

Ramsey County 2022-23 Budget Community Conversations

June 2021

ASL Interpreters

1. ASL Interpreters

2. Chat Box

- Put your questions and comments here.
- We will read the questions and comments during the Community Discussion section.



Presenters

Presenters:

- Ryan O'Connor, Ramsey County Manager
- Alex Kotze, Chief Financial Officer
- Susan Earle, Budget Director
- Sara Hollie and Prince Corbett, Racial and Health Equity Administrators

Overarching Goals

1. Inform and engage our community in the Ramsey County budget process and timelines.
2. To share information, awareness, and transparency in our budgeting process now and into the future – with the goal of participatory budgeting.
3. To offer a preview of the 2022-23 Ramsey County budget investments and priorities and share how past/current community feedback was incorporated in the strategic priorities.
4. To consider the feedback of community in the 2022-23 budget cycle.
5. To prepare community partners for future budget engagement and receive feedback on how to do so.



Disclaimer

This town hall is being recorded.

We are recording for documentation and language/translation purposes.

We cannot get into specifics about client cases or discuss private and confidential information about residents we serve on this town hall.



Agenda

- I. Welcome, Purpose and Ground Rules
- II. Budget Overview & Process
- III. Countywide Vision & Service Team Budget Priorities
- IV. Focused Conversation
- V. Closing and Next Steps

Virtual Agreements

- Be open-minded.
- Listen actively/respectfully when others are speaking.
- Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," and "you").
- Respectfully ask challenging questions and refrain from personal attacks.
- Be engaged and provide feedback.
- The goal is not to always agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.
- Be aware of your facial expressions -- they can be perceived as disrespectful as words.
- Do not dominate the discussion, allow others to be heard.
- "Step Up and Step Back!"

Land Acknowledgement

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contribute their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope for a better life, and some have lived on this land since time immemorial. Truth and acknowledgement are critical to building mutual respect and connection across barriers of heritage and difference.

We are standing on the ancestral lands of the Dakota People. We want to acknowledge the Ojibwe, the Ho Chunk, and the other nations of people who also called this place home. We pay respects to their elders, past and present. Please take a moment to consider their treaties made by the tribal nations that entitle non-Native people to live and work on traditional Native lands. Consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. Please join us in uncovering such truths at any and all public events.

This acknowledgement given in the USDAC Honor Native Land Guide – edited to reflect MN tribes. In review with St. Paul Indians in Action and endorsed by Shannon Geshick, MTAG Executive Director of the MN Indian Affairs Council.

