. Andrews for answering her questions regarding the Blueprint 4 Innovation survey and the direction of the Parks Department. She inquired about the status of the contract the City has with Oakland County for Bloomer Park.

Mr. Elwert responded that the contract was never a long-term plan. He explained that Oakland County has expressed interest in putting boots on the ground, noting that Bloomer is a long-term leased park for the County and they are in the process of figuring out maintenance service. He shared that the City meets with the County monthly to discuss the two entities' properties, and emphasized that while the first long-term lease is all set, the County had always intended to run the park themselves at some point.

Vice President Mungoli pointed out that the County decided within a year that they could run the park themselves.

Mr. Elwert stated that the City is still negotiating with the County, adding that Oakland County Parks is doing a lot throughout the region and is trying to ascertain where to put resources first staff-wise.

Vice President Mungoli brought up her displeasure over the County changing dynamics in their contracts, and voiced that she would like to ensure that if the County decides to back out, they still pay the City.

Mr. Elwert shared that the County paid the City a substantial amount for the 50-year lease. He noted that the City has the ability to back out of the lease based on certain criteria but that they had never intended to sign a long-term maintenance agreement.

Vice President Mungoli expressed her desire for the City to have control over the aesthetics in their parks. She reiterated that the County changes their mind with contracts, and underscored that one of Council's strategic objectives is to monitor their relationships with partners.

Mr. Elwert noted that even if the City is not performing the maintenance services, they will be inspecting the properties and holding the County accountable to their part of the contract. He added that they have 90 days to back out of the contract if they disagree.

Vice President Mungoli questioned whether the City will be doing anything with the Beekeeper Property anytime soon.

Mr. Elwert responded that they have a request in the budget to create a concept plan for the property. He detailed that there were some ideas at the time the City

purchased the property and applied for the grant that paid for about half of it. He added that one of the most prominent ideas is a trailhead with some low access use.

Vice President Mungoli requested confirmation that they will shelve this project until they have room in the budget.

Mr. Elwert explained that they will obtain a cost estimate, which will provide them with enough of a target to be able to come back to Council and figure out how it will fit in with their five-year Master Plan and other endeavors.

Vice President Mungoli questioned how Mr. Elwert feels about having significantly less money in the Parks budget this year compared to last year, when the budget for Nowicki Park was approved.

Mr. Elwert voiced that it is nice to have a break from the large projects for a year or so, but noted that one of their main focuses for the coming year will be to get Nowicki Park up and running. He added that this park is much different than any other of the City's parks and that Ms. McBride has already been working extensively on this project.

Vice President Mungoli sought confirmation that the Parks team will be coming back to Council with a proposal regarding dog park access.

Mr. Elwert expressed his belief that connections in the fob system will provide residents access to the dog park. He noted that Mr. Andrews knows more details and that they expect to come back to Council on this matter.

Mr. Andrews added that they will be looking at fees later this year and then bringing that item to Council.

Vice President Mungoli commented that it would be nice to maintain the dog park area through the use of the dog park fees. She also inquired about the work that will be done on the Museum parking lot.

Mr. Elwert shared that, assuming this item is approved in the budget, they will be looking at the design of the parking lot next year, with construction slated for 2028. He added that the design phase will take around six months, and called attention to some of the unique challenges of this site, noting that it is a floodplain in some aspects and is located in the City of Rochester.

Vice President Mungoli noted that three Rochester City Council Members sit on the Sister City Committee / Rochester, and invited Mr. Elwert to attend one of their meetings to discuss the options for the parking lot before they come to Council. She also shared that she lives across the street from Nowicki Park and is very excited about the park opening next year. She acknowledged that the coming year will be busy, and thanked the Parks team for their work.

Mr. Blair voiced his desire for the Naming Standing Committee to rename the Beekeeper Property. He also questioned whether the dog park passes will be offered as an add-on to the regular park passes.

Mr. Elwert noted that it is probably time to rename the Beekeeper Property, and shared that they are currently looking at options for dog park passes and will present their recommendations to Council in the fall.

Mr. Blair questioned whether the full-time Ranger at Nowicki Park will be present during the day, and whether somebody could purchase a dog park license at the park.

Mr. Elwert confirmed that the Ranger is an on-site Ranger, meaning they will be at the park most of the time they are working or covered with seasonal staff. He stated that the current staff request does not include staff to sell daily passes.

Mr. Blair clarified that he was referring to selling annual, not daily, passes at the park.

Mr. Elwert shared that as of now, they are not planning on doing so; however, if City Council seriously wants to consider it, then they could look at the options.

