

**City of Fairfield Minutes
Regular Meeting of City Council
October 27, 2025**

Council-Manager Briefing

Vice Mayor Kraft called the briefing to order at 5:30 PM. Councilmembers present: Dale Paullus, Debbie Pennington, Adam Kraft, Tim Meyers and Gwen Brill. Staff members present: Scott Timmer, Diana Davenport, Steve Wolterman, Adam Sackenheim, Laurie Murphy, Alisha Wilson, Greg Kathman, Steve Maynard, Tom Lakamp, Mandi Brock, Jason Hunold, Ben Mann and Tami Moore.

City Manager Timmer, Finance Director Davenport and Senior Staff presented the first half of the 2026 Operating Budget summary. See attached slides.

Business Meeting Call to Order

Mayor Rhodus called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Prayer/Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Kraft led in prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Councilmembers present included:

Councilmember, 2nd Ward Dale Paullus
Councilmember, 3rd Ward Debbie Pennington
Councilmember, 4th Ward Adam Kraft
Councilmember, At-Large Tim Meyers
Councilmember, At-Large Gwen Brill

Councilmembers excused included:

Councilmember, 1st Ward Leslie Besl
Councilmember, At-Large Matt Davidson

Councilmember Kraft, seconded by Councilmember Meyers, moved to excuse Councilmembers Besl and Davidson. Motion carried 5-0.

Agenda Modifications

None.

Executive Session Requests

Councilmember Meyers, seconded by Councilmember Brill, moved for Executive Session to discuss confidential information related to requests for economic development assistance and negotiations with other political subdivisions for economic development assistance. Roll call vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Special Presentations

Mike Hogan, Chief Advancement Officer, gave a presentation and overview of the Meals on Wheels program and benefits to Fairfield and the surrounding community. He asked for support of the upcoming Senior Services levy on the November ballot.

Citizen Comments

None.

Council Reports

Councilmember Pennington announced that the City is collecting input on Safe Streets for All planning efforts and residents can submit their feedback via the City website.

Mayor Rhodus stated that he would like thoughts from Council to direct staff on opioid fund disbursement. He proposed creating an endowment with the Community Foundation, which does not earmark for any one group or organization, but the City can pull from interest funds each year. He said he would like to see the money last forever and the city benefit from the interest funds. City Manager Timmer explained a couple of options that the Community Foundation offers. Councilmember Meyers stated that he doesn't have a problem from a process standpoint but would want to see someone from the City Manager's Office involved to bring requests to Council to help administer the program. Councilmember Kraft said he would like to see direct involvement from City leadership. Councilmember Pennington and Paullus stated that Council needs to wait to get input from absent councilmembers before making a decision.

Public Hearing(s)

None.

Approval of Minutes

1. Regular Meeting Minutes - October 14, 2025

The Regular Meeting Minutes of October 14, 2025 were approved as written and submitted.

Old Business

1. **Development Services - Councilmember Adam Kraft**

- a. Ordinance to amend various sections of the Planning and Zoning Code of Ordinance No. 166-84, the Codified Ordinances of Fairfield, Ohio.

Second reading held pending Planning Commission recommendation.

New Business - Motion to Read All New Business by Title Only

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Kraft, moved to read all New Business by title only. Motion carried 5-0.

1. **Development Services - Councilmember Adam Kraft**

- a. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to execute a Community Reinvestment Area

Agreement and a Community Reinvestment Area School Compensation Agreement, which will provide property tax incentives for Image Solutions Apparel, Inc. to include an expansion to its campus by means of renovating and enlarging an existing building on Port Union Road, and declaring an emergency.

Development Specialist Eva Joseph gave a brief overview of the project. Image Solutions is a custom branded apparel and merchandise company headquartered in Long Beach, California, with a local operation currently located on Brate Drive in West Chester Township (Butler County). The company has seen steady growth and proposes to relocate operations to a larger facility in Fairfield. Image Solutions plans to acquire an approximately 50,000 square foot building located on 9.7 acres at 3750 Port Union Road. The company proposes to renovate the building and construct an addition measuring approximately 50,000 square feet, doubling the building footprint.