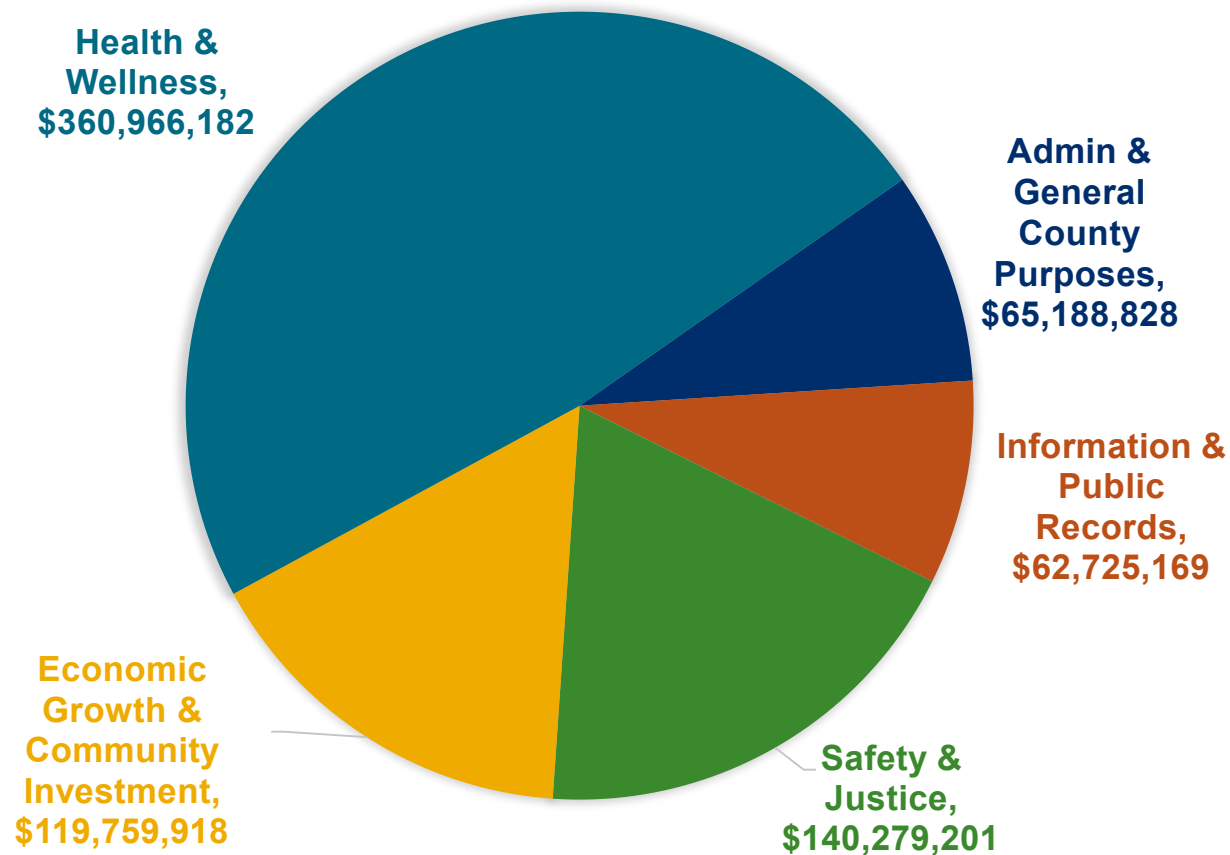
Budget Overview & Process

Susan Earle, Budget Director

Ramsey County Service Teams

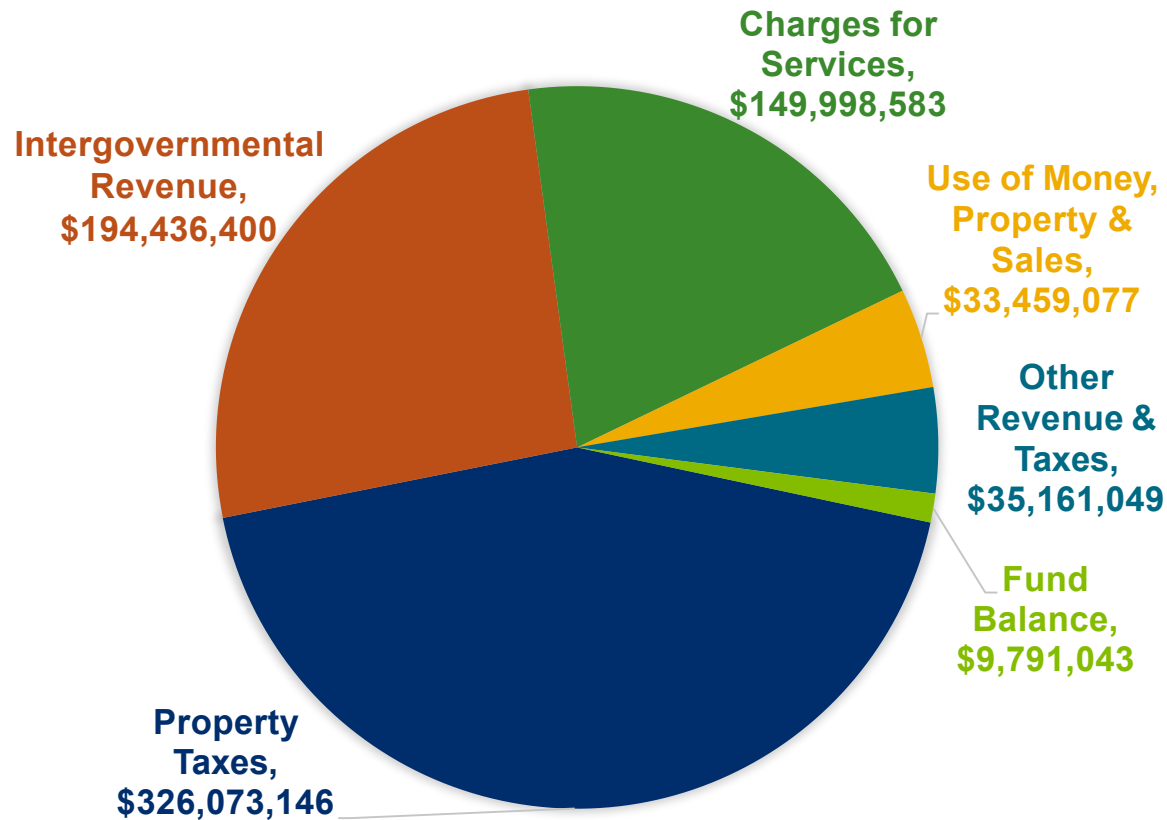


Where County Funds Are Spent: 2021



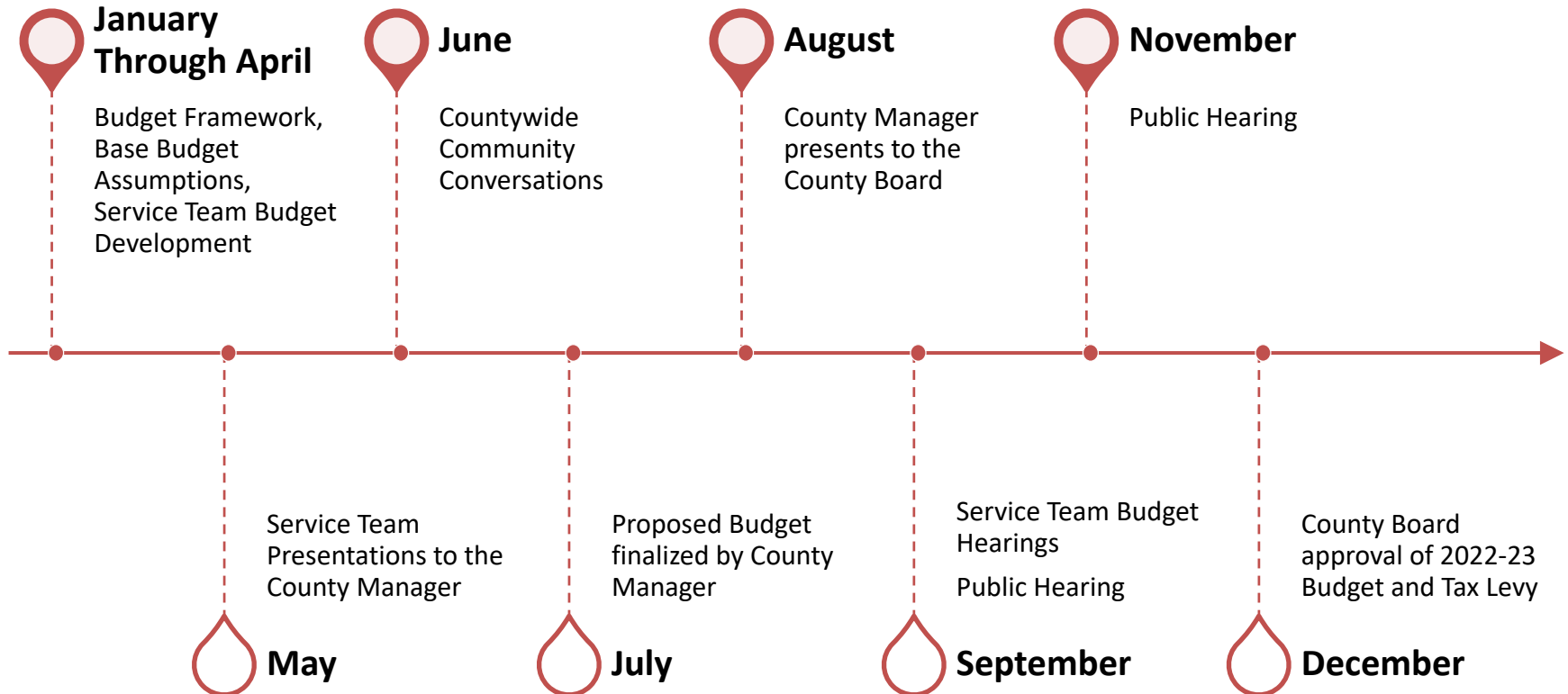