Mr. Blair commented that the City sold parking passes at Innovation Hills for a few weeks after the fees were implemented, and emphasized that as more people hear about the dog park, it would be very convenient for residents to be able to purchase a pass on site. He voiced his belief that the dog park will experience foot traffic similar to that of Innovation Hills, and underscored that he would like to ensure that the City explores all possibilities for making it easier on both staff and residents.

Mr. Elwert explained that there are some unique challenges with dog park passes, specifying that dog owners must sign a waiver and have a dog license, and their dog must have the correct vaccinations. He stated that although they have not ruled out the possibility of selling dog park passes on site, it is not in the current operations plan to do so.

Mr. Skelcy praised the Parks staff, sharing that his company works with them and they are always friendly and helpful. He commented that although the signs for the parking kiosks at Bloomer are helpful, some of his customers have experienced difficulty navigating the QR code. He questioned whether the Parks staff has received any feedback on the kiosks.

Mr. Elwert noted that the kiosks have been installed for only a few weeks and that Ms. McBride can provide more details.

Ms. McBride reported that the kiosks are working out very well, detailing that they get ten to 15 transactions per day at each kiosk and even more on the weekends at Innovation Hills. She explained that the kiosks are providing an accessible option for community members who do not have cell phones or are technologically challenged. She added that the accessible nature of the kiosks is helpful for the Parks staff when dealing with people who are upset about having to pay for parking.

Mayor Barnett echoed Mr. Skelcy's comments regarding the amazing work of

the Parks team. He stated that parks are one of the most significant differentiating factors between Rochester Hills and other cities, and they reflect a continued investment to make the City's park network the best. He clarified that although he has joked about Nowicki Park being completed by April, it is actually slated for a late summer or early fall opening. He also referenced Vice President Mungioli's comments regarding the City's relationship with the County, and pointed out that in terms of Bloomer Park, the City is dealing with Oakland County Parks and not other parts of the County they have worked with in the past. He noted that they have a great relationship and that the County has valuable resources. He concluded by voicing his pride in the Parks team, as well as his appreciation for Council's support of parks. He emphasized that the City is a gold standard for parks and is regularly featured by parent groups and other organizations.

Discussed: PARKS & NATURAL RESOURCES: Parks Department, Grounds Maintenance Division, Natural Resources Division.

2026-0371 Discussion - Component Units (800's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0364 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Museum Division.

2026-0365 Discussion - Special Revenue Funds (200's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0364 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Parks Infrastructure Millage Fund, Tree Fund, Green Space.

2026-0370 Discussion - Trust and Agency Funds (700's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0364 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Green Space Perpetual Care Trust.

2026-0371 Discussion - Component Units (800's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0364 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: RH Museum Foundation Trust Fund.

2026-0365 Discussion - Special Revenue Funds (200's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

Department of Public Services:

Mayor Barnett formally introduced Tracey Balint, Public Services Director/City Engineer, as the newest Director in the City. He shared that Ms. Balint is the first female Public Services Director in the City's history and one of the only in the State. He expressed his confidence in Ms. Balint, and noted that he is excited to officially welcome her to the ranks of directorship.

Tracey Balint, Public Services Director/City Engineer, **Angela Hysinger**, Public Utilities Engineering Manager, **Lori Hamilton**, Administrative Services Supervisor, **Leon Luedeman**, Water & Sewer Operations Manager, **Nick Watterson**, Fleet Manager, and **Chris Shepard**, Field Services Manager, were in attendance to review the Department of Public Services.

Ms. Balint stated that as the nation celebrates its 250th anniversary this year, they are reminded that the American dream was physically built from the ground up. She noted that although the City of Rochester Hills is not quite 250 years old, it has evolved from dirt trails into an advanced road and pathway network. She added that hand-dug wells have been replaced by an expansive water system that feeds the majority of the City. She emphasized that while the demands of keeping a community functioning have dramatically evolved, the core mission of their department remains the same: to support the health, safety, and heart of the community.

Ms. Hamilton shared that the City's first dirt roads, constructed in the 1820s, have evolved into a modern network of engineered corridors and multi-use pathways that bridge neighborhoods, improve accessibility, and support alternative transit. She announced that they will be installing several HAWK signals and rapid flashing beacons in 2027, ensuring that the community moves forward safely for generations to come.

She highlighted the following upcoming road and pathway projects:

- 2026 Projects
 - South Adams and Brewster Pathways
 - Childress Avenue Paving
- 2027 Projects
 - Asphalt, Concrete, and Pathway Improvements

Ms. Hysinger stated that the City has come a long way from the era of private wells and wooden pipes, as the community is now backed by a robust water system, which distributes water from the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA). She explained that to ensure residents receive the superior water quality they deserve, the City dedicates millions of budget dollars toward replacing infrastructure every year.