Should this project proceed, the total building investment is estimated at \$5.9 million. The company also estimates investment of \$117,000 in new machinery, equipment, furniture, and fixtures. Image Solutions will relocate 32 employees from its existing facility in West Chester Township and will create at least 12 new full-time jobs within three years of completion of construction. Anticipated total future payroll is expected to exceed approximately \$2.75 million annually.

Approval of the ordinance would authorize the City Manager to enter into two agreements. The first is a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Agreement. The CRA Agreement would provide a 4-year, 100% property tax incentive on the assessed value of the remodeling and expansion. The existing portion of the building cannot be abated per state law, which is the justification for providing the 100% abatement rate for the remodeling and expansion.

The second agreement is a multi-party School Compensation Agreement. Image Solutions has agreed to compensate the Fairfield City School District and Butler Tech annually, in compliance with the City's Tax Incentive Guidelines. The Board of Education of the Fairfield City School District will consider the agreement at its meeting on October 16, 2025. Director of Operations & Company Solutions, Alana Owens, thanked Council for their consideration of the project.

Councilmember Kraft presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Adam Kraft, seconded by Debbie Pennington, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Adam Kraft, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 129-25. APPROVED 5-0.

2. Public Safety - Councilmember Dale Paullus

a. Ordinance to adopt the 2025 Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Fairfield.

The 2025 Emergency Operations Plan revision was a complete overhaul of the previous

edition. This revision better aligns with the emergency management operations plans at the County, State and Federal levels.

Councilmember Paullus presented the first reading of this ordinance.

- b. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to execute the Firehouse Subs Grant Application and Agreement for a portable fire safety education prop and declaring an emergency

It is necessary for City Council to authorize the City Manager to execute the Firehouse Subs grant application for financial assistance.

This project is estimated at approximately \$7,700 for the purchase of a fire safety inflatable structure. This prop will provide the opportunity to engage the community on various fire safety topics and will be portable in order to attend the many community events within the city.

Councilmember Paullus presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Dale Paullus, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0.

- c. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement for indigent legal representation for 2026 in the Fairfield Municipal Court with the Butler County Public Defender Commission/Butler County Board of Commissioners and declaring an emergency.

The City previously provided legal representation for indigent defendants from its own funds by appointment of attorneys on a case-by-case basis. This new system which was started in 2011 has reduced the overall cost of indigent defense as stated above. The Butler County Public Defender Commission/Butler County Board of Commissioners will provide legal representation for all indigent defendants by providing four (4) public defenders including both felony and misdemeanor representation and state statute and City ordinance violations.

Councilmember Paullus presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Dale Paullus, seconded by Debbie Pennington, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Dale Paullus, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 131-25. APPROVED 5-0.

3. Finance & Budget - Councilmember Tim Meyers

- a. Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 158-24 entitled "An Ordinance to make estimated appropriations for the expenses and other expenditures of the City of Fairfield, Ohio, during a period beginning January 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2025."
- Non-Contractual Appropriations: \$36,000 total (see below for description)

Councilmember Meyers presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Tim Meyers, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Tim Meyers, seconded by Gwen Brill, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 132-25. APPROVED 5-0.

\$36,000 - 2025 Parking Lot Paving Repairs for Community Arts Center (Public Works)

Meeting Schedule

Monday, November 10: Council-Manager Briefing, 5:30 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Monday, November 24: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Monday, December 8: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Clerk Wilson read the meeting schedule.

Executive Session of Council (if Needed)

Council recessed to Executive Session at 7:45 PM.

Adjournment

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council



Mayor's Approval

Date Approved: 11/10/24



2026 Annual Operating Budget

Diana Davenport, Director of Finance
Scott W. Timmer, City Manager

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Agenda

- **Monday, October 27, 2025**
 - ✓ **Budget Overview**
 - ✓ **Revenue & Expenditures**
 - ✓ **Council / Mayor / Law**
 - ✓ **General Services**
 - ✓ **City Manager's Office**
 - ✓ **Finance**
 - ✓ **Development Services**
 - ✓ **Fire**
 - ✓ **Police**

- **Monday, November 10, 2025**
 - ✓ **Municipal Court**
 - ✓ **Public Works**
 - ✓ **Parks & Recreation**
 - ✓ **Public Utilities**