Total = \$748,919,298

Where County Funds Come From: 2021

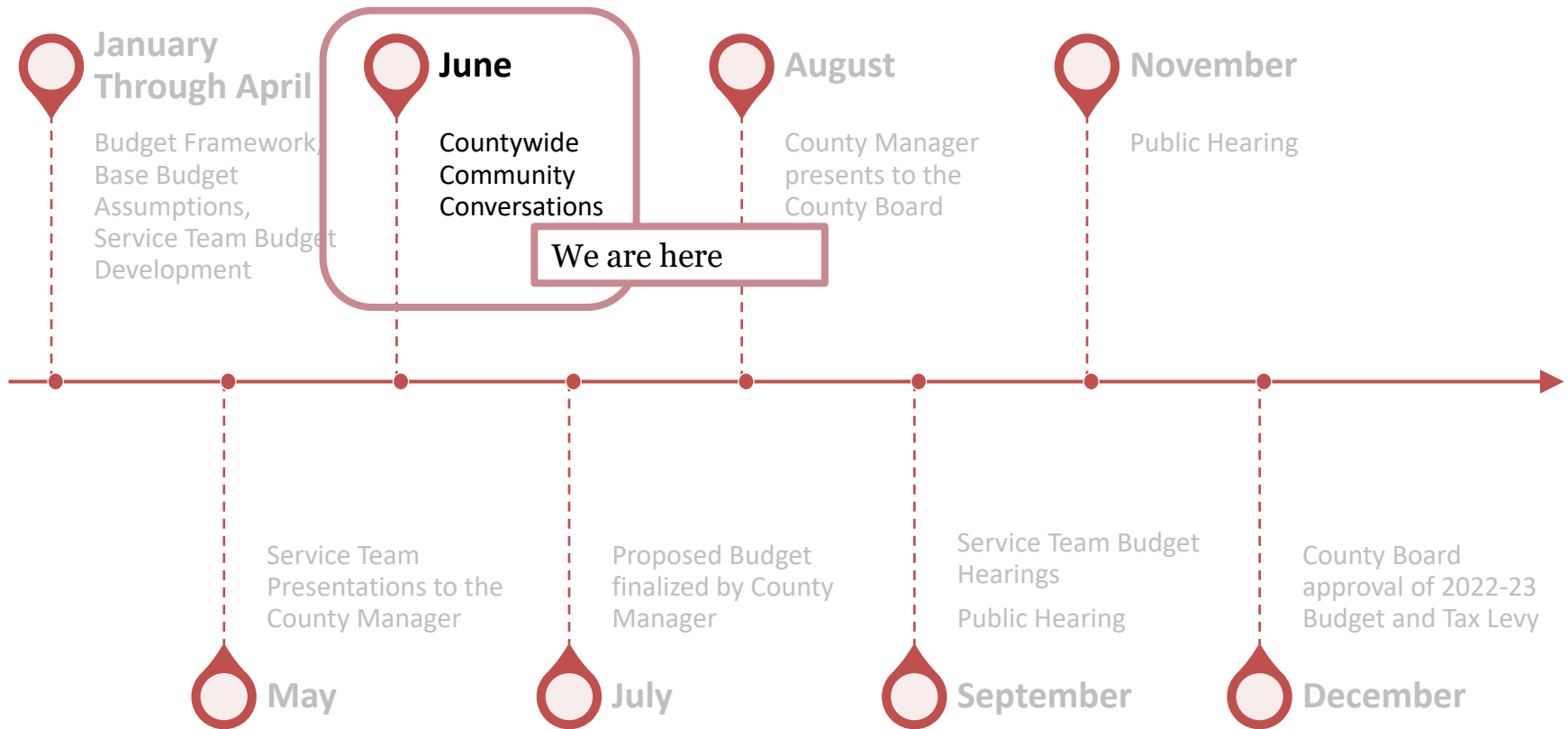


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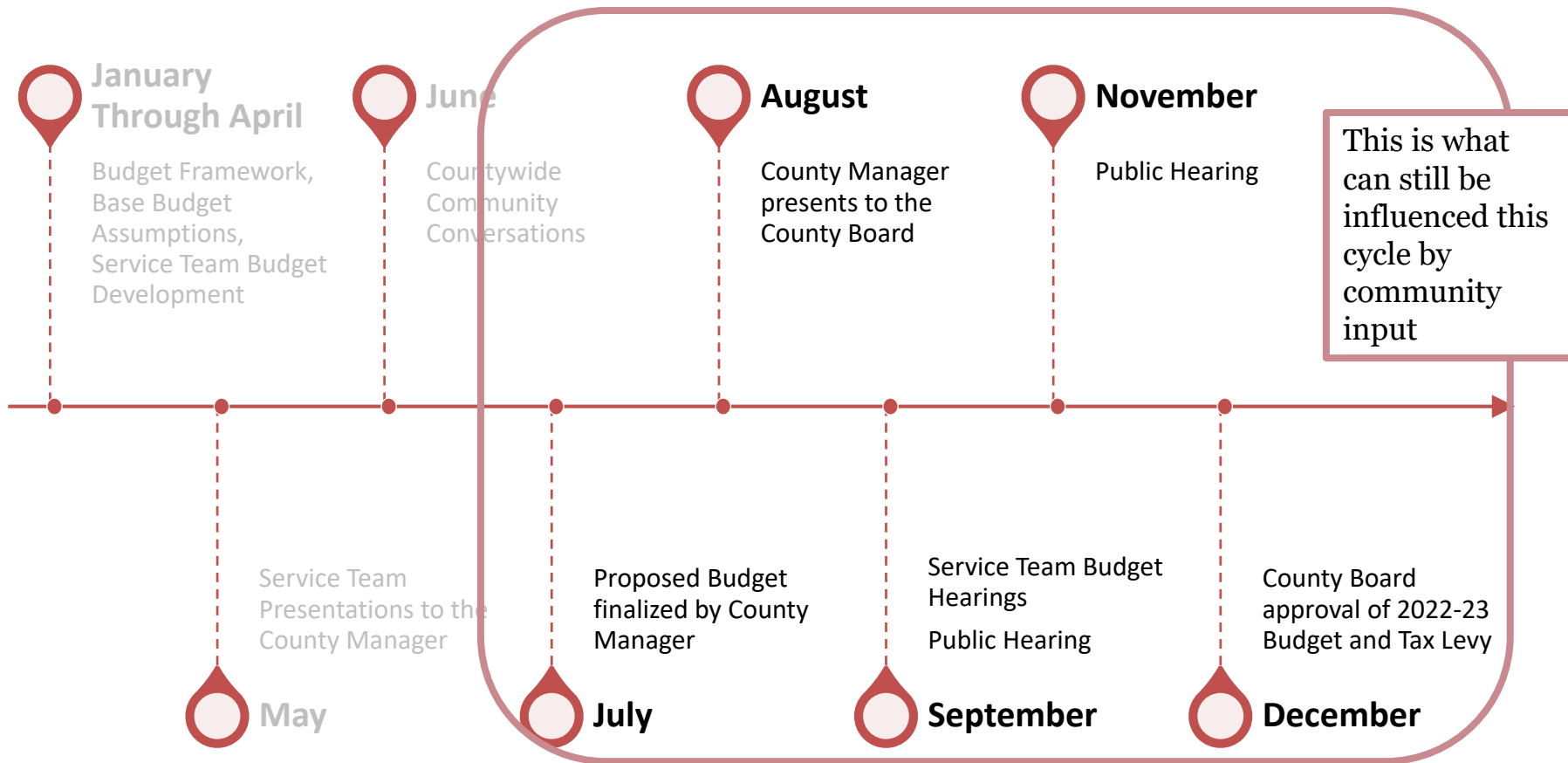
Ramsey County Budget Process



Ramsey County Budget Process



Ramsey County Budget Process



Ramsey County Budget Process





What could community participation in Ramsey County budgeting look like?

What are we trying to achieve through community participation in budgeting?