She highlighted the following upcoming water and sewer projects:

- 2026 Projects
 - Henry Ford Hospital, Avon Towers, and Rochester High School
- 2027 Projects

- Water Main, Sanitary Sewer, Booster Station, and PRV Improvements

She noted that the City has made a significant effort toward modernization through upgrading their water meters, and added that their dedicated Water Resources team invests significant effort into managing floodplains, mitigating stormwater runoff, and preserving natural features.

Ms. Hamilton discussed the transformation of their Geographical Information System (GIS), asset management, and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) programs from basic tools into an interconnected framework that improves efficiency in their daily work. She explained that with improved tracking and infrastructure visibility, they can proactively manage the life cycle of their critical assets. She also shared that to match their growing community, their Fleet Division has transitioned from basic upkeep to managing a complex modern fleet. She detailed that through advanced technical training and proactive maintenance, they keep the City's essential vehicles running, ensuring that frontline teams can safely serve the City without interruption.

Ms. Balint stated that the budget they are presenting today is more than a maintenance plan; it is an investment in continuing a 250-year American legacy of building a better, safer, and more prosperous City for the next generation. She shared that behind their infrastructure is a dedicated team of over 70 men and women who serve the community every day to ensure Rochester Hills remains a premier destination to live, work, and raise a family. She thanked City Council for their continued support.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock commented that behind the Building Department, DPS is his second most contacted department. He pointed out that DPS is very visible in terms of the services they provide and that they undertake many projects. He emphasized that while the services they provide are not always glamorous, they are vital to keeping the community running. He thanked the Department for all their work.

Vice President Mungioli congratulated Ms. Balint on becoming the Public Services Director, noting that she is an example of how a staff member can work their way up to the levels of leadership. She questioned what percentage of the budget DPS constitutes.

Mr. Snyder responded that DPS constitutes approximately 40 percent of the budget.

Vice President Mungioli referenced her preliminary questions, reporting that she was informed that it was not necessary to work on the Dirt Barn immediately. She expressed her concern over the safety of the staff, and urged DPS to ensure they are prioritizing safety and to let Council know what they need. She also brought up discussions regarding water meter replacements, and commented that she would like to ensure there is an alternate option for people who do not want electronic waves in their house.

Ms. Balint explained that they currently read the meters digitally, detailing that as they are driving through the neighborhoods, the car is picking up the communication from the MXU on the outside of the homes. She noted that AMI is pulling that information from the same MXU but is bringing it directly to City Hall, where they have more real-time data available.

Vice President Mungoli stated that the City needs to be able to explain that process to residents when the time comes. She brought up the two Boil Water Alerts from earlier in the year, and questioned how the City holds GLWA accountable for not providing continuous service to the community.

Ms. Balint noted that GLWA operates a separate, larger water system, and stated that the City has very good communication with them and that GLWA is always inviting different communities to be part of their CIP development. She shared that the City met with members of GLWA today regarding one of their stations, and voiced her belief that their communication has improved significantly since May.

Vice President Mungoli committed to holding GLWA accountable if they are not finding ways to ensure the City is receiving consistent water quality. She voiced her belief that the Novi/Walled Lake area experienced a large water main break two years ago, and they now have a \$14 million project in their community. She pointed out that that is a huge investment from GLWA, and questioned why they are not doing the same for the City.

Ms. Balint shared that GLWA is looking into improvements, specifying that they are creating plans and conducting inspections. She added that the situation in May demonstrated to GLWA the cruciality of the infrastructure to the communities.

Vice President Mungoli called attention to the fact that the City has many segments of aging water main, and inquired how they can be more proactive when it comes to replacing these pipes.

Ms. Balint responded that ten to 15 years ago, the City began annually replacing aging water main. She detailed that in 2021, they replaced approximately four miles, and in 2024, they replaced five and a half miles. She voiced her belief that they usually spend between \$5.5 and \$8 million annually on the Water Main Replacement Project. She also shared that they are focusing slightly more on improvements to the PRVs and the Booster Station this year, but they continually update a spreadsheet that provides them with a ten-year outlook on water main replacement, with details regarding subdivisions, age, material, and pressure all taken into consideration.

Vice President Mungoli commented that she would like to set up a time to tour a PRV and the Booster Station, voicing her desire to understand the City's water system. She also pointed out that the City is investing significantly in fleet this year, and inquired whether Council could receive pictures of the new vehicles when they arrive so that they can offset resident concerns regarding where money is being spent. She concluded by thanking Ms. Balint and her team for the great work they do.

Ms. Balint noted that they can start sending pictures of the new vehicles to Council.