Budget Overview

- Budget Basics
 - ✓ Balanced Budget – estimated revenues are greater than or equal to projected expenditures
 - ✓ Fiscal Year – January to December
 - ✓ Key Terms:
 - Fund: sum of money dedicated for a specific / restricted purpose
 - Fund Reserve: amount of money retained in a fund for an unforeseen emergency or need
 - Expenditure: amount of money spent on a good or service
 - Encumbrance: amount of money reserved for a specific purchase



Structurally Balanced Budget



Total Estimated Revenues - \$118,593,210



Total Estimated Expenses - \$103,311,998



Budget Overview

- What impacts the budget?
 - ✓ Economy
 - Income Tax Withholding
 - Business Environment
 - Inflation
 - Interest Rates
 - Property & Casualty Insurance
 - ✓ Fixed Costs
 - Personnel & Labor
 - ✓ State and Federal Mandates
 - Environmental
 - Property Tax Initiatives



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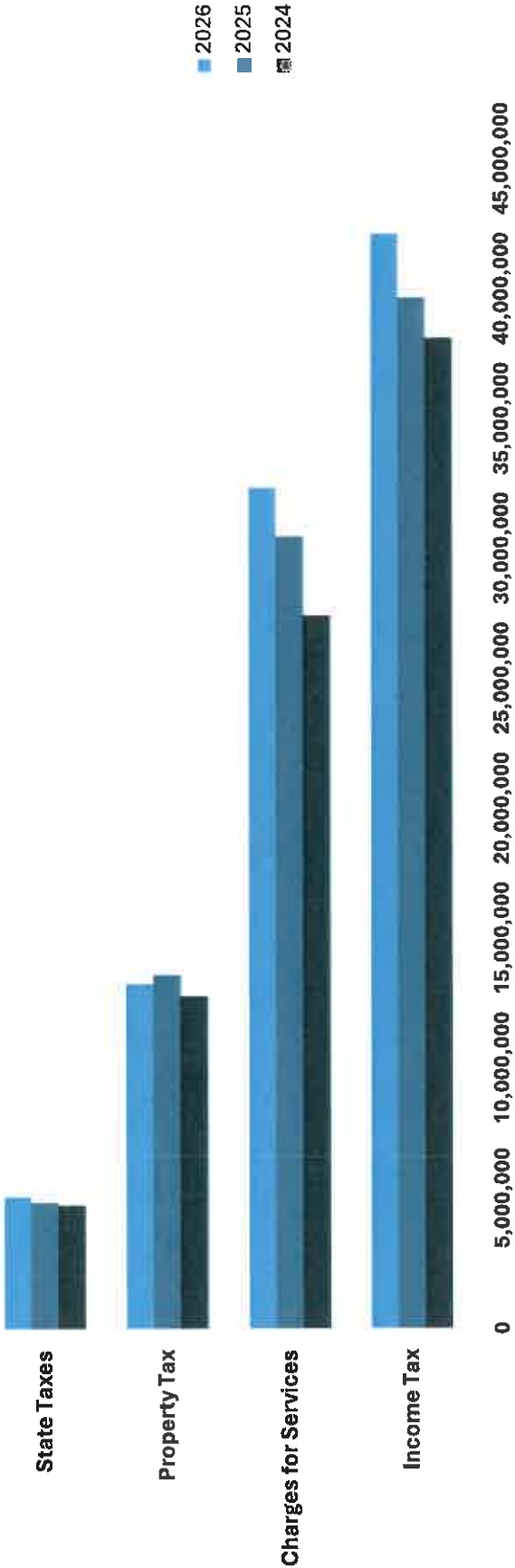
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Revenue & Expenditures