- We see community perspective as a critical component of resource allocation.
 - We have a vision to make community feedback a significant determining factor in future budget and spending decisions.
-



What could community participation in Ramsey County budgeting look like?

How might community participate in shaping Ramsey County's budget?

- Focus groups
 - Online or in person budget simulations
 - Surveys
 - Integration with existing advisory boards
 - Feedback on specific proposals
 - Feedback on broad goals and prioritization of county funds
 - Follow up conversations on implementation and how dollars were actually spent
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2022-23 Countywide Approach Strategic Direction

2022-23 Budget Retains our Countywide Strategic Direction Approved in 2020



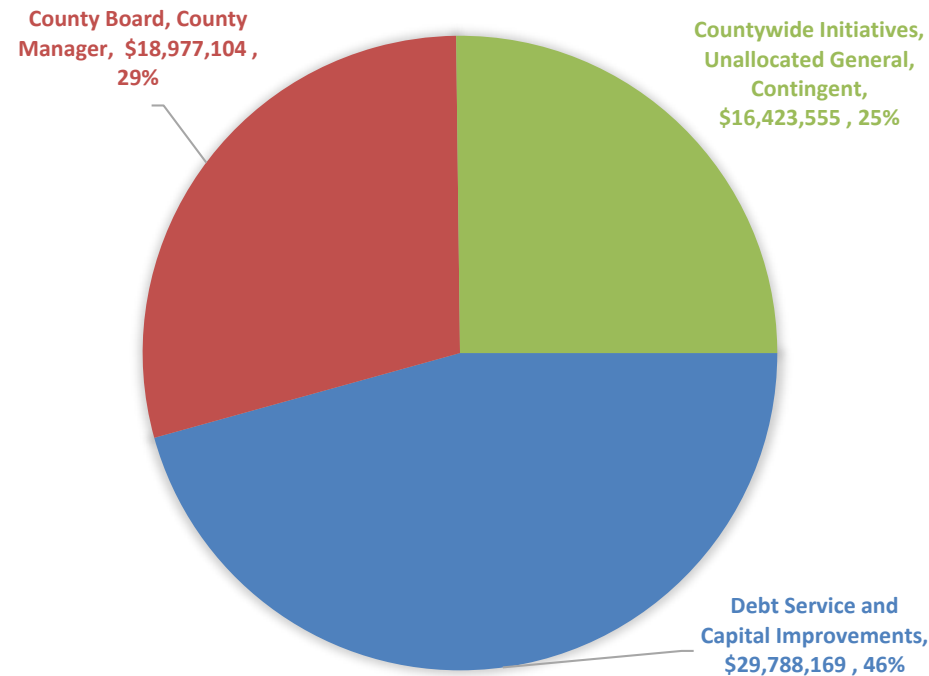
2022-23 Service Team Priorities

Strategic Team

Budget Priorities

- Maintaining high quality, efficient, and customer focused core internal services for Ramsey County
- Continued focus on racial equity and community engagement
- Continued focus on Talent Attraction Retention and Promotion and Public Sector Pathways
- Foundational excellence – building back office and internal audit capacity

2021 Strategic Team Budget



Total = \$65,188,828

Strategic Team

Why these priorities?

- Our work supports all work countywide, and we need to meet the changing needs of our residents, internal customers, and the organization
- Taking lessons learned over the past year and prioritizing community engagement with a racial equity focus
- Maintaining a strong workforce supports a level of service all county residents expect

Community Input

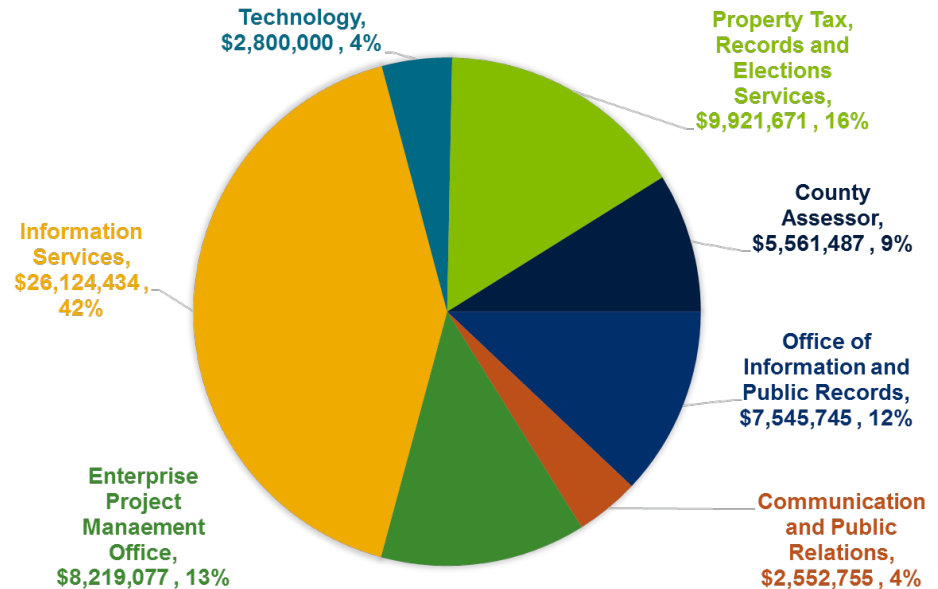
- Pooled funds to provide service teams access to engagement resources
- Increased investments to advance the county's racial and health equity work through trusted messengers, contracting with community, and enhanced communication strategies
- Community budget conversations

Information & Public Records Service Team

Budget Priorities

- **Enterprise Services:** Connecting residents to county (and community) programs and removing barriers to receiving services
- **Technology:** Improving service delivery through technology
- **Communications:** Telling the story of where the county plans to go in the future based on the lessons of the past in clear, timely, accessible, compelling and persuasive ways

2021 IPR Budget



Total = \$62,725,169

Information & Public Records Service Team

Why these priorities?