Mr. Blair shared that he did not realize the City had a street called Rochester Water Works Road, explaining that he stumbled upon it on Google Maps while they were discussing water infrastructure. He voiced his understanding that the water meters are interrogated by electronics in the car, and they do not emanate radio frequency at all times, have batteries, or plug in. He sought further confirmation that as soon as the City zaps a meter with a radio wave, they move onto the next house.

Ms. Balint confirmed Mr. Blair's understanding.

Mr. Blair inquired whether the new system will operate the same way.

Ms. Balint responded in the affirmative, adding that many of the meters are older and are currently being updated but that it is the same meters in the MXU.

Mr. Blair noted that he has a box outside of his house with a cable that goes inside the meter. He questioned whether the City is replacing only the box or whether a meter tech will need to go into every house as part of this upgrade.

Ms. Balint explained that this is simply an upgrade of the meters, adding that the MXUs that are already installed will work with the AMI system.

Mr. Blair shared that he has a separate meter for his irrigation, and it rattles slightly every time his irrigation system is running. He questioned whether DPS would replace both of his meters.

Ms. Balint stated that they take both meters into consideration when scheduling your appointment.

Mr. Blair pointed out that the City has had their new SCADA system, which was a significant investment, for about a year now. He inquired about how it has been performing.

Ms. Balint revealed that they began implementing the new system a year and a half ago but that it is 100 percent active as of a few weeks ago. She described the new system as amazing, detailing that the information is accurate and accessible and that the City is able to monitor flows much quicker than before.

Mr. Blair sought confirmation that the City is doing everything possible in terms of IT to protect the infrastructure.

Ms. Balint confirmed Mr. Blair's statement.

President Carlock inquired whether Council could schedule a time to visit the DPS Garage and see all of the equipment the City has purchased over the last decade.

Ms. Balint responded in the affirmative.

President Carlock congratulated Ms. Balint on her new position, and thanked her for everything that she and her team do.

Mr. Snyder commented that he had some time to crunch some numbers, and reported that DPS operations total \$60 million, which equates to roughly 30 percent of the budget, and all of the DPS Capital Projects proposed for 2027 total \$30 million, which constitutes 75 percent of the capital request and approximately 14 percent of the budget; thus, DPS constitutes approximately 44 percent of the total budget. He added that the public safety portion of the budget, Police and Fire, represents roughly 20 percent of the budget.

Discussed: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES (DPS): Major Road Fund, Local Street Fund, Pathway Maintenance Fund.

2026-0367 Discussion - Capital Funds (400's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0365 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Pathway Construction Fund.

2026-0365 Discussion - Special Revenue Funds (200's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0365 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Water Resources Fund.

2026-0368 Discussion - Water and Sewer Funds (500's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0365 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Sewer - Operating Division, Water - Operating Division, Water & Sewer - Capital Fund, Water & Sewer - Debt Fund.

2026-0369 Discussion - Internal Service Funds (600's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0365 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Fleet Fund.

2026-0365 Discussion - Special Revenue Funds (200's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

Captain Paul Workman, Oakland County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), was in

attendance to provide an overview of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office.

Captain Workman announced that the OCSO's staffing numbers remained unchanged this year, highlighting the following personnel numbers:

- 1 - Captain
- 2 - Lieutenants
- 6 - Patrol Sergeants
- 1 - Detective Sergeant
- 1 - School Resource Sergeant
- 8 - Detectives
- 1 - Community Resource Deputy
- 3 - School Resource Deputies
- 41 - Deputy II (no-fill)

He provided the following information regarding key performance indicators:

- OCSO Total Calls for Service declined by approximately 6 percent in 2025, but overall demand remained consistent with the ten-year average.
- Group A crimes increased slightly in 2025 but are still below the ten-year average. Group B crime statistics continue to decline and are now at one of the lowest levels in the past ten years.
- Modern alarm systems continue to generate about 3 percent of total call volume.
- Accidental or false alarm calls are at their lowest point ever recorded.

He also discussed the following capital improvement projects:

- Upgrade of current parking structure
 - Replaces an outdated layout with one built for the vehicles used today
 - Allows current vehicles to park in the carport backwards so they can back out without having accidental property damage
 - Allows deputies to respond to calls quicker and safer
- Replacement of two 20-year-old mountain bikes with modern e-bikes
 - Will improve deputies' access to parks and pathways while helping address growing e-bike safety concerns

He concluded with the following highlights:

- 99 percent of residents feel safe in their home in Rochester Hills
- 97 percent of residents feel safe in Rochester Hills outside their neighborhood
- 48 percent feel safe nationally and 52 percent feel safe in Michigan
- 69 percent - national average of confidence in local police force

He concluded by thanking the City for standing with the OCSO and supporting the work that keeps the community safe, and requested approval of this year's budget.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock thanked Captain Workman for everything that he and his

Deputies and Detectives do to keep the City safe, and emphasized that everybody he speaks to in the City feels safe both in their home and outside their neighborhood.

