



City of Takoma Park
**Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Budget July 1,
2024 – June 30, 2025**

City Council FY25 Budget Questions- Set 3

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Appendix:

Budget presentation slides

1. Two slides in overview presentation: for pages listing various projects: where in budget are they? (Dyballa)

Attached in Appendix 1

2. Confirm wage costs assumptions for both unions (5% and 4.5%), for non-union non-management and for management and senior leadership (ECI based 4.5%) p. 11 (Dyballa)

AFSCME – All AFSCME employees receive an approximately 4.5% increase in FY25. This is calculated by making a 3% COLA adjustment to the pay grid plus one step of 1.5%. This nets to an approximate 4.55% wage increase. Additionally, AFSCME employees who have worked with the City for 7 years or more as of 7/1/24 will also receive an additional step of 1.5%. I believe this longevity adjustment impacts approximately 40% of AFSCME staff.

Local 400 – All Local 400 employees receive an approximately 4.5% increase in FY25. This is calculated by making a 1.5% COLA adjustment to the pay grid plus one step of 3.0%.

Non-represented staff – All non-represented staff will receive a 4.5% increase (based on ECI from the recent Jan-Jan index).

3. Staff was asked to review the various city fees. How did staff go about this, which ones are proposed for increase, and which ones are proposed to stay the same? Specifically, were dumpster fees reviewed? A Ward 2 resident last year noted that TP fee is \$40 and the county is \$232.50. (Dyballa)

Staff is continuing to compile a response and will have one by this Friday, April 19th.

4. What is status of reviews of vehicle replacement and road maintenance policies. (Dyballa)

Staff worked with the Council finance work group to provide information so they could develop final recommendations. Now that those recommendations are final, staff will be amending the policy to make adjustments in the scoring matrix to include external repair costs as well as doing a survey of fleet policies in comparable jurisdictions to see if additional changes/updates may be appropriate. Similarly, for street maintenance, now that the recommendations have been made by the Council work group, staff will continue its annual review of street maintenance costs and priority projects based on the roadway survey done every 3-5 years.

5. Will the city staff develop an approach to a possible commercial property tax rate in FY25, similar to the review a few years ago? (Dyballa)

Based on the recommendations from the Council work group and without further guidance from Council, staff is not currently planning any adjustments to its commercial property tax rate approach in FY25.

6. For the various grant and community programs listed on p. 230 which specific programs are in which specific line items and for an estimated how much? (Dyballa)

The Inter-Department Grants referenced on pg. 230 total \$205,000 and include:

- Open for Business Grant: \$50,000
- Emergency Rental Assistance: \$75,000
- Quality of Life Grants: \$50,000

- Rental Insurance Pilot Fund: \$5,000
- Hazardous Tree Removal: \$25,000

7. How many applications are anticipated (Folk Fest, July 4th, Juneteenth, other?), can grants committee review applications, and what's the plan for this summer (falls between 2 fiscal years)? (Dyballa)

The City does not have a comparable program that would give insight into the number of expected grants. We are aware of interests from the entities responsible for planning the Folk Festival, Independence Day Parade and Juneteenth events. Others may apply when the application is opened. The grant application and process details are currently in development. Development of the grant is expected to be complete by the beginning of FY25. Funding that is included in the FY24 budget will adequately address events that have traditionally been sponsored by the City in the early part of the fiscal year.

8. Spending is less for FY25 than FY24 by a lot, what is the main reason for such a big difference? (Dyballa)

The difference between the Projected FY24 CIP Budget and the Proposed FY25 CIP Budget is approximately \$6M. The FY24 CIP Budget includes \$7.9M in funding to support the Library/Community Center Redevelopment. The FY25 CIP Budget includes \$3.2M in funding to support the Library. The remaining variance is primarily the result of budget amendments during FY24. The most significant of the budget amendments is Budget Amendment 1 for which unfinished CIP projects from FY23 are reallocated to FY24. The total added impact of the budget amendments is approximately \$2.2M.