Budget Overview – Estimated Revenue

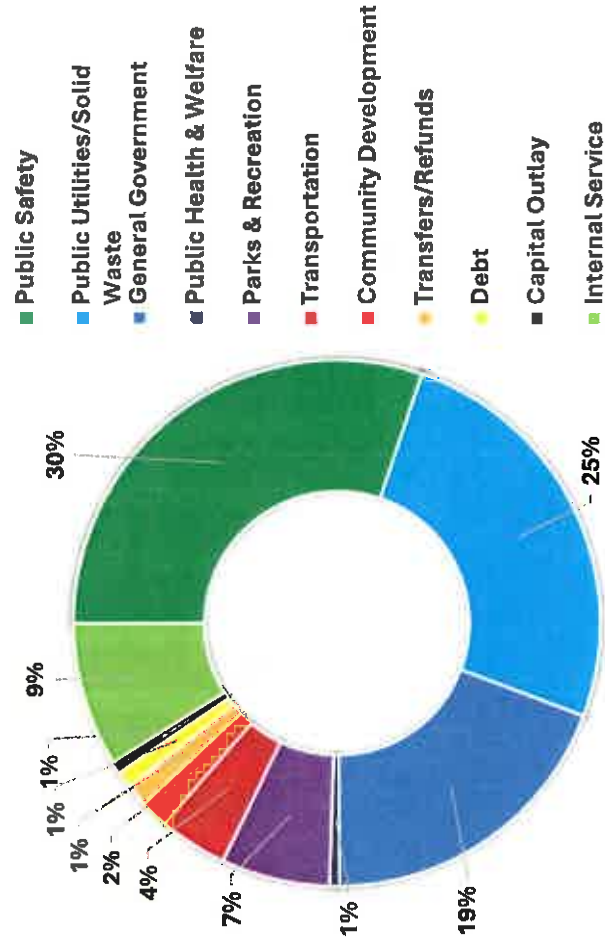
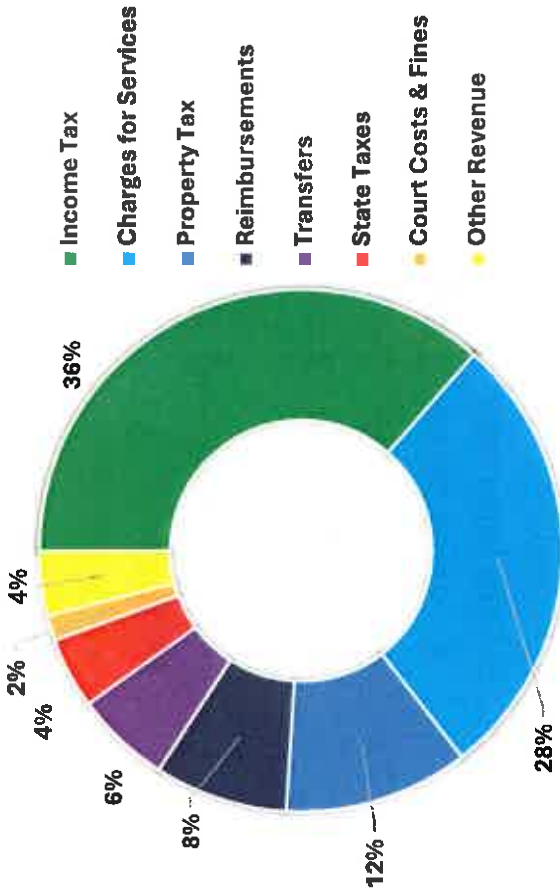
- Total Estimated Revenue: \$118,593,210 – Up 5.0%
 - ✓ General Fund: \$43,399,860 – Up 5.67%
 - ✓ 78.3% from the following 4 sources (\$92.8 M of \$118.5 M):





Budget Overview – All Funds

Where the money comes from.