Vice President Mungoli requested confirmation that the County is not increasing the Sheriff's Department's contract.

Mr. Snyder clarified that there is a contractual increase starting in 2027.

Vice President Mungoli sought confirmation that this increase is nothing more than what was already planned.

Captain Workman confirmed Vice President Mungoli's understanding. He stated that he will not attempt to speak for Oakland County proper but that he has not heard of any surprise increases.

Vice President Mungoli commented that the Sheriff's Department team is worth the investment, which is why City Council agreed last year to increase the City's contribution. She voiced how great it is to see the crime rates decrease. She also pointed out that many recent scams have involved people knocking on residents' doors, and underscored the importance of not letting strangers into your house. She questioned how the Sheriff's Department can spread this message to residents.

Captain Workman expressed his belief that they currently do a pretty good job of educating residents on this matter. He detailed that they have a Community Liaison Deputy who conducts many meetings and educational events around the City, and added that they have partnered with the Mayor to provide education at the OPC. He acknowledged that some scams are getting more complex with the use of AI, but emphasized that they disseminate information through social media and are willing to go any place that will have them to provide education.

Vice President Mungoli requested confirmation that the Sheriff's Department would come speak with the HOAs and any other community group.

Captain Workman shared that their Community Liaison Deputy does so almost daily.

Vice President Mungoli voiced her desire to talk with the City's Ordinance team regarding how the City can create an ordinance relative to e-bikes and scooters. She pointed out that the users of these modes of transportation do not always utilize safety measures, and requested that the Sheriff's Department assist the City in implementing an ordinance before parents start buying their kids these items for the holidays.

Captain Workman highlighted education as integral to this matter, noting that some parents are not aware they may be doing something wrong. He voiced his belief that education balanced with enforcement is the best method, and added that the Mayor has set up a group to discuss education efforts. He stated that the Sheriff's Department will work with the City to create the best ordinance they can.

Vice President Mungoli pointed out that there are neighboring communities introducing ordinances faster than Rochester Hills, and expressed concern that the City will be trailing as opposed to leading in this effort and that there will be inconsistencies between different areas. She emphasized the importance of creating an ordinance sooner rather than later, and thanked Captain Workman and his team for everything they do to keep the City safe.

Ms. Neubauer brought up the murder case in Bridgewood Farms, and thanked the Sheriff's Department for being strategic in how they brought the charges, announcing that there was a recent conviction for the wife on the conspiracy charge. She shared that she follows the criminal dockets for the District Court and the Circuit Court, and noted that it is good to see that many of the cases are not from Rochester Hills. She voiced her appreciation for everything the Sheriff's Department does, adding that they have Council's full support.

Mr. Skelcy expressed concern over the City's older residents getting scammed, sharing that his father lost around \$5,000 in a scam. He questioned what the Sheriff's Department does to safeguard against scams and whether this trend is increasing, decreasing, or staying the same.

Captain Workman shared that he would have to look at the data, but voiced his belief that they are not seeing any more scams now than they have in the past. He shared that his mother-in-law was scammed before, so this issue hits home for him as well. He underscored education as the biggest remedy, and added that they have a dedicated staff that goes after criminals and tries to recover stolen money when they can.

Mr. Skelcy questioned whether they do that for only the elderly or for all citizens.

Captain Workman clarified that they do it for everybody.

Mr. Blair requested confirmation that the Sheriff's Department employs a full-time Weighmaster.

Captain Workman explained that their Weighmaster is one of their traffic personnel.

Mr. Blair inquired whether traffic is their sole purpose.

Captain Workman clarified that they are assigned to a traffic position, and in addition to checking trucks, they are responding to calls and fulfilling other duties.

Mayor Barnett emphasized the great respect the City has for what the Sheriff's Department does, voicing his belief that they have a Council that recognizes the value despite some of the challenges. Regarding the large influx in e-bike users, he acknowledged that the matter is complex and must go through several different departments. He shared that Dearborn Heights was one of the communities that rushed out to the lead, detailing that they charged every person with an e-bike \$250

to register but that this was not an effective solution. He commented that he was at Rochester High School last week and observed about 70 percent of the football players arrive on e-bikes as opposed to having a parent drive them to practice twice a day. He underscored that the City would like to thoughtfully consider this matter, specifically with regard to not charging parents \$500 for this new mode of transportation while considering how they can respect current users of the trails. He continued that the City has members of the Ordinance and Parks teams, as well as the Sheriff's Department, involved in the conversation on how to approach an ordinance, and added that they have begun evaluating what other communities are doing so they can see what is and is not working.