- **Enterprise Services** - This team embodies the Residents First strategic priority by connecting residents to county (and community) programs and removing barriers to receiving services.
- **Technology** - The County's reliance on technology for service delivery and support requires continued investment in periodic replacement, upgrades and new equipment and applications.
- **Communications and Public Relations** - At its core, Communications & Public Relations is responsible for connecting residents, businesses, partners, policymakers, employees and visitors to the services, programs, priorities and performance of the county today, as well as transparently telling the story of where the county plans to go in the future based on the lessons of the past in clear, timely, accessible, compelling and persuasive ways.

Community Input

We are more committed than ever through our strategic investments to ensure IPR and countywide community participation in decision-making that impacts the lives of all our residents.

Community plays a critical role in all Enterprise Services activities.

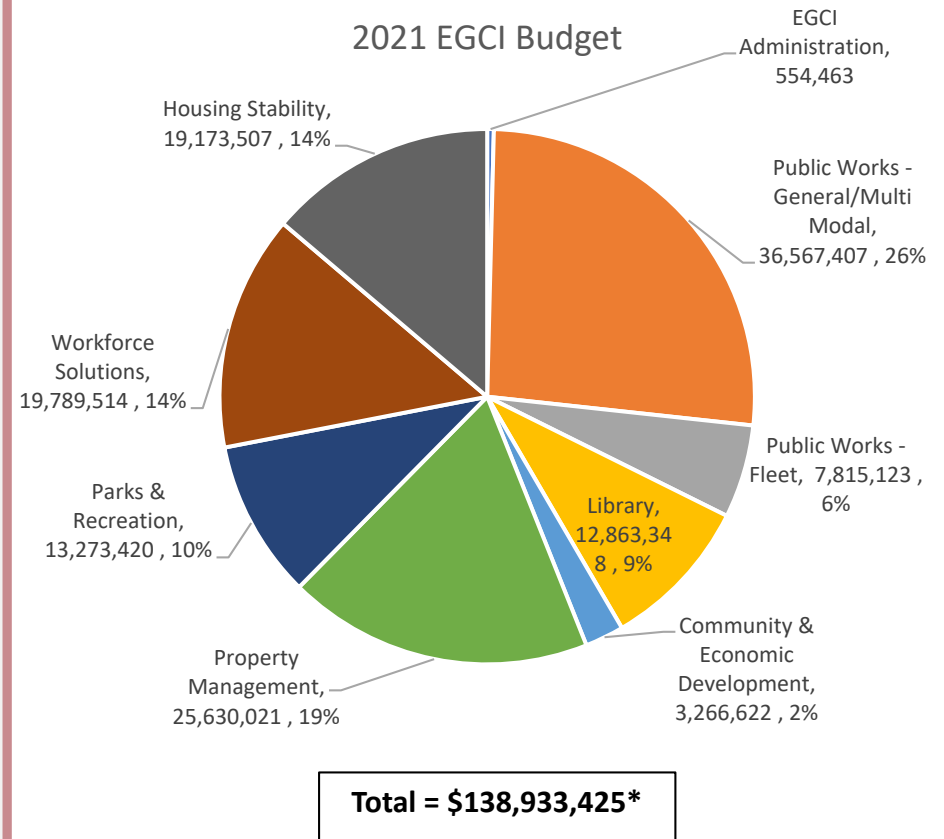
Community members were involved in the development of the Navigator job description as well and the screening and interviewing of applicants.

Community also has multiple seats on the advisory councils for Enterprise Services/service delivery planning and operations.

Economic Growth & Community Investment

Budget Priorities

- Activation of a Housing & Redevelopment Authority Levy
- Investment into Housing Stability
- Property Management working with departments to decrease their office space needs.



**Includes new Housing Stability Department, which was created after the board approval of the 2021 budget.*

Economic Growth & Community Investment

Why these priorities?

- The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic downturn exacerbated a long-standing affordable housing crisis. Additional resources (HRA and Housing Stability) are critical to address the housing needs of our residents.
- Property Management's work enables the county to advance its Residents First Facilities priority.

