

## **RAMSEY COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION AGENDA**

Monday October 16, 2023 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Merriam Park Library, Meeting Room B, 1831 Marshall Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call Attendance
3. Approval of Monday October 16, 2023 Agenda
4. Approval of the August 7, 2023 Minutes
5. New Business
  - A. Welcome and Introductions
    - i. Prince Corbett – District 3
  - B. Proposed Ramsey County 2024-2025 Budget Presentation
    - i. Presented by County Manager Ryan O'Connor
  - C. Declare a Vacancy for District 7 – Charlotte Peña
  - D. Accept Resignation and Declare a Vacancy – District 2
    - i. Unexcused absences (February 6, 2023, May 1, 2023, and August 7, 2023)
  - E. Approve Proposed Meeting Dates for 2024
    - i. February 5, 2024, May 6, 2024, August 5, 2024, October 21, 2024
  - F. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
6. Committee Reports
  - A. Chair Reports – Chair Nancy Haas
    - i. Request legal guidance on petition numbers to adequately present a ballot question to amend the Home Rule Charter
    - ii. Officer Nomination Committee
  - B. Budget Committee Report – Co-Chair Angie Theis and Ann Maslansky-Takahashi
    - i. Motion to approve Budget Letter to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners
  - C. Charter Review Committee Report – Co-Chair Gene Nichols and Mathew Emerson
  - D. Confirm Committee Chairs, Membership, and Workplan for 2024

7. Citizen Input (Approximately 7:30 PM)

A.

8. Future Agenda Items

A.

9. Adjournment

Attachments:

1. August 7, 2023 Charter Commission Minutes
2. 2024-2025 County Manager Proposed Budget Presentation

## RAMSEY COUNTY CHARTER COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday August 7, 2023 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
Roseville Library, 2180 North Hamline Ave., Roseville Minnesota 55113

1. Call to Order: Chair Nancy Haas called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
2. Roll Call Attendance: Completed by Jason Yang

District	Charter Commission Member	Present	Excused	Unexcused
1	Ann Maslansky-Takahashi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	Eugene M. Nichols	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Lisa M. Laliberte – Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Joann Knuth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Nancy Haas - Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Vacant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Bethany Winkels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	William A. Lindeke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Jazmin Glaser-Kelly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Gloria Bogen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Hoang Murphy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Matthew S. Emerson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Charlotte A. Pena	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	William (Bill) Kempe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At Large	Angela (Angie) Thies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At Large	Shelby Gagnon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At Large	Allen E. Hoppe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Guests: Rachel Tierney, Attorney, Kennedy & Graven Law Firm  
Melissa Finnegan, Government Relations Specialist, Ramsey County Manager's Office

Also Present: Jim Mogen, Assistant Attorney, Ramsey County Attorney's Office  
Jason Yang, Planning Specialist, Ramsey County Manager's Office

3. Motion to amend the agenda to change the last quarterly meeting from November 6, 2023 to October 16, 2023. Motioned by Bethany Winkels, seconded by Allen Hoppe. Unanimously approved by all members present.

4. Approval of Monday May 1, 2023 Agenda: Motioned by Bill Kempe and seconded by Eugene Nichols. Unanimously approved by all members present.
5. Approval of the February 6 Minutes: Motioned by Lisa Laliberte and seconded by Allen Hoppe. Unanimously approved by all members present.
6. New Business
  - A. Introduction of New Ramsey County Charter Commission Members
    - i. District 5 – Gloria Bogen
  - B. Request by Bob Fletcher to Amend the Home Rule Charter and Response
    - i. Presented by Rachel Tierney, Kennedy & Graven Law Firm
      1. Rachel provided an overview of the proposed amendment to the Ramsey County Home Rule Charter and facilitated a discussion with the members present. Discussion topics included reviewing Home Rule Charter - Section 11, lack of clarity regarding petition processes, delegated authority for appointed vs elected positions, issues regarding sufficiency of voters for a petition, and discussion of potential future next steps or options.
        - a. See Mn Statutes 383A.554 and 375A about application and differences between “sufficient signatures” (ie. 5% of signatures based on General Election or 5% of signatures based on the Governors election).
      2. Next options could include:
        - a. After petitioners have gathered “sufficient” signatures and after the signatures have been vetted by the County Manager’s Office or the Elections department, then the Charter Commission members will approve the sufficiency of the petition and begin the process of getting the petition on the next general election ballot, OR
        - b. Charter Commission members can ask for more information from petitioner, interested parties, or request additional legal information.
7. Citizen Input (Open: 6:50 p.m. Closed: 7:03 p.m.)
  - A. Bob Fletcher, Ramsey County Sheriff
    - i. Provided public comment about the petition to change the appointment of the county manager to an elected position. Purpose is to balance power between the board and the county manager. Plan is to move forward slowly and methodically to give an opportunity for residents to voice their thoughts about the proposed amendment.
    - ii. Charter Commission members had an opportunity to ask the petitioner questions about intent, research and goals of the proposed change.