Discussed: SPECIAL POLICE FUND: Special Police Fund.

2026-0364 Discussion - General Fund (100's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0365 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Crossing Guards.

2026-0365 Discussion - Special Revenue Funds (200's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

Todd Gary, Fire Chief/Emergency Services Director, **Bill Cooke**, Deputy Fire Chief, and **Ann Echols**, Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal were in attendance to provide an overview of the Rochester Hills Fire Department (RHFD).

Chief Gary stated that as the nation marks its historic America 250 milestone, they are reminded that the Fire Department represents one of the country's oldest and most enduring traditions of community service. He noted that while the public typically sees their team in moments of crisis, their response capacity is forged every day behind the scenes; it requires continuous training, preparation, and strategic investment. He announced that tonight's budget proposal outlines the critical resources, staffing, and equipment required to ensure they are always ready when the community needs them.

Deputy Chief Cooke provided the following highlights regarding the City's Firefighter/Paramedics:

- Responded to 9,212 incidents in 2025
- Average of 25.2 incidents per day
- 7,740 EMS calls (84 percent of call volume)

He shared that fire incidents demand an immediate, highly coordinated response, and underscored adequate staffing as the single most important factor in saving lives and protecting property. He also revealed that not only does the Fire Department maintain an average priority response time of five minutes and 15 seconds, which is well below national averages, they have also earned for the third consecutive year the prestigious American Heart Association Gold Award for rapid

heart attack and stroke care. He announced that to continue performing at this level, 2027 will be a strategic building year. He specified that they are focused on streamlining their operations and planning for the future and that this budget funds critical EMS equipment replacements like outdated heart monitors and automated chest compression devices.

Assistant Chief Echols discussed the following information regarding the Community Risk Reduction Division:

- 2,251 commercial inspections
- 11.7 million square feet
- 291 programs
- 11,000 residents

She also shared that earlier this year, the Fire Department completed their new four-story training tower, allowing personnel to simulate high-stakes fire and rescue scenarios in a controlled environment. She explained that this facility is a game-changer for a roster that logged an incredible 16,659 hours of training last year, averaging roughly 245 hours for every member of the Department. She noted that this equates to nearly five hours of training every week per person, keeping their team well above the national ISO standards and ready for any call. She concluded by announcing that in this budget cycle, they will begin exterior enhancements to preserve the longevity of Fire Station One, and in Budget Year 2027, they will begin the planning and engineering portion for a redesign of Fire Station Five's parking lot.

Chief Gary recognized and thanked the dedicated Fire Department team, describing them as a highly committed group of individuals who show up every day and put their lives on the line to ensure the safety of Rochester Hills. He called attention to the fact that not only did the recent Fire Millage pass, it passed with a huge 71 percent majority. He pointed out that several public safety millages in surrounding communities failed, as voters are being extremely cautious with their tax dollars, making the community's decisive vote of confidence in the Fire Department nothing short of remarkable. He shared that the entire Department is excited and energized by this support, and noted that they can now move forward with hiring 12 additional Firefighters while reinforcing their Capital Fund for long-term sustainability. He thanked the residents, City Council, Mayor Barnett, CFO Snyder, and the City leadership, adding that the Fire Department is deeply grateful and ready to put their resources to work for the City.

Council Discussion:

President Carlock referenced the fact that several communities did not get their public safety millages passed, while the City's Fire Millage passed handily. He commented that the City's residents trust and rely on the Fire Department, so they are willing to pay more to ensure that the Fire Department is ready to respond. He brought up the ubiquity of e-bikes, electric cars, tablets, cell phones, and batteries, and questioned whether the Fire Department is equipped to handle a battery device fire.

Chief Gary responded in the affirmative, noting that they have a blanket that is designed for car fires and that they have different packing material and drums to place batteries in. He emphasized that they have the newest technology and that he believes they are equipped to handle a battery device fire.

Vice President Mungioli thanked the Fire Department for being such a great team and keeping Rochester Hills one of the safest cities in the country. She voiced her understanding that around a year ago, something related to the Fire Department's response rate impacted their insurance.

Chief Gary explained that it was their ISO rating.

Vice President Mungioli inquired whether they are any closer to getting that improved.

Chief Gary noted that the additional staff will help, but explained that the ISO rating looks at several different factors, from water supply to equipment to personnel. He stated that ISO will come out and conduct an inspection when they get around to it, and this could be anytime in the next few years. He shared that they are taking measures they can control, such as ensuring that all staff members have the required trainings and working more efficiently with surrounding departments to ensure they receive automatic aid on larger fires.

Vice President Mungioli pointed out that neighboring communities are also challenged with staffing numbers, and questioned what makes Rochester Hills stand out for a potential recruit.

