



Ramsey County Manager's 2026-27 Recommended Budget

Ling Becker, Ramsey County Manager
Sept. 2, 2025





Propelling into Ramsey County's Next Chapter

- First budget as County Manager.
- 2025 Supplemental Budget presentation set the stage.
 - Transition to service teams has vastly benefited the county in operationalizing work.
 - Intentional focus on structural improvement through organizational alignment to ensure we operate efficiently and effectively.
- Unprecedented budgetary pressures.



Current Context

- Responding to growing fiscal pressures and uncertainty acknowledging:
 - Federal actions.
 - State budget.
 - Federal budget.
- Balancing immediate needs with long-term resilience
- Unprecedented time — demands clarity, discipline, resolve and courage.



Vision:

A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.

Mission:

A country of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.

What guides us is unwavering

- Making investment with intentional choices—even when resources are tight.
- Commitment to excellence in service, driven by community and focused on people.
 - Most diverse county in the state.
 - 550,000 residents.
 - 4,000 dedicated employees.
- Countywide Goals:
 - Well-being, opportunity, prosperity and accountability.
 - Embedded throughout the budget—whether in strategic investments, targeted reductions or systems transformation.
 - Remind us why we're here and who we serve.

Drivers of this Budget

- Employee investments through classification and compensation modernization.
- Rising state cost shifts and unfunded mandates.
- Prioritizing investment in core services and improving organizational outcomes.





A Budget of Responsible Choices

- Strategic stewardship of resources
 - Align resources with the county's most critical needs while strengthening operational excellence to meet future challenges.
 - Implement targeted staffing reductions and service adjustments to maintain long-term fiscal stability with a focus on core county services.
- Makes targeted investments to sustain core operations and services
 - Underinvestment today weakens our ability to respond tomorrow.
 - Must preserve infrastructure, workforce, and service delivery capacity.
 - Proactive preparedness is less costly than reactive crisis response.
- Aligned with Budget Themes.

Budget Core Themes



County Responsible Services: Delivering the essential, mandated services that protect health, safety, and well-being.



Operating as One Ramsey County: Representing the unified commitment of all county departments and employees working together to serve residents.



Advancing Partnerships: Growing impact through partnerships that address disparities and drive shared solutions.



Investing in Organizational Excellence: Strengthening systems and processes to ensure accountability, efficiency, and impact.



Supporting Long-Term Fiscal Health: Addressing structural funding gaps, safeguarding reserves, and growing our tax base.



County Responsible Services

- Investments in:
 - Social Services – Child Protection Services.
 - Emergency Management and Homeland Security.
 - Workforce Development.
 - Emergency Communications Center.
- Ensuring a responsive, efficient and stable public assistance system.



One Ramsey County

- Project Bridge Reducing Adult Detention Center population.
- Enterprise investment and coordination guided by our values
 - County-wide evaluation.
 - Racial Health Equity positions.
 - Trusted Messenger Initiative.



Advancing Partnerships

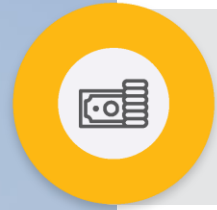
- Intentionality and commitment to drive transformation.
 - Appropriate Response Initiative.
 - Family Coaches.
 - Justice Transformation.
 - American Indian Coordinator.





Investing in Organizational Excellence

- Organizational alignment.
- Compliance and Ethics Office.
- Focus on federal revenue in Human Services.
- Staffing capacity in county core operations.
- Increased investment revenue.