- B. Motion by Ann to receive a copy of background work/legal memo that Rachel discussed thus far, no second; not approved.
  - C. Questions from Commission Members included:
    - i. What are the average years of service for the county manager role?
    - ii. What was the level of research conducted by the petitioner?
      - 1. The Petitioner's response: Researched other governing options, but tried to keep the amendment simple. No authority has been taken away from the board of commissioners.
  - D. Chair Haas informed the Charter Commission members this was not an action item, and they can ask for future conversations or legal information to clarify gray areas.
8. Ramsey County Government Relations Legislative Session Presentation
- i. Presented by Melissa Finnegan, Government Relations Specialist, Ramsey County Manager's Office
    - 1. Provided a highlight of the 2023 Legislative Session, see attachment 3.
9. Committee Reports
- A. Chair Reports – Chair Haas
    - i. Provided update on workplan status and invited co-chairs to provide their updates.
  - B. Budget Review – Co-chairs Angie Thies and Ann Maslansky-Takahashi
    - i. They will review the Ramsey County budget and draft a letter to offer suggestions and feedback pertaining to the proposed 2024-2025 budget. They also invited other members to join the committee and plan to meet once before the next quarterly meeting.
  - C. Charter Committee Review – Co-chair Mathew Emerson and Eugene Nichols
    - i. They reviewed the Home Rule Charter and have nothing to report. They asked additional questions to clarify roles and responsibilities of the Charter Commission members.
10. Future Agenda Items
- A. Presentation from Ramsey County for the proposed 2024-2025 budget and tax levy.
  - B. Approved the proposed 2024 Ramsey County Charter Commission meeting dates.
11. Adjournment
- A. Chair Nancy Haas adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday October 16, 2023  
6 p.m. – 8 p.m. 90 Plato Blvd West, Plato Conference Center, Saint Paul, MN 55107

Attachments:

1. May 1, 2023 Ramsey County Charter Commission Minutes
2. Ramsey County Charter Commission Response to the Home Rule Charter
3. 2023 Legislative Session Highlight

# Important dates in the budget process

Aug. 22	County Manager's presentation of proposed budget to county board - including property tax impacts, and community indicators.
Aug. 30	County Manager provides virtual Town Hall to employees.
Sept. 5	Finance provides overview on county financial position.
Sept. 5-19	Service Teams budget meetings at Ramsey County Courthouse.
Sept. 19	<b>Public Hearing #1</b> - 4:30 p.m. at Ramsey County Courthouse with option to participate online.
Sept. 25	Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee sets overall property tax levy.
Sept. 26	County board certifies 2024 maximum property tax levy.
Nov. 10–24	Notices of estimated taxes, values emailed/mailed to property owners.
Nov. / Dec.	<b>Public Hearing #2</b> - 6:30 p.m. at community location with option to participate online.
Nov. 28	County board considers adjustments to the county manager's budget proposal.
Dec. 12	County board approval of 2024-25 budget and 2024 property tax levy.

Visit [ramseycounty.us/ChiefClerk](https://ramseycounty.us/ChiefClerk) to sign up to testify at public hearings.



# **Ramsey County Manager's 2024-25 Recommended Budget**

*Presented to the Ramsey County board for their consideration*

**Ryan T. O'Connor**  
**Ramsey County Manager**

October 16, 2023





## Where we've been

- The COVID-19 pandemic placed an enormous pressure on families and counties.
- Ramsey County leveraged American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to keep the levy low and reduce taxpayer burden while expanding services to all residents.
- In May 2023, the Peacetime Emergency ended.
- The 2024-25 proposed budget reflects this inflection point for community and county as we move beyond the emergency of the pandemic and into the future.



## What we've learned

- Greater disparities and needs existed in Ramsey County.
- Co-creation is the only way to transform systems.
- Accessible communications are critical.
- In-person service delivery matters.
- Investments in technology infrastructure increase connectivity, productivity and access.
- There are better ways to use space to collaborate, create and promote wellness.
- New ways to collaborate across Service Teams to serve community.

