

CAN Summary of the Cambridge 2024 Proposed Budget

On April 24th, the City released its proposed budget for Fiscal year 2024 which starts on July 1, 2023. The budget is available on the City's website. The first public discussion of the budget will be on May 8th at **5pm** at the Council Chambers and a second, if needed, will be held May 22nd at 5pm. The Council may add more sessions, if necessary.

The City Manager, Tom Carroll, and the City's Finance Director, Deborah Cooper, have made significant improvements to the budget and administration of the City's resources. These improvements include workload data and performance measures, graphic presentations and standardizing the salary system throughout the City staffs. The budget which is some 80 pages is tough to summarize, but here goes my effort:

Revenue:

1. The Council **did not** raise the property tax rate of \$0.8096/\$100 of assessed value of the property.
2. The Council **did** raise the water and sewer rates for the first time in ten years to help offset the cost of the major capital investments needed.
3. The budget for the general fund is \$14,635,000 with revenue income of \$14,636,000 – **a balanced budget**.
4. The City will end this fiscal year, 2023 with a projected \$3 million surplus. The Council will need to decide whether to keep that in reserve or to apply all or some to the 2024 budget.
5. In addition to the year of end reserve, the City has four other reserves: a \$2.4 million Rainy Day reserve; a \$1 million Debt reserve; a \$900,000 Shoreline Resiliency reserve and a \$107,000 Art in Public Places reserve.
6. The City also receives funding from the three Enterprise funds as follows: The Sanitary Sewer fund, \$5.1 million in sewer charges; \$7.1 million in grants; The Water Utilities fund, \$2.4 million and the Marina fund, \$771,000.

Expenses:

1. The City will fund 126 employees at a new rate system that standardizes and increases salaries though out the organization.
2. The West End Sewer Project and Trenton St. Pump St. Replacement project are funded at \$7 million a substantial investment to improve our infrastructure. This is a start to a \$20 million effort over the next few years.
3. Establishes a \$1 million "Land Bank" fund to purchase and rehabilitation of old, vacant houses though out the City.
4. \$600,000 to start the Shoreline Resiliency project which is estimated to cost \$18 million when completed. Funding is mostly though State grants.
5. \$430,000 grant to study how to reduce the wave action in the City Marina.
6. \$800,000 to stabilize the old City Hall building
7. \$450,000 in a multiyear effort for youth employment and transportation.
8. \$230,000 for computer upgrades for the City
9. \$162,000 for Cedar St. Culvert replacement to stabilized the street.
- 10.\$300,000 for Water meter, equipment and truck replacement
- 11.\$886,000 in support of the Voluntary Fire and Rescue Co.
- 12.\$7 million for our Police Department

This is just a short summary of the major items in the budget. I am sure the Council will do a detailed review of all the items in the budget during the review process.

Cambridge now has little over 13,000 residences in 6,803 acres. Our population is growing in the City by 6.2% over the last census while the County lost a small number of people. We are 47% Black, 38% white, 8% Hispanic and 2% Asian. We are almost 20% 65 years or older, a very important number to me. Our home ownership is 45.2% and we have about 6,500 houses. All these fun facts are in the budget, take a look.

Charles McFadden,

President, CAN