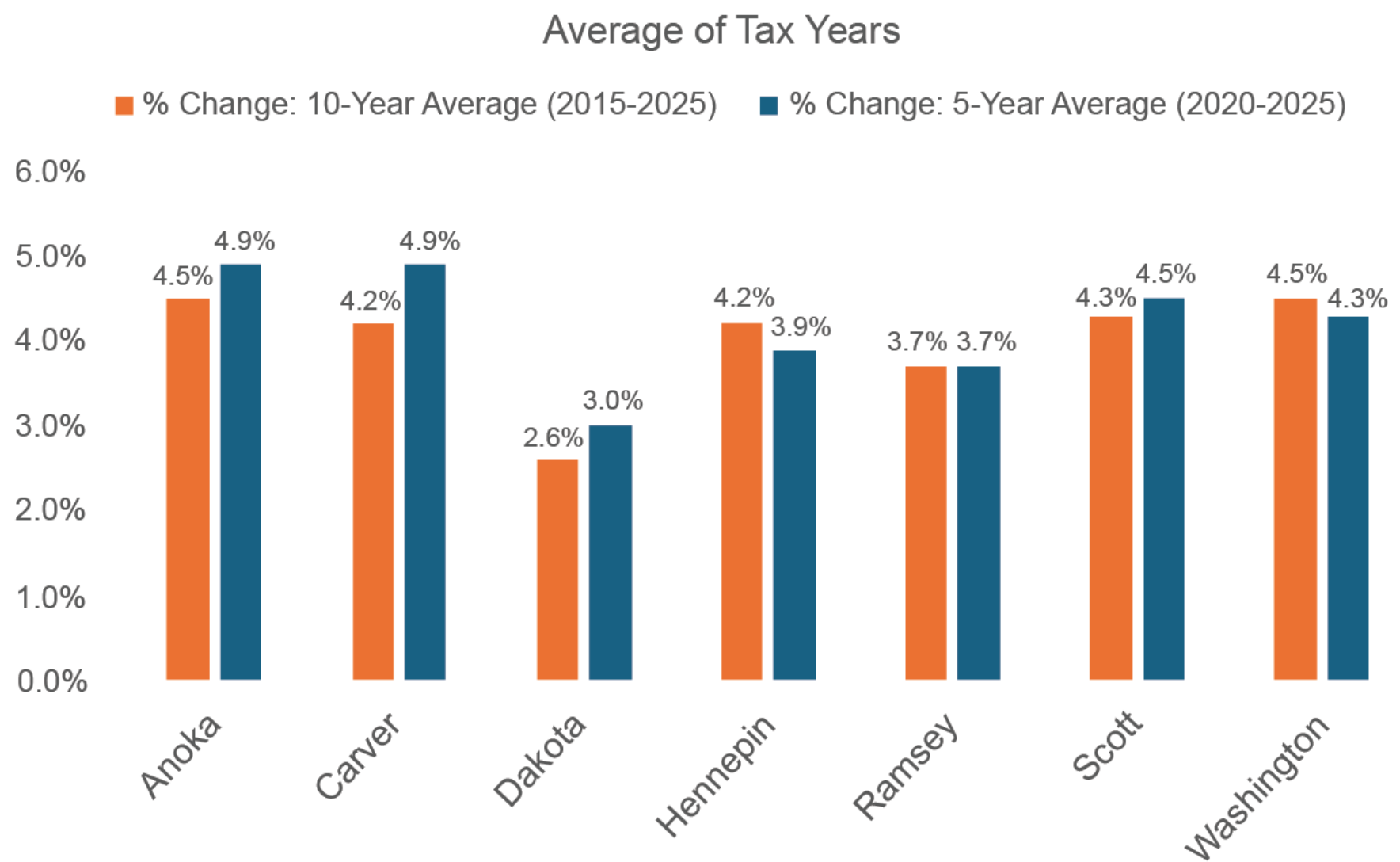


Supporting Long-Term Fiscal Health

- Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan 2.0.
- Housing Continuum.
- Transit and Transportation Plan investments.
- Redevelopment projects.
- Capital investments.

