



## 2024-25 Biennial Budget Follow Up Information

Service Team: Information and Public Records Department: County Assessor

Budget Committee of the Whole Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

**Question: Write up on how we're changing our assessing processes and leading in that space.**

Answer: The County Assessor department continues to innovate and lead in the Minnesota assessing community. We do this by both exploring new technology and methodology regarding mass appraisal, and implementing those that best serve the residents Ramsey County. The department has had great success in utilizing sophisticated value models to assign values to both residential and commercial properties. These value models have resulted in continued high quality and equitable value assessments across all property classes. The Ramsey County Assessor department is considered a pioneer in this space and continues to assist other assessing jurisdictions in implementing their value models.

The department continues to focus on advancing racial equity by working on hiring staff who reflect the community they serve. By partnering with local colleges, the department offers internships to local students, with a goal towards finding a full time job in the assessing field. We are the only county in the State with such a program.



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Service Team: Information and Public Records Department: Enterprise and Administrative Services

Budget Committee of the Whole Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

**Question: When will we have a Residents First Workshop?**

Answer: Residents First Executive Sponsors and Advisory Board are planning a Board Workshop for Q1 2024.

**Question: Written overview of construction/renovation at service centers. What is happening at the service centers? Also included a written overview of the evolution of navigators.**

Answer: The first Service Centers and Navigator role were developed in the midst of the County's COVID-19 response in the summer of 2020. The first five Service Centers opened in August 2020 at the East Kellogg Building, 90 W Plato, and the libraries in Roseville, Maplewood, and Shoreview. At that time all Navigators were temporarily redeployed from other areas of the county. In late 2020, the Service Centers and Navigators were moved from our pandemic response into IPR and the Enterprise Services Division was established within the Enterprise and Administrative Services Department.

Starting in early 2021, the Service Centers were reduced to three locations due to use – East Kellogg Building and Roseville and Maplewood Libraries. Permanent staff – Manager, Supervisors, and Navigators - were hired in early 2021. As Service Centers became more established and known throughout the community and we started to come out of our pandemic response, the role and function of service centers and navigators continued (and still continues) to evolve to truly meet the mission of transforming county services and providing a “one-stop shop” for residents to access county services and more easily navigate the complex government systems with the help of the Enterprise Services team. Navigators work not only within Service Centers, but also at over a dozen community sites and frequently attend community events to help residents navigate county services.

In January 2022, the Downtown Service Center located at the East Kellogg Building moved to Metro Square because the federal trial of three of the former officers involved in the murder of George Floyd were being tried across the street which created a barrier for residents trying to access services at that building. This move was intended to be a temporary move. Staff and residents immediately provided feedback that the Metro Square location was a significant improvement over the Kellogg Building and we began planning for a more permanent location at Metro Square. In late 2022, the Downtown Service Center moved locations within Metro Square to a larger, renovated space where it is today on the second floor. This space was needed as we had already outgrown the first, temporary space at Metro Square, but it was always envisioned that a longer planning process would take place to develop a purpose built Service Center at Metro Square that will meet the longer-term needs. We (EAS, Property Management and departments across the county) are working together now to develop a new, more



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permanent space at Metro Square that includes purpose built spaces, human centered design principals, and collaboration with residents to create a space that is welcoming and inclusive for all.

Concurrent to the moves and planning taking place at Metro Square, the Maplewood Library and Service Center closed in late 2022 for renovations. The Maplewood Service Center relocated to Maplewood Mall in January 2023. Following the move, staff and residents provided feedback that the Maplewood Mall location was preferred to the library, providing greater accessibility and space for expanded services. In September 2023, the County Manager announced that the Maplewood Service Center will stay at the Maplewood Mall and we started planning for renovations at that space to make it more welcoming and functional for staff and residents.

**Question: When will we have a Board Workshop on Service Centers upgrades and bigger picture look at needs for Service Centers (with Property Management)**

Answer: This workshop will be scheduled in 2024.

**Question: Thank you for the information about service centers. I was also glad to see the recent update on our Maplewood Service Center. How are our numbers for resident visits per day? Has that number increased since we toured it earlier this year? And, have we been able to add more wayfinding signs through the mall since then?**

Answer: Yes, our resident numbers have increased 65% in the first and second quarter of 2023. We are seeing between 20-35 residents daily – and this number is growing due to increased awareness of the location and added partnerships. We don't have wayfinding signage at Maplewood yet. It HAS been added to the mall directory. This is part of the larger renovation project we are planning.

**Question: I wonder about opportunities to add art to our service centers and places like our Mental Health Center on University. Have there been or could there be efforts to do this to help with institutional feel and bring art in county spaces?**

Answer: We are working with Property Management to bring human-centered design and trauma-informed concepts to all service center spaces. This is also part of on-going renovation plans at Metro Square and service centers. We hope this sets a precedent for how we collaborate with Property Management on how to build welcoming spaces into the future.



## 2024-25 Biennial Budget Follow Up Information

Service Team: Information and Public Records Department: Property Tax, Records and Election Services

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**Question: Keeping updated on legislation change regarding sale of forfeited property.**

Answer: Will keep the board updated as we learn more. Nothing to report currently.