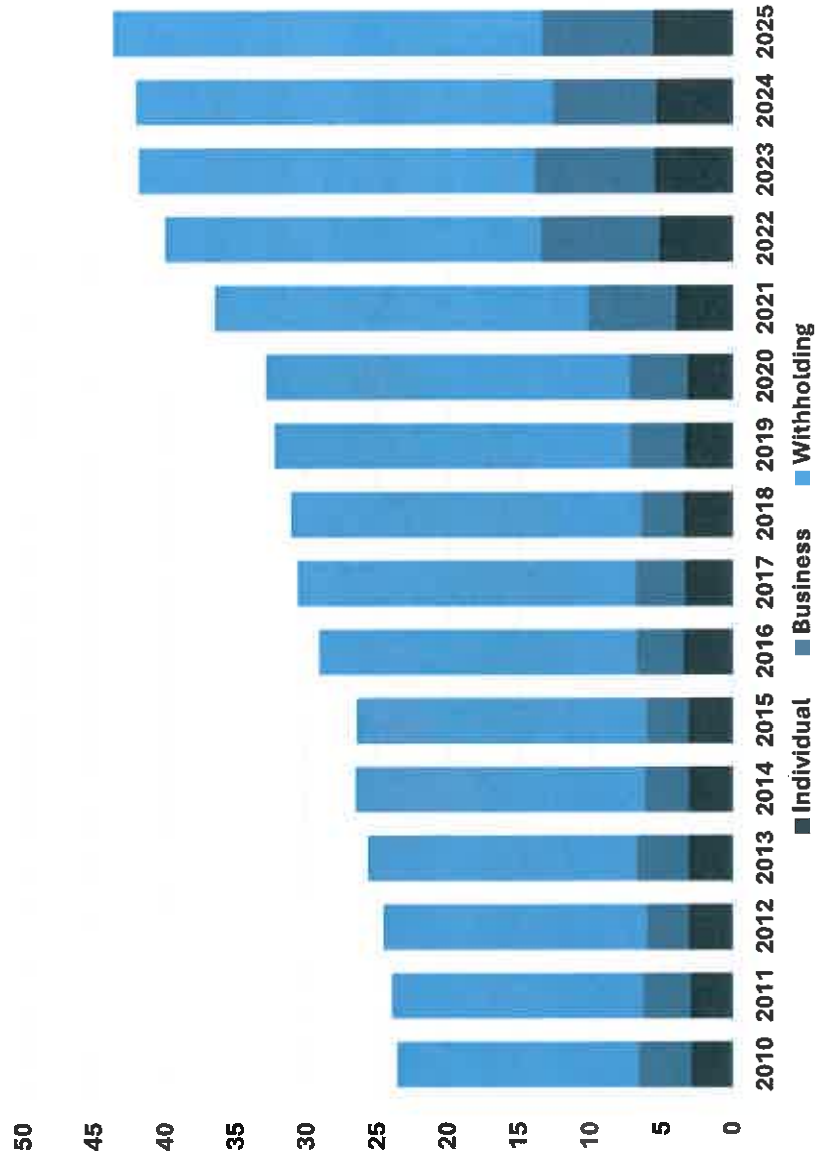


Where the money goes.



Budget Overview – Income Tax

- Growth Rates
 - ✓ 5-Year Intervals
 - 2010-2014 – 2.97%
 - 2015-2019 – 5.07%
 - 2020-2024 – 6.38%
 - ✓ 10-Year
 - 2015-2024 – 5.29%
 - ✓ 15-Year
 - 2010-2024 – 4.50%
- Type Composition
 - ✓ 2010 vs 2025*
 - Ind: 12.16% vs 12.81%
 - Bus: 15.81% vs 17.85%
 - Wth: 72.03% vs 69.34%