Proposed Budget and Property Levy Context

MSP Region – Average Annual Percentage Levy Change



Budget overview

Total proposed budget

- **2026:** \$929,256,728
- **2027:** \$968,457,020

Overall budget increase

- **2026:** 6.57%
- **2027:** 4.22%

Proposed levy increase

- **2026:** 9.75%
- **2027:** 7.5%

County Program Aid in 2026

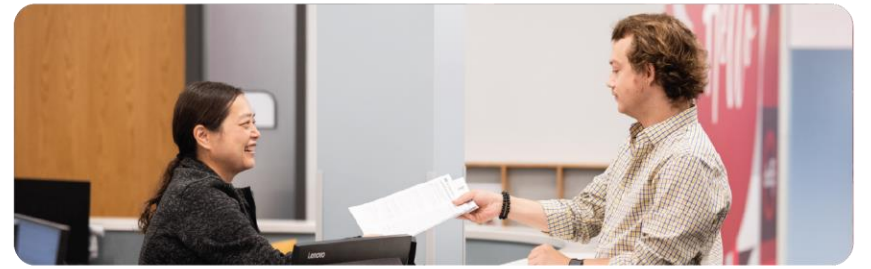
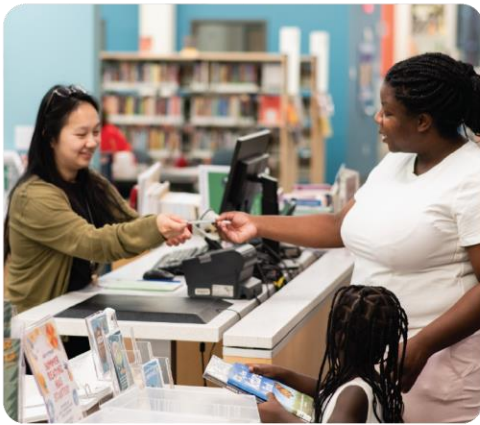
- Decrease of \$331,165
- Resulted in a levy increase of 0.1%

Regional Rail levy

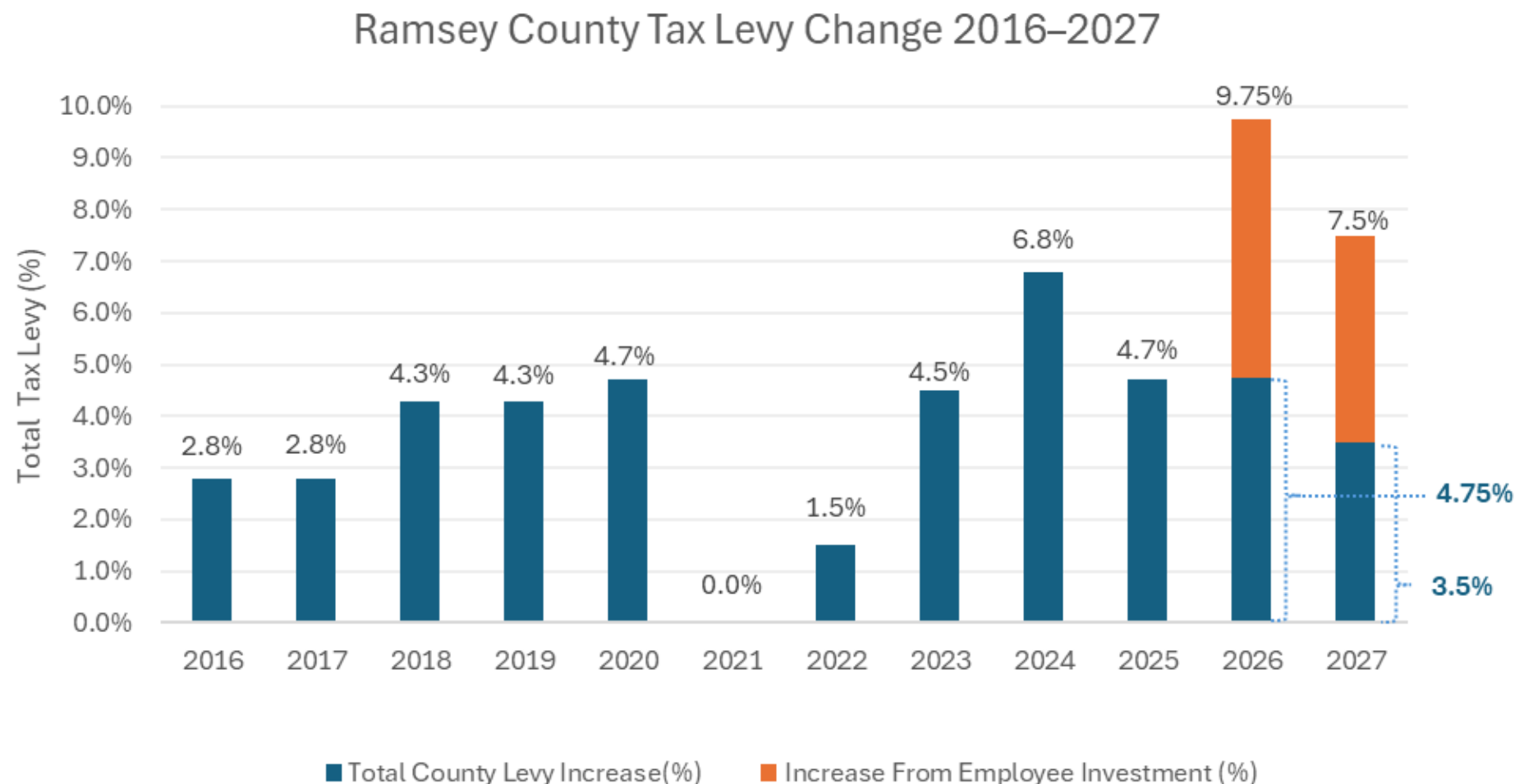
- **2026:** \$37,285,643
- **2027:** \$37,844,927 (est)