A nighttime photograph of the Minneapolis skyline, featuring several illuminated skyscrapers and a street with traffic lights in the foreground.

### *Vision:*

A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.

### *Mission:*

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

## What guides us

- Vision, mission and goals.
- Community.
  - Most diverse county in Minnesota.
  - 550,000+ residents.
  - Residents First lens.
  - Extensive community engagement.
  - Approximately 4,000 employees.



## What we need now

Investments in:



**People** – both those served by Ramsey County and those who work for Ramsey County.



**Partnerships** – intentional and authentic involvement of stakeholders to further reach and impact and promote equity in decision-making to better meet community needs.



**Service delivery** – particularly in finding gaps and overlaps in how services are provided and working with residents to increase accessibility.

# Beyond the pandemic

*Investing in people, partnerships  
and service delivery to ensure a more  
equitable, sustainable future for all.*



# Budget overview

## Total budget

**2024:** \$813,395,192

**2025:** \$841,793,172

## Overall budget increase

**2024:** 3.48%

**2025:** 3.49%

## Proposed levy increase

**2024:** 6.75%

**2025:** 4.75% *(will be reduced once cannabis revenue estimates are available)*

## Average levy growth

**2015-2025:** 3.3%

**2021-2025:** 3.5%

## County Program Aid in 2024

Increase of \$6,228,291

Resulted in a levy decrease of 1.76%

## Regional Rail levy

**2024:** \$34,167,111

**2025:** \$36,286,749

## Housing and Redevelopment Authority levy

**2024:** \$12,819,564

**2025:** \$13,610,087

## Authorized FTE's

**2024:** 4,178.72, (-3.8% change vs. 2023)

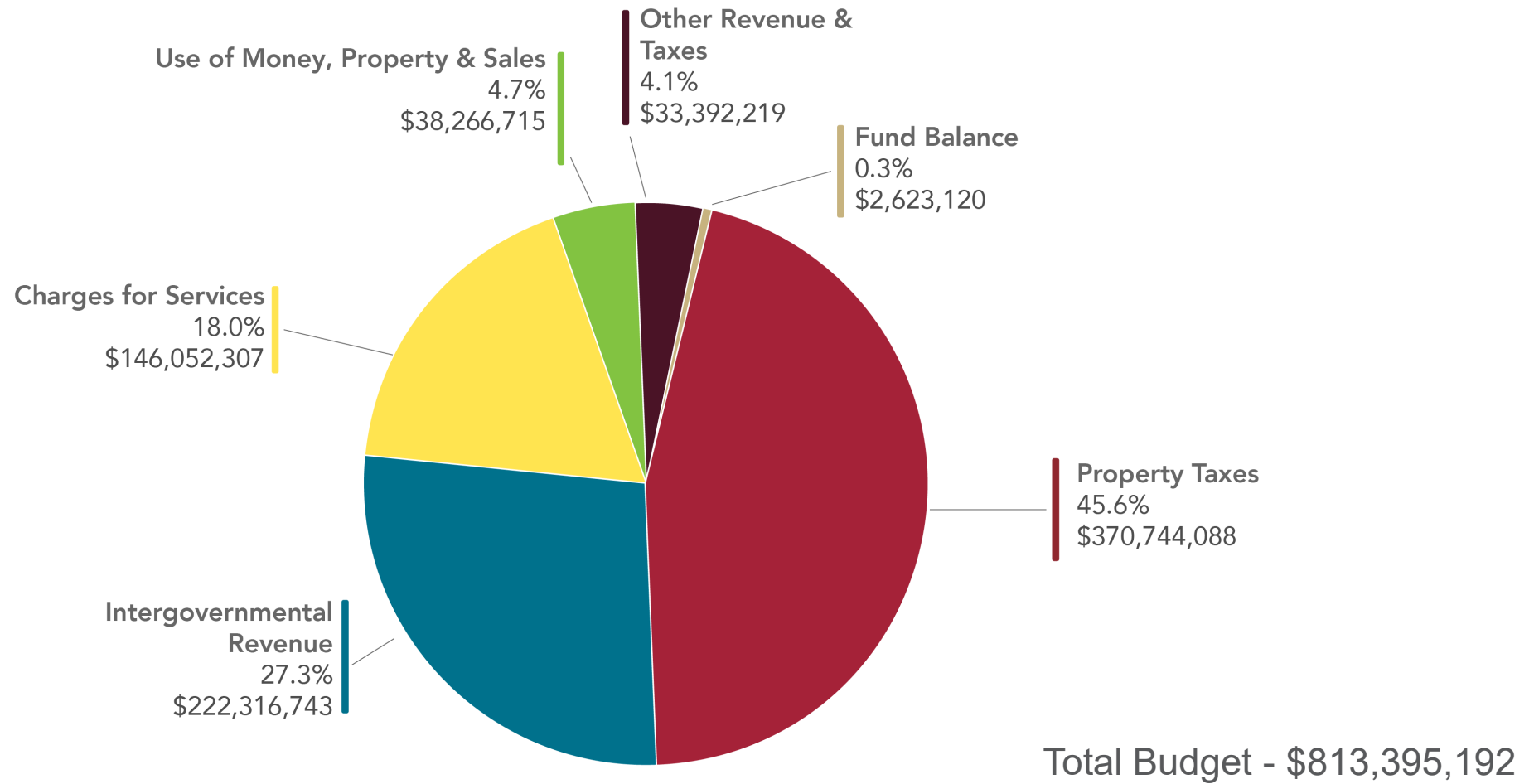
**2025:** 4,189.82, (0.3% change vs. 2024)