Note: 2025 Amount is forecasted for remainder of FY 2025

Budget Overview – Projected Expenditures

- Total Estimated Expenditures: **\$103,331,998**

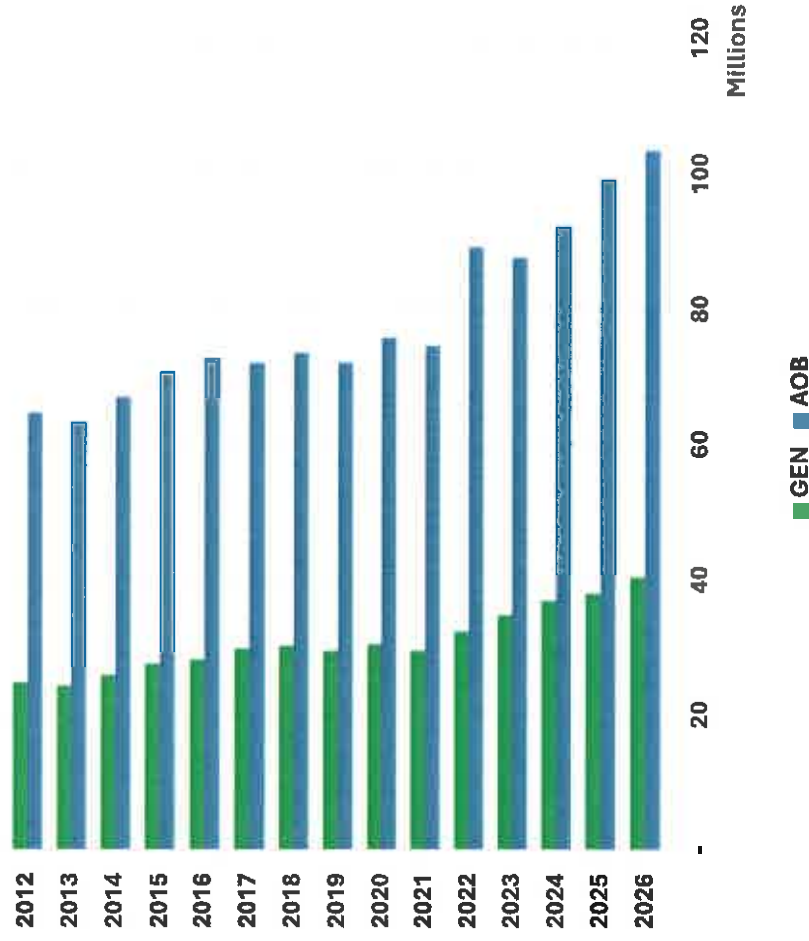
- ✓ 2025 Original Budget: **\$98,959,789**
- ✓ 2024 Original Budget: **\$92,049,377**
- ✓ 2023 Original Budget: **\$87,464,426**

- General Fund: **\$40,275,133**

- ✓ 2025 Original Budget: **\$37,906,021**
- ✓ 2024 Original Budget: **\$36,793,191**
- ✓ 2023 Original Budget : **\$34,645,662**

- Growth Rates

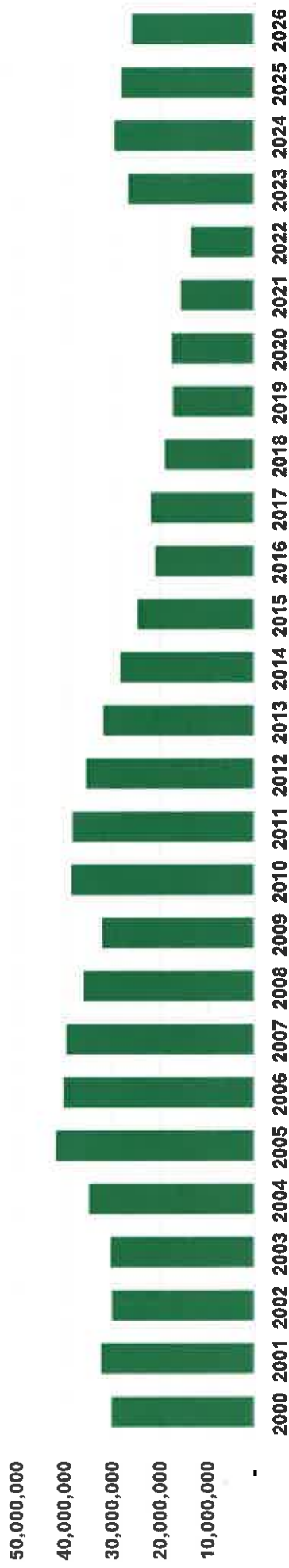
- ✓ 15-Year Growth Rate: **3.42% | 3.57%**
- ✓ 10-Year Growth Rate: **4.10% | 3.46%**
- ✓ 5-Year Growth Rate: **3.78% | 5.74%**



Budget Overview – Debt

- Total Debt Outstanding: **\$28.85 million**
 - ✓ Short-Term Debt: \$4.76 million
 - ✓ Long-Term Debt: \$24.09 million
- Bond Rating: **Aa1**
- 2026 Activity
 - ✓ Principal payments: \$2,945,151
 - ✓ Interest payments: \$742,742
- Primary Debt Funding Sources
 - ✓ Street Improvement Fund (401) – \$2.7 M | 9.4%
 - ✓ Capital Improvement Fund (402) – \$1.6 M | 5.4%
 - ✓ Water Revenue Fund (601) – \$13.0 M | 45.0%
 - ✓ Sewer Revenue Fund (620) – \$11.4 M | 39.6%
 - ✓ Special Assessments (501) – \$0.17 M | 0.6%