Housing and Redevelopment Authority levy

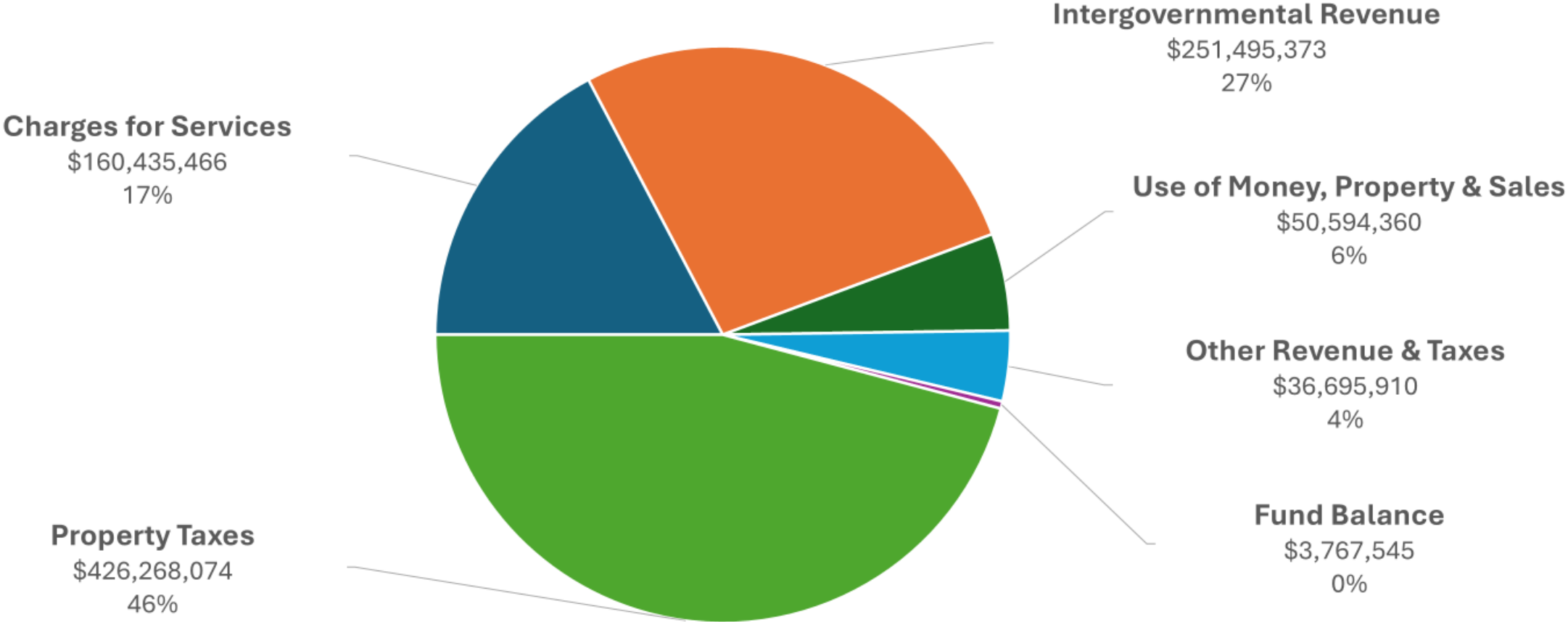
- **2026:** \$14,266,482
- **2027:** \$14,480,479 (est)