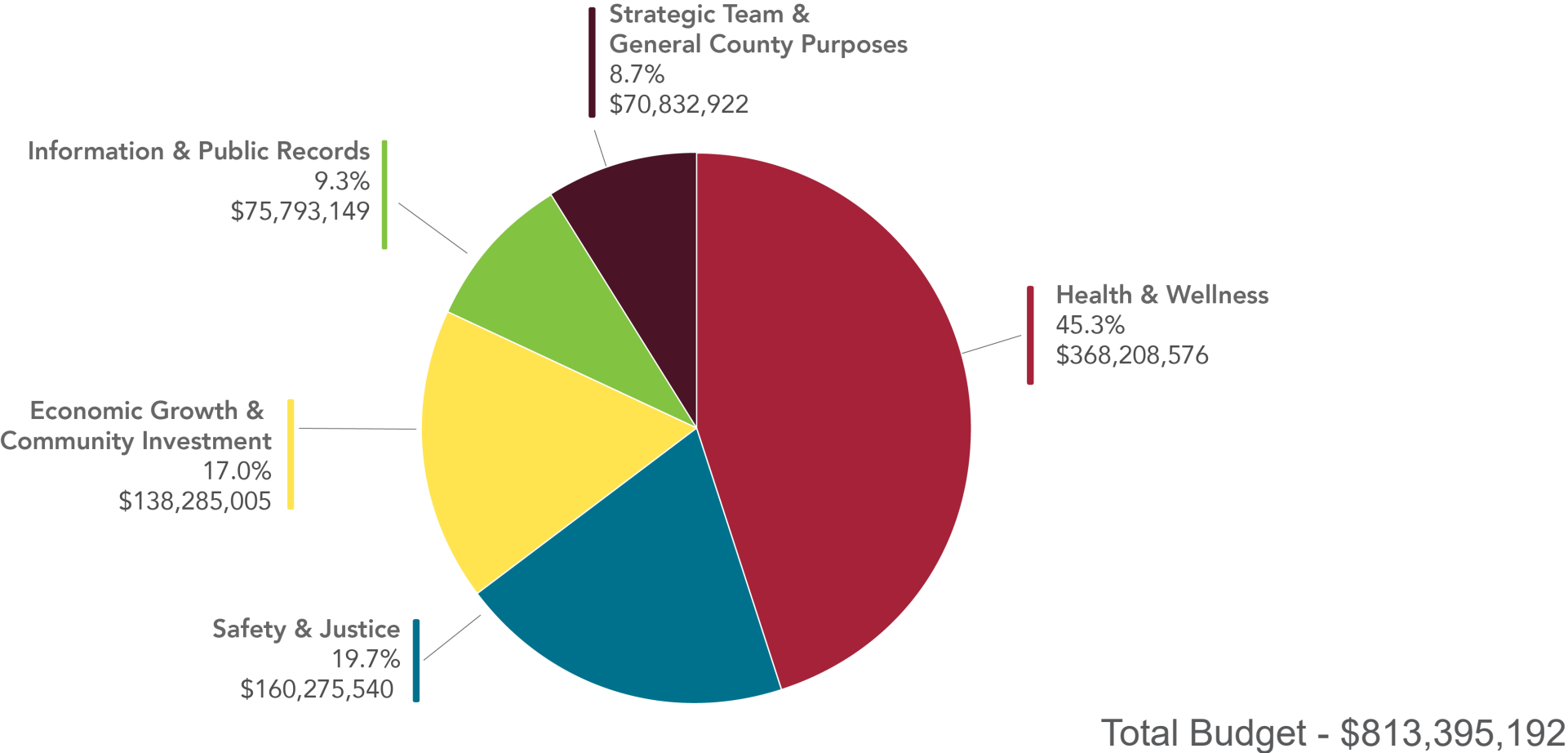
## State supports direct to residents to build household wealth

- Enhanced homeowner property tax rebates.
- Enhanced renter property tax rebates.
- Income tax rebates.
- Income tax credits for families.
- Property tax homestead exclusion.