9. Can ARPA funds be used for any of these GF matching funds (example Met Trail \$52k, Maple Ave \$60k), could they be obligated by December? (Dyballa)

Yes, ARPA funds could be used for this purpose and obligated by December.

10. What would current costs be for a resident survey in FY25 (in 2018 the city budgeted \$57k), and could such a project be identified and obligated from ARPA funds by December 2024? (Dyballa)

Staff is currently unaware of what a community survey would cost in 2024 without additional research. However, yes, ARPA dollars could be used and likely easily obligated by December.

11. Can we see an updated spreadsheet of library funding sources and the various budget categories the dollars are from (ARPA, GF etc.)? Also, what the current assumed dollar costs are plus how much contingency. (Dyballa)

The Library and Community Center financing includes:

- Cable Grants: \$2,500,000
- Library State Grant: \$125,000
- State Capital Grant: \$300,000
- ARPA Fund: \$4,000,000
- Digital Inclusion Grant: \$75,000
- Bond: \$7,000,000

The FY25 budget includes a proposed \$1.1M in additional contingency. Current change orders for the project total about \$1.0M of which about \$461K are covered by the existing contingency.

12. Where is the performance metric consultant cost in the budget? (Fulcher)

This cost was mistakenly excluded from the budget. Staff have requested that Council consider the estimated \$30K cost during reconciliation.

13. Concerning Safe Routes to Schools- What are the expenditures and what grants come into the City to support this program? How much of the salary is covered from outside sources? Are any sidewalks or other pedestrian safety infrastructure covered from outside grants through this program? (Fulcher)

The staff salary for the Special Projects Coordinator comes from the General Fund, and the position responsibilities includes Safe Routes to School programming as well as pedestrian and bike safety initiatives, and Bike to Work Day activities. The City has two active Safe Routes to Schools grants in the FY2025 budget - \$35,000 in remaining funds for the Takoma Park Improvement Project and \$50,000 for the Enhanced Biking Project. The City provides a required 20% match for both grants from the Planning & Development Services expenditure. The grant funds are for operations and activities such as the crosswalk training kits, bike rodeos, learn-to-ride classes, Walk to School and Bike to School days.

14. Should we replace 9 police cars in one fiscal year? Might we move one of the vehicles that were forgone in FY24 to FY26? (Fulcher)

The delay of the purchase of Police vehicles that have been identified for replacement based on the existing City criteria and evaluation process will result in a vehicle remaining in the fleet when it should be replaced and will likely increase maintenance costs for that vehicle. Additionally, it defers that replacement to a later year, adding it to the number of vehicles to be replaced at that time. So it is just adding that cost to an out year. Lastly, the cost for vehicle purchase increases each year, so a delay results in a more expensive replacement.

15. Electrification of our fleet seems complicated with take home vehicles. Do any other staff ever take-home vehicles other than the TPPD? Have we inquired about what other cities are doing about chargers for take home vehicles? Is an electric car sufficient for the number of hours an officer drives on their shift? It seems that even though electric trash trucks are extremely costly, the support of these vehicles are a lot less complicated and may be better within our reach. (Fulcher)

Only the Police Department has staff with take home vehicles. City staff are currently working on a EV fleet transition plan that will include information about the supporting infrastructure needs.

The Chevy electric vehicle is the only pursuit rated EV vehicle available. The vehicle is currently being tested by several jurisdictions across the Country. The Police Department has yet to determine if the vehicle is viable for inclusion in the City's fleet but will continue to investigate over the coming months and years.

In regard to EV trash trucks, the cost is extremely high - almost double the cost of the diesel

fueled models. The City of Hyattsville has two EV trash trucks, one that is very small which it has been able to be use. The other one is large - a 20-yard size (Takoma Park uses a 25- or 27-yard size). The large truck has not been able to be used due to numerous operational problems. (Hyattsville received an MD Energy Administration grant for the purchases). Some of the current challenges for transitioning to EV's for large trucks is the availability of servicing nearby and the charging infrastructure. That type of vehicle requires a separate higher-powered charging apparatus than a passenger car. It requires dedicated circuits and some special conditions related to managing potential arcing of the power. We are still gathering information about the requirements for large EV vehicles, but so far, these are some of the operational issues we have been made aware of.