Employee Investments: Class and Compensation Modernization

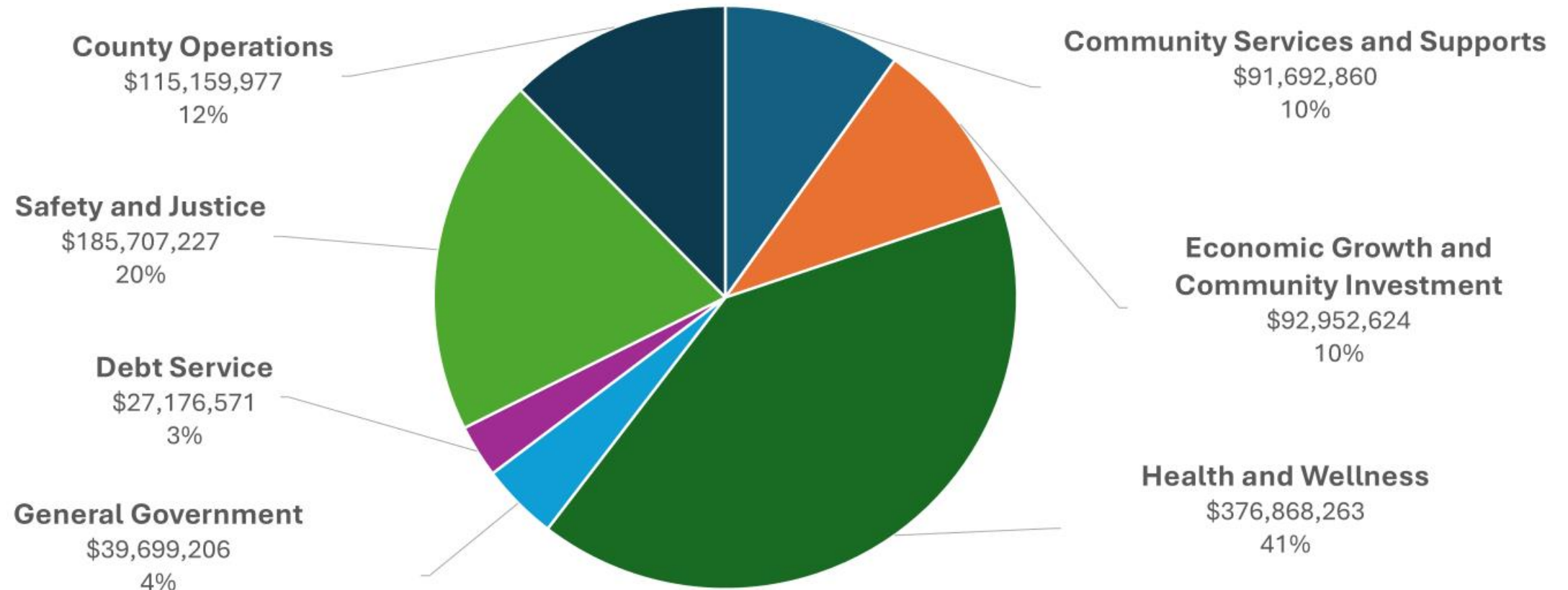