# Where the county dollar comes from - 2024



# Where the county dollar goes - 2024





## Additional funding opportunities that will improve programs and services

- Cannabis.
- Corrections.
- Homelessness.
- Housing.
- Transportation.
- Public safety.
- Workforce.



## People, **partnerships** and service delivery



## Investments in people

*Both those served by Ramsey County and  
those who work for Ramsey County.*





## Investments in people

### Attracting and retaining staff

- Resources to be competitive in the job market and retain and attract the best employees.
- Increasing paid parental leave.
- Public sector pathways program.

### Care Center employees

- Supported employees through the closure, absorbed more than 80 into other Service Teams and departments.

### High priority investments

- Expanded investments in areas including information security, financial assistance, property management, navigator services, communications, grants and revenue.



## Investments in people

### Residents First

- Centering residents to ensure that county services, applications and programs are inclusive, accessible, efficient and provided with exemplary service.

### Transforming Systems Together

- Engaging and building trusting relationships with community and sharing power to support healthy and safe communities in areas including violence reduction, child welfare, probation services and youth justice transformation.

### Trusted Messengers and Continual Communication

- Sharing information with our community and using the lessons learned from the pandemic to inform how we communicate effectively as an organization and with our partners.



# Investments in people

## Transit, housing and workforce infrastructure

- Supporting business growth and development in our community, ensuring people have access to new opportunities for upward mobility.
- Making investments in housing and redevelopment projects along the county's "Critical Corridors."
- Resourcing the full housing continuum and strengthening partnerships with housing agencies and developers who contract for much needed supportive services.

## Community wealth building

- Creating a relational, transparent and accessible procurement system that expands who works with and on behalf of Ramsey County.





## Investment in partnerships

*We are committed to enhancing partnerships,  
sharing power and co-creating in new ways.*





# Investment in partnerships

## Modernization of the financial assistance system

- Partnering with the state to create a modern, responsive human services system.
- Reconfiguring caseload structure and the development of a resident-relationship management system and approach that eliminates programmatic and departmental barriers.
- Improving client access through call center and service center.



## Investment in partnerships

### Bail reform initiative

- Collaborating with justice system stakeholders, nonprofit groups and community members.
- Improving our pretrial system by prioritizing community well-being and safety.
- Reducing harm caused by the cash bail system.
- Elimination of fines and fees to provide more equity and not continue systemic racism.



## Investment in partnerships

### Responding to Climate Change and Increasing Community Resilience

- Engage with community to develop a climate action framework (CAF) that aligns with the State of MN's goal of achieving a carbon-neutral, resilient, and equitable future for Minnesota and guide the implementation of the county's CAF.
- Partner with professionals to assess ways to advance the Federal Justice 40 initiative and increase Equitable Climate Resilience in the county's Climate Action Framework in development.
- Advocate for legislative policy changes that assist the county in reducing energy consumption and providing services that address the health and environmental impacts of climate change in community. Leverage capital improvements and secure state and federal funding to complete these strategic initiatives.



## Investment in service delivery

*Our service delivery continues to evolve to  
meet the demands of our community.*





# Investment in service delivery

## Appropriate Responses Initiative

- Not all 911 calls are the same: public safety response vs. mental health or community partner.
- Enhancing 911 responses in Ramsey County by focusing on resident well-being and community.
- Working closely with community members and agency leaders to transform and co-design our 911 response.



# Investment in service delivery

## Buildings and spaces

- Continuing to consolidate and innovate when it comes to physical county space and service delivery.
- Renovations to Metro Square to be more welcoming and accommodating to employees and residents.
- Service Centers, located strategically throughout the county, offer in-person assistance for a wide range of county programs and services.





# Investment in service delivery

## Technology and equipment

- Innovative technology solutions, consolidated data management and ongoing security enhancements to better serve employees and residents alike.
- Public Wi-Fi in county buildings.
- Voting equipment refresh.



# Thank you

[ramseycounty.us/Budget](https://ramseycounty.us/Budget)

*October 16*

*2023*