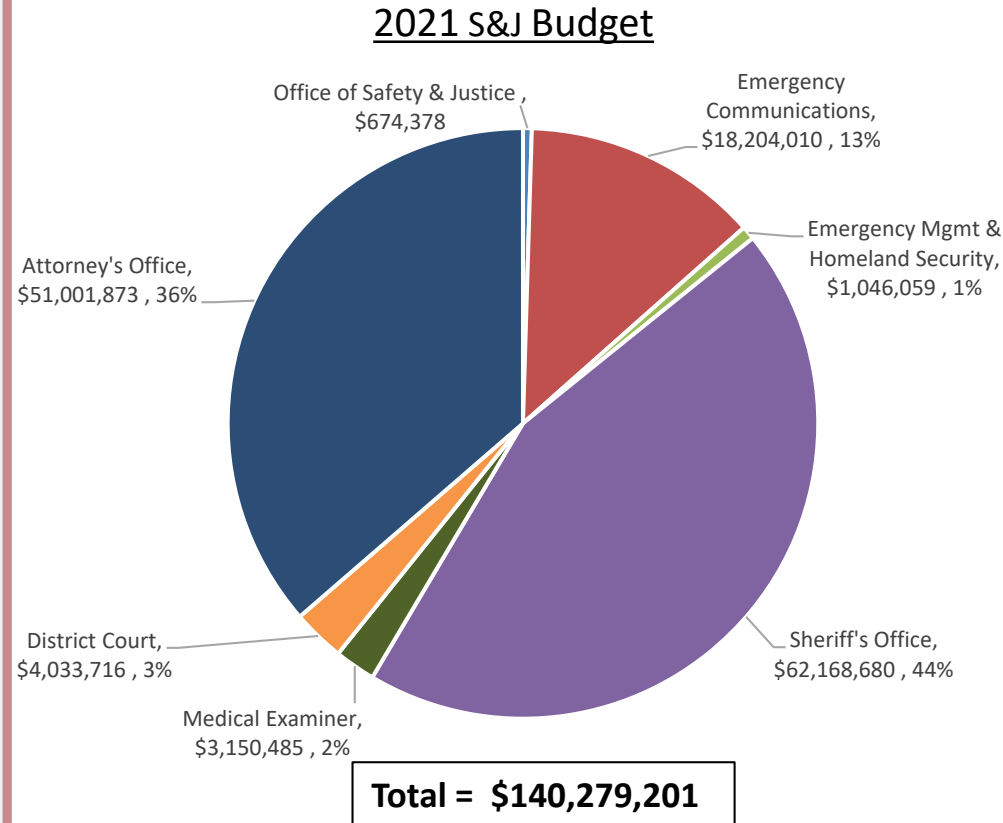
Community Input

- Ramsey County's Economic Competitiveness and Vision Plan was developed over 18 months with strong input from residents and community stakeholders.
- A unified approach to community engagement for Residents First Facilities and Service Delivery is planned for early summer 2021.

Safety & Justice Service Team

Budget Priorities

- Aligning justice system decision making with community values
- Less incarceration
- Reducing unintended consequences of contact with the justice system
- Redesign public safety response models to include more Social Services and Public Health supports



Safety & Justice Service Team

Why these priorities?

- Involvement in the justice system disproportionately impacts Black and Brown residents with lifelong consequences.
- Past focus on punitive approaches have increased harm to our communities.

Community Input

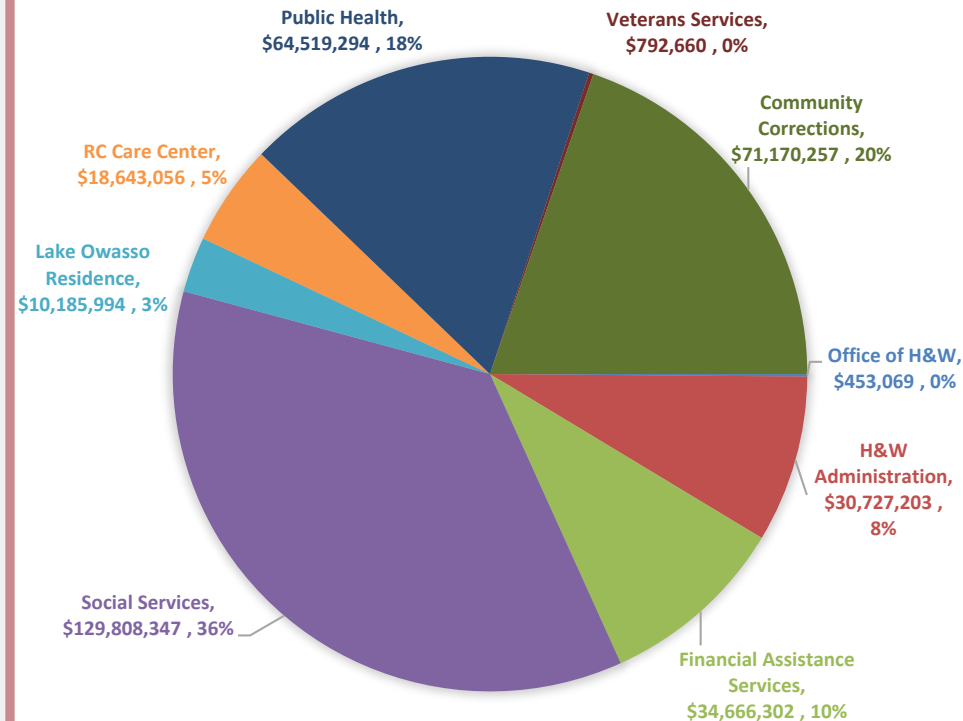
Community is represented in the various committees and workgroups that are advancing justice reform and transformation. Community involvement increasingly includes codesign where community representatives are working together with systems leaders to develop new approaches that align with community values.