Where the County Dollar Comes From



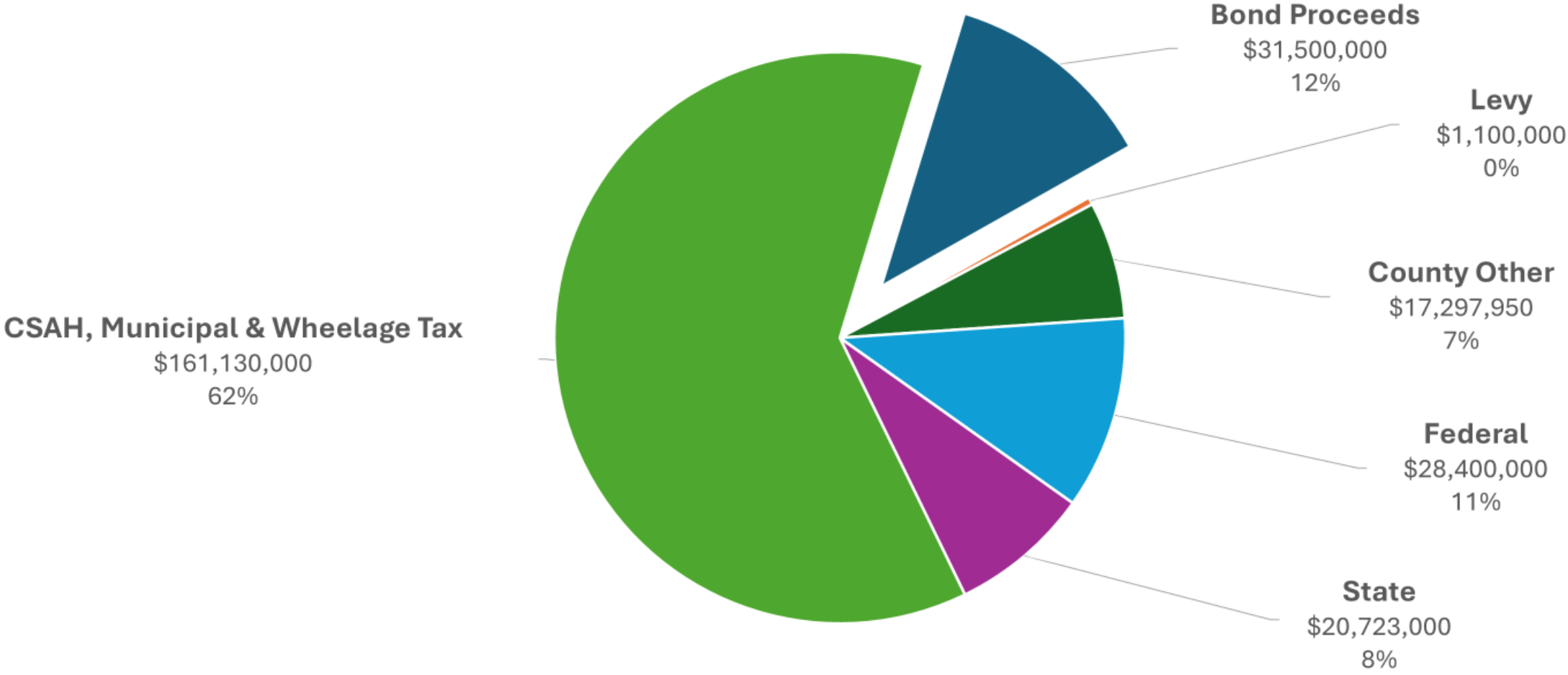
Total 2026 Proposed County Budget: \$929,256,728

