



2024-25 Biennial Budget Follow Up Information

Service Team: Strategic Team

Department: Countywide Budget

Budget Committee of the Whole Meeting Date: September 5, 2023

Question: P. 20 & 21 – Pies / Chart: Regarding “Where The County Dollar Comes From,” does the county have data on how “Charges of Services” breaks down? What residents are paying the most for what services? Who would the best person be to talk to to obtain that information?

Answer: Charges for Services includes the following categories of revenue -

- 311100 Fees & Services – Legal
- 311200 Fees & Services – Recreational
- 311300 Fees & Services – Property
- 311400 Fees & Services – Medical
- 311500 Fees & Services – Miscellaneous
- 311600 Commissions
- 311700 Other Services
- 311900 Federal Aid Revenues
- 312000 Intra-County Services
- 313000 Fees & Forfeitures

Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to track demographic information tied to these charges at a countywide level.

Question: P. 23 – Summary of budget (looking for high-level answers that don’t have to be given right away, but can be asked before the appropriate presentation dates). What explains the overall decrease in Technology from 2023 (7.2 million) to 2025 (4.8 million)? Why does Housing Stability expect to see a dip in funds needed for 2024 that goes back up in 2025?

Answer:

Technology – The Technology department is one part of the overall IS budget. This change represents a decrease in Information Technology Project (or ITP) funding. Overall, the IS budget is increasing.

Housing Stability – The variability in Housing Stability funds is largely tied to expected grant revenues and how they are reflected in the budget.



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Question: County Manager's Office - Projects & Grants: p. 171: Regarding Support of Immigrants and Refugees, why did we see a 2022 budget of 100,000 and then a cut in 2023 with no additional funding in 2023, 2024 and 2025?

Answer: This is an accounting issue. In 2022, this initiative was called out separately in the budget. For 2024 – 2025, it is included as part of the Unallocated General budget. We will move the budget into the CMO after January 1 of each year to help manage this program.



2024-25 Biennial Budget Follow Up Information

Service Team: Strategic Team

Department: CMO/Gov't Relations

Budget Committee of the Whole Meeting Date: September 5, 2023

Question: How much is the county paying to hire contract lobbyists right now?

Answer:

Goff Public (State focus)	\$65,000
Aurora Strategies (Federal focus)	\$85,000 Regional Rail Levy
Haas Pool (Homelessness 2023)	\$30,000
Park Street Public (State focus)	\$10,000 RCAO funds
PTR Associates (Climate funding focus 2023)	\$30,000

Question: How much will these proposed roles save the county long-term?

Answer: One of the goals in adding more capacity to the Government Relations team is to secure more state and federal funds for the strategic priorities of Ramsey County. We can't guarantee any savings.

Question: Does the budget proposal also consider any staff training or costs/accommodations that the county may be responsible for or may have to reimburse, in addition to the lobbyists' salaries? For example, lobbyists' costs in meeting or arranging events for legislators, travel costs, etc.

Answer: Currently Government Relations spends very little in outside trainings or materials. On the state side, almost all the travel is still within Ramsey County and costs are usually for coffee/donuts and printing materials. We have a small budget for these items. This budget has accommodated staff to go to the D.C. and summer NACo conferences.



2024-25 Biennial Budget Follow Up Information

Service Team: Strategic Team

Department: Human Resources

Budget Committee of the Whole Meeting Date: September 5, 2023

Question: P. 193, Revenue: Why did we see 2023's budget sit at 252k, and what is causing it to go back down to 89k in 2024 and 25?

Answer: The Human Resources department is losing a source of revenue moving forward. Under the old MetroPass Program, HR would purchase monthly MetroPass Bus passes for employees and sell them at a 50% discount. The payment from the employees got recorded as Revenue in HR. The new commuting policy now dictates that the County pay for these bus passes in entirety. This the loss of Revenue in HR.

Question: P. 194, Revenue: Why did we see 2023's budget sit at 517k, and what is causing it to go back down to 101k in 2024 and 25?

Answer: The same answer applies to this question. The loss of MetroPass Bus Pass Revenue and an additional loss of Revenue tied to parking fee elimination at the Government East Building. This loss of revenue is tied to a change in policy tied to the parking lot at the Government East Building. Human Resources used to receive 50% of the parking revenue tied to this building. Due to the COVID pandemic, the County stopped collecting parking fees at this lot. The decision has been made to disband the parking fees at this building moving forward.

Question: I am interested in the "Language pay" for employees required to possess bilingual skills, and would like to ask questions about that as we learn more about it?

Answer: On the topic of language pay, it is something we are looking into for employees who serve populations with many languages. While we have translation firms that provide support in some areas, there are employees who because they speak these languages have been directly providing translation and or responding in the said language for business purposes.

While some of these employees are indirectly compensated, there is no formal language pay in our compensation practice. We feel it is important to start the discussion about language pay by formalizing the process and making it a part of our compensation practice.

This is not only to attract and retain employees but also to provide a fair assessment of the skills employees bring to our organization.

Note, however, that this would need to be bargained.



2024-25 Biennial Budget Follow Up Information

Service Team: Strategic Team

Department: Finance

Budget Committee of the Whole Meeting Date: September 5, 2023

Question: What other Counties have Triple AAA bond rating and GFOA award?