16. The Sustainability Committee made recommendations for expanding access to vehicle chargers and increasing our composting. Are either of those components reflected in the FY2025 budget? Is there any budget to increase compost education in our local schools? It seems like educating youth was effective with encouraging recycling to be part of a culture. (Fulcher)

We were anticipating a response from the Mayor and Council to the recommendations made by the Sustainable Maryland Committee. The FY25 proposed budget does not include any additional funding or programs for increasing food waste collection participation, however, it does include some funding to incentivize installation of EV chargers.

The Committee recommended changing the Code to require commercial and large multi-family properties to have programs, expand enforcement and increase outreach and promotion of the program. The one aspect that we may be able to put some staff time in for FY25 is the education and outreach - however, given the limitation of the part-time Sustainability Intern, it is not likely we will have sufficient staff capacity to do so.

The FY25 proposed budget includes \$50,000 in the Sustainability budget to be used to incentivize EV charger installation to multi-family or commercial property owners. Additionally, the Sustainability Manager is pursuing grant opportunities to facilitate this as well as coordinating with Montgomery County on some funding opportunities.

17. Is the Recreation Department seeking to fill any other positions? Did the list of positions that we are seeking to fill only include FTEs? (Fulcher)

If a sustainable funding source were available, Recreation would hire a .5 FTE position and dedicate that position to work with our teen program. Since reopening from the pandemic, the department has lost two part-time staff that work with teens. The City has been trying to rehire for those part-time positions and have not been able to draw enough interest to interview. Several adjustments have been made as to where the position is advertised and still only minimal interest.

Appendix:

FY2025 Budget Highlights

Social and Community Programs

- Emergency Rental Assistance (\$75,000) (Interdepartmental - Grants)
- City Homeowner Tax Credit (\$142,000) (Interdepartmental – Tax Rebate)
- Food Insecurity Program (\$70,000) (ARPA)
- Recreation Scholarships (\$150,000) (A reduction in Recreation revenue)
- Community Quality of Life Grant (\$50,000) (Interdepartmental - Grants)
- Summer Enrichment Program (\$45,000) (Recreation -- Service and Charges)
- Tree Takoma (\$50,000)(PW – Services and Contracts)
- Energy Efficiency Rebates (\$60,000) (PW-Services and Charges)

Infrastructure Projects

- Street Rehabilitation (\$525,000) (ARPA & CIP)
- Stormwater Capital Improvements (\$230,000) (SWM Fund CIP)
- Street Light Upgrades and Maintenance (\$20,000) (CIP)
- PSMP Implementation (\$20,000) (CIP)
- Houston Court Biofiltration (\$91,000) (SWM Fund CIP)
- Equipment Replacement Reserve Contribution (\$900,000)(Unassigned Reserve transfer)

FY2025 Budget Highlights

Pedestrian Safety and Transportation

- Sidewalk Design and Construction (\$300,000) (CIP)
- Met Branch Trail Project (\$425,000) (Spec. Rev CIP)
- Maple Ave Connectivity Project (\$240,000) (Spec. Rev CIP)
- New Hampshire Ave Bikeway (\$350,000) (Spec. Reve CIP)

Housing and Economic Development

- Library Renovation (\$3,220,000)(CIP)
- Library Construction Contingency (\$600,000) (Unassigned Reserve)
- Community Events Grant (\$60,000) (Intergovernmental – Community Festivals)
- Open for Business Grant (\$50,000) (Interdepartmental – Grants)
- Housing Reserve Contribution (\$100,000) (Unassigned Reserve transfer)

Internal Operations

- Document Management Platform (\$222,200)(ARPA)
- Emergency Generator (\$58,000)(CIP)
- Response to Increased Crime (\$150,000)(Police – Various Overtime Categories)
- Staff Appreciation and Engagement: (\$18,000) (Intergovernmental – Recognition Non-Cash)