Where the County Dollar Goes



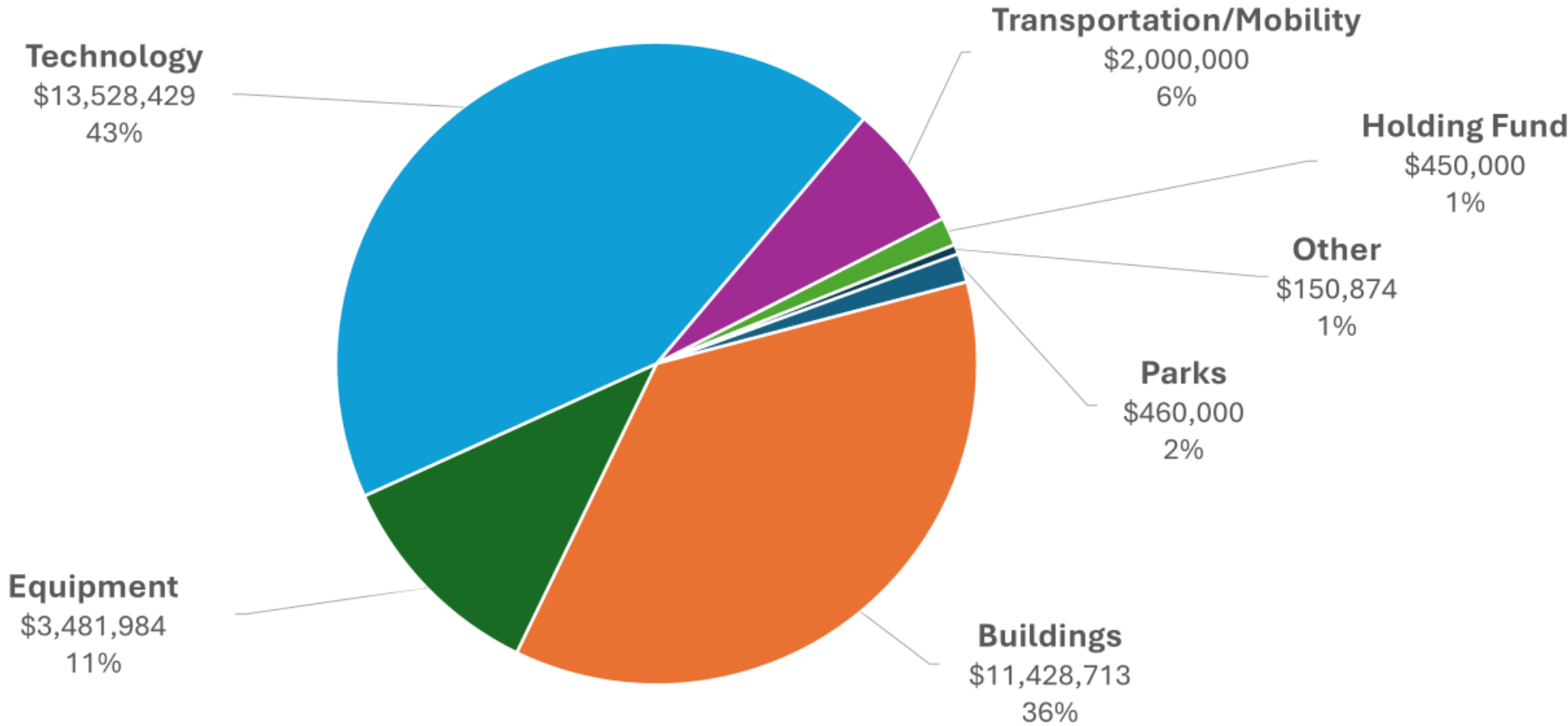
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Capital Budget Funding Sources



Total 2026 Proposed Capital Programs: \$260,150,950

2026 Bond Funded Projects



Organizational Alignment

Organizational Alignment

- Started as part of 2025 Supplemental Budget discussion.
- Balance service teams with intentional reduction of the Health and Wellness Service Team.
- Strong focus on operational excellence.
- New organizational structure beginning Jan. 1, 2026.
- Operational excellence strategic priority.



Organizational Structure 2026 and 2027

2027: Environmental Health will move to Economic Growth and Community Investment Service Team.

Closing and Budget Timeline

Key Dates in the 2026-27 Budget Process

**Sept.
2**

County Manager presentation of proposed budget to County Board.

**Sept.
23**

County Board certifies 2026 maximum property tax levy.

**Sept.
15, 16, 18,
19 & 22**

Department presentations to County Board.

**Nov.
10-24**

Notices of estimated taxes, values emailed/mailed to property owners.

**Sept.
15**

Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee reviews county, city and school district maximum levies.

**Dec.
11**

Truth in Taxation Public Hearing #2 (6:30 p.m. at Saint Paul City Hall – Ramsey County Courthouse).

**Sept.
22**

Public Hearing #1 (5 p.m. at Saint Paul City Hall – Ramsey County Courthouse).

**Dec.
16**

County Board approval of 2026/2027 Ramsey County budget and property tax levy.