Chief Gary shared that based on their last contract, their pay is now competitive with other departments. He added that they have new equipment and offer much more training than a lot of other departments. He also noted that they are actively recruiting people from the local community colleges, detailing that the Fire Department has agreements with these schools that allow their paramedic students to do their internship with the Department.

Vice President Mungioli inquired about the Fire Department's health insurance.

Chief Gary voiced his belief that their health insurance is satisfactory, sharing that he has not heard any complaints.

Vice President Mungioli emphasized that the City would like to offer the best benefits so they can attract the best employees. She inquired about the Fire Department's social media strategy to recruit Firefighters.

Chief Gary stated that they have been working with HR to create a flyer, and added that their union is putting information on their Facebook page regarding some of the benefits of working for the City, and speaking with individuals they know. He shared that they do lateral hires, meaning that if somebody has three years of full-time experience in another fire department, they do not have to start at low pay when they come to Rochester Hills; they can start at top pay. He noted that this has helped them draw some experienced Firefighters.

Vice President Mungoli revealed that when the City's Fire Millage was up for discussion, she started following other fire departments on Facebook. She commented that it is amazing what the Rochester Hills Fire Department has compared to other departments, and expressed her belief that their new equipment alone might be able to attract people. She concluded by sharing that she prays for every one of the teams when they are responding to calls, and underscored the City's support for the Department.

Ms. Neubauer voiced that the Fire Department made it easy for the City to advocate for the Fire Millage because of their transparency and the data they provided. She made particular mention of the communication she had with Chief Gary regarding the millage going on the August ballot rather than the November ballot, acknowledging that this decision was a very quick pivot. She also recognized that the continued development of elder care facilities in the City puts pressure on the Fire Department, and expressed her hope that they can make density changes to ensure that all residents are safe and they do not have a disproportionate amount of calls to certain places. She added that every time she hears sirens go by, she prays for the Firefighters and whomever they are responding to.

Mr. Skelcy referenced the 9,000 calls the Fire Department responded to last year, and noted that this equates to around 24 calls per day. He called attention to the amount of stress that the men and women in the Fire Department experience, and inquired about the mental health assistance that is offered.

Chief Gary shared that they provide critical incident stress debriefing and that they try to give their Firefighters ample downtime. He added that Station Three runs multiple calls a day, while Station Five runs only a couple and sleeps most nights. He continued that a handful of departments in southern states have transitioned from three shifts to four, giving people an additional day off. He noted that this schedule requires hiring an additional 23 people, but allows people to work a day and then have three days off.

Mr. Skelcy questioned whether the Fire Department rotates the teams at the different stations to distribute the calls more equally.

Chief Gary responded that they have shift bids every two years, explaining that people pick their shifts based on seniority. He stated that although they do not rotate stations on a regular basis, that is something that has been discussed within the industry. He noted that that is something that would have to be dealt with during union negotiations.

Mr. Blair echoed his appreciation for the Fire Department, sharing that the City appreciates them and loves what they bring to the community. He commented that he did not see the replacement of the Department's largest assets in the next five years of the Capital Improvement Plan, and questioned whether they will be refurbishing equipment or whether they will come to a point in 2032 when they have \$10 million worth of apparatus to purchase.

Chief Gary explained that most of their apparatus has been replaced within the

last ten to 12 years and that they typically get 20 years out of an aerial apparatus and 15 years out of a fire engine. He shared that they have sold some of their apparatus to reduce their fleet, as they do not have the Firefighters to staff all the fire engines, and this saves them money. He stated that future replacements should be spaced out enough so they do not have to purchase multiple apparatus in a year, and added that they can extend the life of the apparatus that does not get used as much.

Mr. Blair questioned whether the problems with the Capital Fund in the Seven-Year Forecast are related to the apparatus matter, pointing out that they have not purchased any new apparatus in three or four years and that this issue will start to compound.

Mr. Snyder shared that the City works with the Fire Department annually to update the capital roster. He shared that the largest factor impacting the Fire Capital Fund is the ambulances, noting that they were on a five-year cycle but that this was probably unsustainable long-term. He mentioned that they can move apparatus around and get seven years out of it, and added that they have the money in 2033 to replace the ambulances they have not even replaced yet this year.

Mr. Blair commented that a ladder will probably cost around \$2 million in 2032, and questioned how long it would take the Fire Department to obtain one.

Mr. Snyder responded that they have a bit of time to figure that out.

Mr. Blair underscored that he does not want this matter to catch them off guard, noting that equipment is not going to get cheaper and lead times are not going to decrease. He stated that since he does not see anything past 2031, he will trust that they are on top of this.