Triple Crown GFOA Winners in MN (2021): Carver, Crow Wing, Ramsey, Washington

Of these counties, Ramsey and Washington have a AAA rating from both Moody's and S&P, Carver has AAA from S&P (not rated by Moody's), and Crow Wing has a AA credit rating from S&P.

A full listing of Minnesota county bond ratings is attached.

Question: P. 137, additional request of \$ for Foundational Excellence: "Ramsey County invested over \$1.2 million each year . . . The proposed budget includes an additional investment of \$1.0 million in 2024 and \$1.2 million in 2025[.]" Does "additional" here mean that we are adding a request of 1 million on top of the yearly 1.2 million for a total of 2.2 million for 2024, and then the same for 2025?

Answer: That is correct. The total investment is \$2.2 million in 2024 and \$2.4 million in 2025.

Question: P. 175, P-Plus program: Does the county have any intention to undo its harms to residents caused by the P-Plus program?

Answer: The County has been part of the P-Plus program for many years and once it was discovered how it works by the current Finance team, we worked quickly to end the program. We do not have the ability to make payments to residents or companies previously enrolled in the program.

Question: P. 180-1, Revenue: Are we able to break down data as to the demographics of residents getting charged the most for what services?

Answer: Service Teams may have additional information, but we have no way to track this centrally.

Question: There are many mentions of the soon to be created grants office - can we please get an update on plans, priorities, and functions at the earliest convenience?

Answer: Plans are still coming together for the grants office, but we know there is a gap in our county of dedicated resources to supporting this work so funds are allocated in this budget to address that. The vision is to have a countywide support to seek and apply for grant funding. Right now service teams have varying levels of staffing to support this work, and money is left on the table because of it. This



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team would seek to maximize grant opportunities and work with service teams and departments to identify potential grant opportunities and support in the application and acceptance process.

Minnesota Counties	Moody's Rating	S&P Rating
RAMSEY CNTY MN	Aaa	AAA
AITKIN CNTY MN	Aa3	
ANOKA CNTY MN		AA+
BECKER CNTY MN		AA+
BELTRAMI CNTY MN	Aa3	
BENTON CNTY MN		AA
BIG STONE CNTY MN		AA-
BLUE EARTH CNTY MN	Aa2	
BROWN CNTY MN		AA
CARLTON CNTY MN	Aa2	
CARVER CNTY MN		AAA
CHISAGO CNTY MN		AA+
CLAY CNTY MN		AAA
COOK CNTY MN		AA
COTTONWOOD CNTY MN		AA-
DOUGLAS CNTY MN		AA
FARIBAULT CNTY MN	Aa3	
FILLMORE CNTY MN		AAA
FREEBORN CNTY MN	Aa2	
GOODHUE CNTY MN	Aa2	
GRANT CNTY MN	Aa3	
HENNEPIN CNTY MN		AAA
HOUSTON CNTY MN		AA
HUBBARD CNTY MN	Aa3	
ISANTI CNTY MN	Aa1	
ITASCA CNTY MN	Aa1	
JACKSON CNTY MN		AA
KANABEC CNTY MN		AA-
KANDIYOHI CNTY MN		AA
KOOCHICHING CNTY MN		AAA
LAC QUI PARLE CNTY MN		AAA
LAKE CNTY MN		AA
LE SUEUR CNTY MN		AA
LINCOLN CNTY MN		AA-
LYON CNTY MN		AA
MAHNOMEN CNTY MN		AA-
MARSHALL CNTY MN		AA
MARTIN CNTY MN		AA
MCLEOD CNTY MN		AA
MILLE LACS CNTY MN	Aa3	
MORRISON CNTY MN		AA
MURRAY CNTY MN	Aa3	
NICOLLET CNTY MN	Aa2	
NOBLES CNTY MN		AA
NORMAN CNTY MN		AA+
OLMSTED CNTY MN	Aaa	AAA
OTTER TAIL CNTY MN		AA
PENNINGTON CNTY MN		AA-
PINE CNTY MN		AA-
PIPESTONE CNTY MN		AA
POLK CNTY MN		AA
POPE CNTY MN	Aa2	
REDWOOD CNTY MN		AA
RENVILLE CNTY MN	Aa2	

Minnesota Counties	Moody's Rating	S&P Rating
RAMSEY CNTY MN	Aaa	AAA
RICE CNTY MN		AA
ROCK CNTY MN		AA+
ROSEAU CNTY MN		A+
SCOTT CNTY MN		AAA
SHERBURNE CNTY MN		AA+
SIBLEY CNTY MN	Aa3	
SAINT LOUIS CNTY MN		AA+
STEARNS CNTY MN		AA+
STEELE CNTY MN		AA
STEVENS CNTY MN		AA
SWIFT CNTY MN		AA-
TODD CNTY MN	Aa2	
TRAVERSE CNTY MN	Aa3	
WABASHA CNTY MN		AA+
WADENA CNTY MN		AAA
WASECA CNTY MN		AA
WASHINGTON CNTY MN	Aaa	AAA
WATONWAN CNTY MN	Aa3	
WILKIN CNTY MN		AA-
WINONA CNTY MN		AAA
WRIGHT CNTY MN		AA+
YELLOW MEDICINE CNTY MN	Aa3	