Total Debt at Year-End





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City Council / Mayor's Office / Law Department



City Council & Mayor

- Funding Source
 - ✓ General Fund

- Expenditures
 - ✓ City Council - \$269,668
 - Personnel – Up 4.71%
 - Non-Personnel – Up 0.70%
 - ✓ Mayor - \$18,654
 - Personnel – Up 25.00%
 - Non-Personnel – Down 50.00%

\$288,322 – 3.4%



Law Department

- Funding Source
 - ✓ General Fund
- Expenditures
 - ✓ Personnel – No Change
 - ✓ Non-Personnel – Up 1.0%

\$631,470 – 1.0%



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General Services



General Services

- Funding Sources
 - ✓ General Fund
 - Expenditures
 - ✓ Personnel – Down 11.10%
 - ✓ Non-Personnel – Up 9.18%
- \$6,659,280 – 9.0%**



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Administration



Administration

- Funding Source
 - ✓ General Fund

		2026 Dept Proposed	2025 Original	% Δ
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 120 (CITY MANAGER)	Personnel	1,069,375	920,855	16.13%
	Other	55,950	48,450	15.48%
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 145 (HUMAN RESOURCES)	Personnel	418,835	433,605	-3.41%
	Other	115,350	114,900	0.39%
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 213 (INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY)	Personnel	728,848	624,705	16.67%
	Other	103,300	96,700	6.83%
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE	Personnel	2,217,058	1,979,165	12.02%
	Other	274,600	260,050	5.60%
		2,491,658	2,239,215	11.27%



Administration

- City Manager's Office (120)
 - ✓ Request: Communications Manager
 - Murphy Epsom Study
- Human Resources (145)
 - ✓ Request: 2nd HR Coordinator
 - Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM):1 HR Professional per 100 Employees
- Information Technology (213)
 - ✓ Request: 2nd Help Desk Technician
 - Same staffing level since 2005
 - Desktop Workstations: 200 to 392
 - Laptop Devices: <10 to 85
 - iPads: 0 to 90
 - MDTs: <15 to 43
 - Servers: 12 to 37



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Finance



Finance

- Funding Sources
 - ✓ General Fund
 - ✓ Enterprise Fund(s)

		2026 Dept Proposed	2025 Original	% Δ
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 210 (FINANCE ADM & ACCOUNTING)	Personnel	606,170	746,935	-18.85%
	Other	34,825	33,645	3.51%
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 211 (INCOME TAX)	Personnel	842,923	755,980	11.50%
	Other	168,750	130,000	29.81%
601 (WATER REVENUE) - 212 (UTILITY COLLECTION)	Personnel	203,993	200,635	1.67%
	Other	211,535	182,100	16.16%
620 (SEWER REVENUE) - 212 (UTILITY COLLECTION)	Personnel	166,902	164,155	1.67%
	Other	3,620,165	3,330,900	8.68%
FINANCE	Personnel	1,819,988	1,867,705	-2.55%
	Other	4,035,275	3,676,645	9.75%
		5,855,263	5,544,350	5.61%

Finance

- Funding Sources
- Trust & Agency Funds

		2026 Dept Proposed	2025 Original	% Δ
707 (WEST CHESTER TOWNSHIP JEDD I) - 211 (INCOME TAX)	Other	3,628,000	2,536,975	43.00%
708 (FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP JEDD) - 211 (INCOME TAX)	Other	81,250	14,250	470.18%
606 (WATER GUARANTEED TRUST) - 212 (UTILITY COLLECTION)	Other	65,000	65,000	0.00%
630 (SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT) - 630 (SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT)	Other	3,244,000	2,992,220	8.41%



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Development Services



Development Services

- Funding Source
 - ✓ General Fund

		2026 Dept Proposed	2025 Original	% Δ
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 150 (PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVL)	Personnel	709,990	704,815	0.73%
	Other	79,500	79,000	0.63%
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 155 (BUILDING AND ZONING INSPECTION)	Personnel	838,368	847,402	-1.07%
	Other	122,784	106,700	15.07%
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	Personnel	1,548,358	1,552,217	-0.25%
	Other	202,284	185,700	8.93%
		1,750,642	1,737,917	0.73%