Health and Wellness Service Team (HWST)

Budget Priorities

- **Residents First: Effective, Efficient and Accessible Operations** through Human Services Technology Modernization. Using technology to improve workflows.
- **Advancing Racial and Health Equity and Shared Community Power:** Continued engagement with the HWST Racial Equity Action(s) Team, Racial Equity and Community Engagement Response Team, the Equity Action Circle, Ramsey United and many other community action teams to address priorities identified by these teams.
- **Aligning Justice System Outcomes with Community Values:** Focused areas include Transforming Systems Together, adult mental health co-responder model in partnership with law enforcement, Healing Streets, Juvenile and Adult Diversion, JDAI and Adult Justice Reform.
- **Advancing Holistic Approach to Strengthen Families:** Early childhood cross-departmental and cross service team work for Child Welfare and Family Coach Model, and Service Center Navigators.
- **Stability Starts with Place to Call Home:** Housing support and homelessness prevention through programs and services within HWST Departments.
- **Pandemic Response:** HWST addresses the needs of community, specifically BIPOC, who suffer disproportionately higher rates of illness and death. COVID-19 will remain a burden that will be addressed by each department with leadership continuing to come from Public Health.

2021 HWST Budget



Total = \$360,966,182

Health and Wellness Service Team (HWST)

Why these priorities?

- The priorities for HWST align with the county-wide strategic priorities.
- Some priorities are in direct response to community input and engagement.
- The well-being of Ramsey County residents is at the heart of each priority.
- Goal of the priorities is to improve outcomes and end race-based disparities and inequities by making investments in communities that are most impacted.
- Acknowledge the burden and ongoing work HWST addresses during the ongoing pandemic and beyond.

Health and Wellness Service Team (HWST)

Community Input

- At the beginning of the budget process HWST engaged both staff across the Service Team and community through budgeting 101 sessions.
- The intent is to reengage both groups multiple times throughout the budget process.
- The Department leaders took what they learned from those sessions and brought back the concerns and priorities to their areas and community action teams to enlist them into the budget and/or strategic planning process knowing not all items could be addressed in this budget cycle.

What we learned: Residents and Key Stakeholders

- Targeted investments in services and programs to the most impacted and vulnerable communities, in Financial Assistance, Veterans, Social Services: mental health and aging populations.
- Community driven and focused measures that determine where we are making a difference and where improvements are needed.
- Increased funding/resources to new (not as well-known) and grass-roots BIPOC businesses and partners working with the impacted communities, that could help reduce high internal personnel costs.
- Address the barriers and challenges of contracting that small businesses and BIPOC communities experience when working with the county.
- Increased COVID-19 response in BIPOC communities.
- Dedicated resources that support community-participatory evaluation, data collection and reporting that helps focus our programs and services.

Focused Conversation

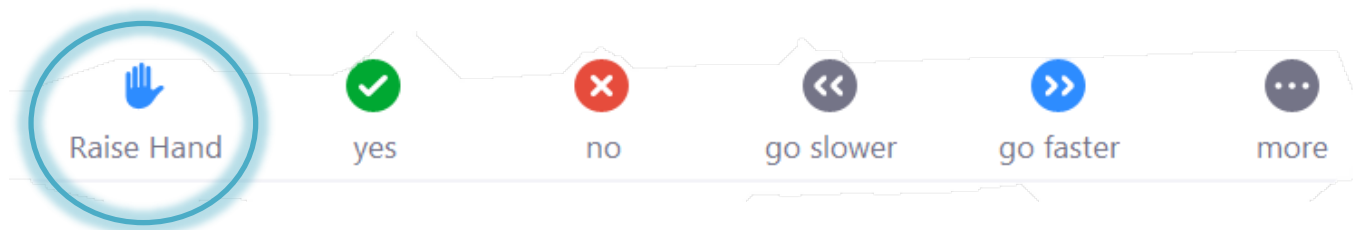
Conversation Structure and Ground Rules

Structure

- Utilize chat box for questions or comments
- “Raise” your hand and moderator will call on you
- One (1) minute per speaker for comments or questions

Ground Rules

- Be respectful
- Be open-minded
- Listen actively and respectfully when others are speaking
- "Step up and step back"



Group Discussion

1. From what you've heard, what is most exciting about what's being invested in/proposed? What is most concerning?
2. Regarding the budget priorities shared today, what strategic investments should be prioritized over others?
3. Are there any priorities important to your community that are missing?
4. How should we be thoughtful about engaging community in shaping Ramsey County's budget in the future?
5. What other outstanding questions do you have?

Closing and Next Steps

Where to Learn More

Understanding your Property Taxes and Value

- [English](#)
- [Hmoob](#)
- [Karen](#)
- [Soomaali](#)
- [Español](#)

[Popular Annual Financial Report](#)

[Ramsey County Budget](#)

[Ramsey County Open Data Portal](#)

Questions? Email AskBA@co.ramsey.mn.us
Call 651-266-8041