Mr. Snyder specified that a lot of the apparatus will need to be replaced in the later 2030s and 2040s.

Mayor Barnett referenced Mr. Blair's inquiry regarding apparatus, and revealed that it is a national issue they discuss at the US Conference of Mayors. He explained that there are only three producers of the apparatus, and fire departments nationwide are dealing with the challenge of lead times. He continued by bringing up the recent passage of the Fire Millage, and expressed his gratitude for the residents' historically strong support. He also credited the Fire Department for creating a reputation of strong service delivery, and acknowledged Council's leadership and support. He pointed out that communities that did not get their public safety millage passed were critical about their administration spending money, indicating a lack of confidence in the financial management of their community. He emphasized the fact that the City's millage had the highest support of any public safety millage in the County and that it serves as a recognition of smart, conservative fiscal management and a strong partnership between City Council and the administration.

Additional Questions/Comments from Staff:

Mr. Snyder addressed the issue that Ms. Mannino discovered in the Capital Improvement Plan Summary, confirming that both he and Ms. Mannino were correct. He explained that their budget software caused an error with the Project Cost versus the City Cost, and announced that Debby Hoyle, Senior Financial Analyst, will get in touch with representatives from the Gravity software to ensure they resolve the issue. He noted that despite the snafu between these two columns, the correct budget information flowed into the technical appendices and the line item detail, and all the information that was presented tonight was correct. He stated that there is one straw poll question currently on the table: to televise Planning Commission meetings. He shared that over the course of this week, the administration will meet with the Media Division to determine the impact of this undertaking, and they will bring that forth as a straw poll for City Council to vote on. He stated that the budget is in the hands of Council, and inquired whether there is anything additional they would like to add to the list.

President Carlock stated that he does not have anything to add. He commented that as usual, the budget process is very thorough and that Council deeply appreciates the time that staff put into making the budget as clear as possible.

Mr. Snyder stated that at the City Council meeting on September 14th, they will hold a Public Hearing on the budget, and this will provide an additional opportunity for any members of the public to voice their opinion on the budget. He noted that they will have the results of the straw poll by that date and will inform Council of the final tallies. He also mentioned that he has a schedule conflict on September 14th, explaining that he is a member of the Michigan Government Finance Officers Association (MGFOA), whose fall conference is being held from September 13th through 16th at the Grand Traverse Resort in Ada, Michigan. He shared that he is the current Vice President of the MGFOA and will move to the role of President on Tuesday the 15th. He noted that while he must attend this conference, he does not have to be there on Monday and can come back for the Public Hearing. He questioned whether Council would like him to come back for the meeting that night.

President Carlock responded that that is not necessary.

Ms. Neubauer questioned whether somebody could cover for Mr. Snyder that night.

Mr. Snyder shared that Ms. Hoyle has said she could cover the Public Hearing, and thanked Council for saving him about seven hours of driving.

Mayor Barnett thanked Mr. Snyder and the rest of the Finance team for an exceptional job in getting the City to this point. He also thanked the Directors and other team members who attended the meeting tonight. He underscored that the City team appreciates City Council's year-long support and the freedom they allow in presenting the budget in fun and creative ways. He noted that despite the fun, the City administration approaches this part of their job with eminent pride and seriousness, explaining that aside from ensuring public safety, managing the residents' money is the most important thing they do. He stated that they are

incredibly proud of a budget that is \$30 million less than it was last year yet is still investing in City Council's top priorities, and a budget that maintains a structural surplus and exceptional fund balances. He pointed out that the budget keeps Rochester Hills as the third lowest taxed city in Oakland County and the only debt-free city in Michigan, all while allowing them to continue delivering amazing parks and investing in roads. He quoted former University of Michigan Football Coach Jim Harbaugh, questioning, "Who's got it better than us?" He noted that they are exceptionally blessed and that a lot of that starts with a strong financial house, which requires strong financial leadership. He commented that he is privileged to be a part of this team, and emphasized his appreciation for the amazing partnership between City Council and the administration.

Discussed: FIRE DEPARTMENT: Fire Department Fund.

2026-0367 Discussion - Capital Funds (400's) - 2027 Budget

Attachments: [Budget Presentation Schedule.pdf](#)

See Legislative File 2026-0365 for Council Discussion.

Discussed: Fire Capital Fund.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- Regular Meeting - Monday - August 24, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before Council, it was moved by Mungioli and seconded by Blair to adjourn the meeting at 10:28 p.m.

JASON CARLOCK, President
Rochester Hills City Council

LEANNE SCOTT, MMC, Clerk
City of Rochester Hills

EMMA BOWEN
Administrative Coordinator
City Clerk's Office

Approved as presented at the (insert date, or dates) Regular City Council Meeting.