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FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire

- Funding Source
 - ✓ Fire Levy Fund (Special Revenue)

	2026 Dept Proposed	2025 Original	% Δ
203 (FIRE LEVY) - 320 (FIRE/EMS OPERATIONS)	11,311,330	11,329,510	-0.16%
	1,615,383	1,483,980	8.85%
	12,926,713	12,813,490	0.88%



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POLICE DEPARTMENT



Police

- Funding Sources
 - ✓ Special Revenue Funds

		2026 Dept Proposed	2025 Original	% Δ
211 (LAW ENFORCEMENT) - 310 (POLICE)	Other	15,000	21,000	-28.57%
213 (LAW ENFORCEMENT & EDU) - 310 (POLICE)	Other	30,000	30,000	0.00%
215 (LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT BLOCK) - 310 (POLICE)	Other	45,000	-	



Police

- Funding Sources
 - ✓ General Fund

		2026 Dept Proposed	2025 Original	% Δ
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 310 (POLICE)	Personnel	15,256,036	14,282,010	6.82%
	Other	1,747,600	1,619,650	7.90%
100 (GENERAL FUND) - 316 (JUSTICE CENTER)	Personnel	-	-	0.00%
	Other	1,208,000	1,213,000	-0.41%
POLICE	Personnel	15,256,036	14,282,010	6.82%
	Other	2,955,600	2,832,650	4.34%
		18,211,636	17,114,660	6.41%



The Challenge: A Reactive & Overburdened Patrol

- The 2025 Workload Assessment reveals our Patrol Division is operating at or beyond its capacity, forcing officers into a purely reactive role.
 - ✓ The 60% Saturation Problem: The ICMA recommends patrol officers spend no more than 60% of their time on non-discretionary calls for service (CFS). Ratios higher than 60% indicate an overburdened and "largely reactive" force.
 - ✓ Fairfield's Reality: The Operations Division is "currently operating above the 60% saturation threshold during multiple hours of the day".
 - ✓ Peak Hour Deficits: As shown in Chart 1, average available manpower falls below the required staffing to maintain the 60% threshold at numerous peak times, including:
 - 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM, 2:00 PM, 5:00 PM, 6:00 PM, 10:00 PM
- This constant demand leaves patrol with "limited discretionary time" for the proactive, preventative policing our community needs.



The Impact: Patrol Covering Specialized Demands

- Due to staffing shortages, the overburdened Patrol Division is forced to absorb specialized workloads, further reducing their availability for proactive engagement.
 - ✓ Absorbing Investigations:
 - Patrol officers investigated 229 cases in 2024.
 - This is an "additional demand" not typically assigned to patrol and consumes significant, un-tracked time for follow-ups, interviews, and evidence processing.
 - ✓ Absorbing Warrants:
 - The Warrants Unit is no longer staffed as of 2025.
 - In 2024, patrol officers served 1,294 warrants, diverting them from neighborhood presence.
 - ✓ Losing Specialists:
 - Specialized officers, including the BURN Task Force Investigator and the DARE officer, were reassigned to patrol to cover basic manpower shortages.
- Critical community-facing work, like addressing neighborhood drug complaints is being sidelined to meet basic call response.



The Solution: A Proactive Directed Patrol Unit

- The workload assessment recommends a new Directed Patrol Unit as the most effective solution to bridge this gap.
- What is a Directed Patrol Unit? It is a dedicated team focused on engagement, prevention, and problem-solving. This unit will:
 - ✓ Work collaboratively with residents, businesses, and schools to solve recurring community issues.
 - ✓ Use data to proactively target emerging problems.
 - ✓ Bridge the gap between reactive patrol response and community outreach.
- How This Solves Our Problem: The unit is specifically designed to:
 - ✓ Reduce the patrol burden by handling drug complaints, neighborhood problems, and other quality-of-life concerns.
 - ✓ Reduce workload during peak hours, freeing patrol officers to handle emergency calls.
 - ✓ Provide operational flexibility to support community initiatives and restore proactive, preventative policing.



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